# Unlikely Heroes

**Summary**

A battered Boy Who Lived finds his world come crashing down when his name comes out of the Goblet of Fire. Shockingly, the only ones to come to his rescue are those he’d believed were his enemies.

**Notes**

Notes: Is canonical to the Selection of Triwizard Champions. CreatureFic Sub!Harry
"Useless little freak! Can't do anything right."

Crack!

The belt came down again; he'd been locked in the smallest bedroom for three hours. No doubt Uncle Vernon had worked himself up into a temper.

Harry lay there on the floor since he'd be tossed on it, biting his lip to hold in the cries of pain.

Crack!

Crack!

The belt came down everywhere on Harry's body, he hadn't eaten in three days not that he dare mention it. Harry didn't fight he'd learned not to, he was still being punished for his inflation of Aunt Marge. Though the woman didn't remember, Uncle Vernon did. His uncle also remembered the trouble Dobby caused his first summer back from Hogwarts but believe he; Harry had done that. Harry had been locked up in his room right after, his window barred, his door had a tiny cat flap for food and he was only let out once a day to bathe and use the loo. It had been just like his cupboards, he'd been locked in the dark.

Silent tears rolled down the young Gryffindor's face, it wasn't long until he'd get to go to the Burrow. The Burrow was so different, there was food and like Hogwarts he was allowed to eat it. When Uncle Vernon left Harry was so sore, he crawled to the loose floorboard and pulled out a few potions. He took the pain-killing potion first; then a nutrient one and finally a dreamless sleep one.

Harry never told Ron and Hermione he suffered from nightmares, in the beginning it was just from Uncle Vernon and his temper. Then came the Troll and the Philosopher's stone 'adventure' which Harry saw as something frightening. Second Year wasn't much better with the attacks on Muggleborns and the Chamber opening, facing a basilisk was utterly terrifying, some nights he dreamt of being pinned in the basilisk's eyes and dying. Other nights he was bit by the basilisk and felt the venom eating away at him slowly. Then his nightmares Third Year were about Black chasing him and trying to kill him. After he found out Black was innocent and his godfather, he'd watched Professor Lupin transform into a monster and almost kill him. Peter escaped, Sirius had to go on the run and Harry was being forced to return to the Dursleys. Yes, he had a lot of things to spark nightmares…

Harry loved Hogwarts, he got plenty to eat and he had some friends. He just wished the hero worship would stop. He was not a Hero, he would never be…

He did love the Burrow but the Boy Who Lived stuff was plain freaky…

He just wished he could be a wizard without being the Boy Who Lived…
Chapter One

Harry was excited, sort of. The Triwizard Tournament was dangerous but you had to be seventeen to even enter much less participate. This was one danger he could avoid…

Ron, Fred and George were mad because they were too young, while Hermione made things worse by telling him how dangerous it was. He didn’t need to hear about the death toll or how the last time there was a tournament a creature went wild and killed the Heads of all three Schools.

Harry was doing his best to ignore it all; but it was finally time for the Triwizard Cup to choose a champion.

He heard the crackle of flames change a bit before Dumbledore announced, "Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, Cedric Diggory.

There were boos from Gryffindor and Slytherin, Ravenclaw clapped politely but Hufflepuff was on their feet clapping and making loud noises.

Why were they happy? He could die!

The sound of the flames changed again.

"Beauxbatons Academy of Magic, Fleur Delacour."

There was polite clapping from the Beauxbatons' delegation and some sobbing as well, the Ravenclaws who they shared a table with also clapped some.

There came a third change in the flames.

"Durmstrang Institute, Viktor Krum."

Ron groaned.

The twins teased Ron about his crush being a champion.

There was a reserved applause from both the Durmstrang students and the Slytherins with whom they shared a table.

Harry thought it was all over until, the flames were heard again. He felt icy dread flood his body.

"Pot…Harry Potter!"

There was that awful tone, the one Uncle Vernon used before beating him. Harry looked up; all around him were looks of anger, betrayal and shock.

"Potter! Get up here!"
The Great Hall filled with hissing about cheating and how he was going to be punished.

This was no small thing, it wasn't like he could just scrub cauldrons or polish silver. He was going to be beaten; he just knew it.

Harry slowly wobbled to his feet, his face white with fear and his hands trembling. 'He hadn't done anything, why was his name in the cup? He didn't want to die, they were going to hurt him. He,'

Harry fainted, his magic did the strangest thing, it locked itself in side him and his Glamour the one he used so much magic to hide behind even betrayed him and crashed.

XooooooX

Draco had been watching and complaining when the Hogwarts champion was selected.

A Hufflepuff? Everyone knew they were a lot of duffers; they were cowards and ran away at the slightest hint of danger. Why couldn't it have been a Slytherin? Warrington wasn't a bad bloke; he'd have preferred Pucey who was on the House Quidditch team with him.

The Beauxbatons' Champion was announced and then the Durmstrang Champion, Draco was quite pleased it was Krum. Any Seeker worth his weight in Galleons worshiped and admired Krum.

It should have been all over.

The flames flashed blue again and a charred bit of paper flew into the odious Headmaster's hand.

Dumbledore blinked then stammered, "Pot…Harry Potter!"

Draco glanced around and saw all around him were looks of anger, betrayal and shock because of POTTER.

"Potter! Get up here!"

The Great Hall filled with hissing about cheating and how he was going to be punished.

Draco half expected to see a smug look on Potter's face.

What he saw unnerved him; Potter was chalk white and shaking with terror.

The famous Boy Who Lived was terrified? Mister three-time award Special Service to the school? The Celebrated Rule Breaker frightened?

It was hard to surprise the Prince of Slytherin but watching Harry Potter faint was a surprise. The snap of powerful magic being broke was also highly unnerving.

The first person to run down from the Head Table wasn't Nurse Pomfrey or Dumbledore; it was Uncle Severus, his godfather.

Uncle Severus lifted Potter from the cold stone floor, worry lines etched in his sallow face.

Draco hadn't seen that look since he was eight and tried to brew a difficult potion by himself only to have it explode on him. He remembered the worry and gentleness from his favorite professor when he found him and carried him up from the dungeon potions lab up to his father's study. Mother had been so upset and then cruelly furious, he'd been lectured later and made to promise not to do such a thing again by both his father and godfather.
Dumbledore looked annoyed, McGonagall embarrassed, Crouch vacant, Bagman seemed a bit shocked, the Durmstrang Headmaster Karkaroff irate, and Madam Maxime, the Headmistress of Beauxbatons was outraged.

The only one who seemed to actually care that Potter looked cold and lifeless was Uncle Severus. Why? He thought his godfather and Head of House couldn't stand the boy.

Pomfrey seemed to remember herself and hurried to check on the boy.

Severus waved her off, "Headmaster, we'll see to it that the Potter boy is examined and treated if needed." There was a forced sneer, "Then I'm sure he will be questioned and punished."

Bagman chuckled, "he's just faking. He didn't expect he'd actually be chosen. I can't wait to find out how he managed to get past your age line Dumbledore. We can't discuss anything about the first Task until all the Champions are present."

The Heads of Durmstrang and Beauxbatons started to raise a fuss.

Dumbledore held up his hand, "We'll discuss this in my office."

There was a barely restrained rage in the old goat, Draco knew that look well; Father often had it. Especially when dealing with the Headmaster...

XoooooX

Severus Snape, Potions Master and Head of Slytherin House cradled the cold limp body of Harry Potter, the son of his rival and his best friend. He wanted to hate Harry; he wanted to see James in the boy. What he saw was himself, the self that was reflected in Lily's eyes when they were young.

Severus felt a rage; he could feel scars through Harry's robe. He knew that sending Harry to live with Petunia was a terrible idea. He should have argued harder against it. Petunia tripped Lily, stole her homework, hid her books and sometimes she even hit her. What had she done to Harry?

"Would you please let me treat my patient?"

Severus was jarred out of his brooding thoughts, until he had answers he was going to protect Harry's secret. He used what little magic Harry had at present to weave a Glamour that covered his scars. With all the times the boy ended up in the infirmary; why hadn't Poppy noticed a Glamour? He was concerned she was incompetent. He remembered when Potter and Black were really vicious and he ended up badly bruised. He couldn't hide the marks under his customary Glamour, but the boys were never punished. He hated it, and it isolated him further. It meant that no one was going to save him from his father either...

Poppy cast a few spells; "He fainted." The woman said coldly, "He must have been shocked his little scheme for attention actually worked. I'm sure he'll be punished severely."

Severus was appalled, something was very wrong here. He could hear Lily yelling at him to do something, James too. He had a life-debt to that man that he never repaid, at James' death it transferred to his son. He was going to fix this, somehow, someway; he was going to fix this.

He sat beside Potter's bed, he wasn't leaving until the boy woke up and he could question him. Not interrogate, question.

XooooooX
Draco noticed that Uncle Severus never came back to the dungeons. He ignored his housemates as they continued to berate Potter and Diggory. Finally, just before curfew he cast a disillusionment charm on himself and slipped out when a Slytherin Sixth Year entered the Dungeon Common Room.

Making his way to the First Floor Infirmary being sure to avoid running into anyone including Fitch's cat Mrs. Norris.

There sitting in a chair was Uncle Severus, his mouth was moving but he wasn't talking out loud.

Draco inched closer.

There was a hiss in ancient Gaelic, "Draconis Lucius Malfoy! What are you doing out of the Dungeon?" casting nonverbally a privacy charm of his own creation.

Draco responded in kind, "I didn't see you come down to the Dungeon. You usually check on us. I was worried. I saw your face when Potter fainted. I saw Potter's face before he fainted. He was scared Uncle Severus."

Severus nodded, "I saw that. Poppy didn't even treat him. She looked at him and he fainted to avoid being punished for scheming his way into the Tournament."

"We have to tell Father. Dumbledore was so angry that Potter fainted. Please, there is something wrong with him. I felt something happen to his magic. I don't like Potter much but he looked so frightened."

Severus nodded, "We'll go take him to the Manor, we'll get a real Healer to look at him." He could lose his job for this but he owed Lily and he would do anything for her son.

Draco waited for his godfather to pick up Potter, summoning a house elf.

Severus used a Glamour to make the Malfoy elf look like Potter. Using a powerful disillusionment spell he, Draco and Potter slipped away to his floo in his office.

Emerging in Malfoy Manor's Library, Draco hurried ahead to find his father.

Severus removed his Glamour that he'd cast on the tiny Gryffindor; the only way Lucius would lift a finger for Potter was if he saw some benefit for himself. Saving the Boy Who Lived would make Lucius a hero and Fudge indebted to him.

Chapter End Notes

Lucius was locked in his study when he heard running feet and a pounding on the door. Reluctantly, he unlocked the door.

Draco threw open the door, "Father, Uncle Severus is coming. We need your help."

Lucius was a bit confused because it was November and both Severus and Draco should be at school.

"Lucius, I might have found a way for you to remove Dumbledore and to ingratiate yourself with Fudge." His old friend said as he entered the study.

Lucius stared, in Severus' arms was Harry Potter, looking weak and fragile. "What are you thinking bringing him here? What if,"

"Narcissa didn't see us. We were careful. Instruct the house elves to be silent if you don't trust her." Was Severus' reply.

Draco was a bit surprised, father didn't trust mother? He remembered all the times mother couldn't be bothered with him and that Narcissa was never allowed alone with him.

"We both know you never wanted to be bonded to her, you didn't want to take the Mark either but she and your father pressured you. I only took it because of you; you needed someone you could trust at your side. I've always been there Lucius, whenever you needed me. You helped me gain a level of respect in the Dark Lord's inner circle, you convinced him to send me to Hogwarts as a spy to keep me safe. You helped me get hired there as a Potions Master, I wouldn't even have gotten accepted into training without you. Who convinced you to use the Imperious Curse as an excuse? I'm begging you to help him. Something is terrible wrong Lucius; you should have seen him when they called his name. Everyone immediately assumed he cheated."

"Slow down Severus, set the boy down and talk."

Draco saw a look of worry and affection hiding in his father's silver eyes. What was going on?

Severus undid Harry's robe, and tugged off his shirt, there were healed welts and burns from hot liquids. "I swear I never knew. It has to be Petunia. I told you what she did to Lily and I. We have to help him; I can't let him go back there. Please Lucius I never ask for anything, help him. He needs a healer, but Pomfrey didn't even treat him. She walked off on him just like she walked off on me."

Lucius hissed under his breath in Latin, "I always hated that woman, she never reported the injuries that Potter and Black caused. They always singled you out, trying to break you and Lily apart. As if you had feelings for the Mud,"

"Lucius!"
"Sorry, Muggleborn witch more then friendship. You didn't, I should know." He leered.

Severus glared, "Behave yourself. Are you going to help him or not?"

"Anything for you, you always were my favorite snake. I just wish..." Lucius looked at his son, "...never mind. I'll summon our Family Healer." He summoned a house elf, "Treca?"

The little house elf shook, "Yes Master?"

"Fetch Healer Thaddeus Smythe. You are not to inform the woman."

"Yes Master. Treca fetch Healer. Treca no talk to the woman."

Draco was even more shocked, Father never acted like this that he saw. He knew his parents didn't share a bedroom but he thought all parents were like that.

Severus sat with Harry in his lap, caressing his wild thatch of black hair, "Lily, I'm so sorry I let it come to this. I'll protect him. I promise."

It took ten minutes before the healer arrived.

Lucius met Healer Smythe at the door, "You know our expectations, I expect your confidentiality until I say otherwise. We will be informing the Ministry but for now I need your silence and discretion."

Draco watched, as the healer examined Potter. There was a gentleness in his godfather that he'd only glimpsed before, his father stood behind the settee his hand resting lighting on Uncle Severus' shoulder.

Severus reached up absently to cover Lucius' hand with his own accepting comfort.

Healer Smythe spoke, "I know this boy; it's Harry Potter. He's the size of a nine-year-old not a fourteen year old. He shows signs of prolonged starvation and extended abuse, he is currently locked in his mind. It would require a very talented Mind Healer who is an exemplarily Legilimens. He needs a very strict diet, almost as if he was pregnant. He needs to eat constantly, as well as taking a supply of potions. He shows extended use of Dreamless Sleep Potions, he'll need to be weaned off of them. He shows signs that they are losing their potency."

Severus closed his eyes, "What sort of life have you had? If only,"

"Severus, it's not your fault. You didn't know,"

"I begged that man to save them. He could have. Instead," Severus' eyes shimmered with unshed tears, "...he let this happen."

"I'll do everything I can. You know not everyone supports the old fool, I think this time I can have him removed without threats. I'll call Fudge; I'll have the house in London made ready. Draco, we'll see that you're excused from school. Severus can ask Slughorn to take over your classes. I think it's time for Severus Prince to rise." Lucius said, squeezing the younger Slytherin's hand before leaving.

Draco stared at his godfather, "What happened to Potter?"

"Someone who hates magic hurt him. Dumbledore let this happen. Your father is going to do something about this."

"What's going on with you and father?" Draco asked sitting on the edge of his father's desk.
"Nothing, we're just friends."

Draco snorted, "I'm not a Gryffindor dunderhead or a Hufflepuff duffer." throwing his godfather's words at him, "I'm a Slytherin and I'm your godson, give me more credit then that. I know Father doesn't think much of mother; he's closer to you. What did you mean that you've always been at his side? He seems so protective of you and he seems softer, with mother he's so terse and he won't even look at her. You both seem to wish something but then you trail off."

Severus held out his hand to Draco.

Draco moved to slip his hand into his godfather's.

Severus pulled him close, whispering so faintly it was almost too low to hear, "I wish you were my son."

Draco let the man hold him; he knew that Severus cared for him, "I wish I was too." He was closer to his godfather then to either of his parents but his father did his best to keep distance between him and his mother. He just wished his father were around more.

XoooooX

Lucius sent three house elves to ready the London Townhouse for occupancy. He often used it when the Wizengamot was in session and Draco was at Hogwarts. He trusted Severus to look out for his son, if he couldn't have a child with Severus at least the man could be a part of his son's life. He had been forced to play the part of a pureblood husband to the woman his father choose and to father a child with her. After Narcissa Black was pregnant he moved back out to his old rooms. He hired nannies and house elves to care for the child leaving little opportunities for the woman to be alone with the infant.

He floo called the Minister at home, asking him to meet him at his London residence in half an hour and to bring an Auror.

When the elves announced that the house was ready and that three bedrooms had been prepared for guests Lucius returned to his study.

Severus still had Potter's head in his lap and Draco dozing off against his side.

Lucius felt a pang of regret they looked like a family.

Severus smiled wanly at him when he entered.

"The Minister will meet us there." He picked up Draco; he wished he'd done this more often in the boy's life. "We should go, I'd like to avoid the woman."

Severus levitated Harry gently, before rising to take the boy back in his arms.

Together the two former Death Eaters flooed away from the Manor and the woman who was Lucius' wife.

XooooooX

Lucius put Draco to bed, tucking him in as he'd longed to do for the boy's entire life. "Sleep well son, we'll talk in the morning."

His brilliant son slept.
Lucius joined Severus in the next room; Treca was waiting in the Library for the Minister.

Severus sat on the edge of the bed, Harry looked so tiny and fragile. Why didn't he notice before? He tried to hate Harry because he was James' son, but he was Lily's too. She would be so ashamed of him...

"We'll find a way to protect him." Lucius promised.

There was a knock on the door.

"Enter."

"Minister for Magic Fudge and Senior Auror Shacklebolt." Treca announced.

Minister for Magic Cornelius Fudge looked tired and a bit annoyed, "What do you need Lucius? What was so urgent?"

"You heard about Potter becoming the unprecedented Fourth Champion?" Severus asked.

The pompous old fool nodded, "He found some way around the age line. Dumbledore promised he'd be questioned and punished."

"Did he mention that Potter was unconscious?" Lucius asked.

"He told me that Potter was pretending to faint to avoid punishment."

Severus sneered, "I saw Potter, he didn't just faint. Minister the poor boy was terrified and not of being caught for breaking a rule."

"Didn't you just last spring tell me,"

Severus scowled, "I know what I said. I was wrong; I saw what I wanted to see. I saw his father and not Harry. Minister, the boy has been starved and abused. I'm speaking up because of my friendship with his mother. A reputable healer has examined him and given us strict orders. The Nurse at Hogwarts barely gave him a glance. I can attest that she turns a blind eye to bullied and abused children." Pulling down the bedding and removing Harry's shirt to show Fudge the bruises.

Fudge's eyes bulged and his face turned purple, "Someone's been abusing our Savior?"

Severus nodded, "Lily would have approved of me but James would have been outraged at

"Who is the Healer?" Shacklebolt asked.

"Healer Thaddeus Smythe, he is a private healer who is welcomed in the highest circles of Wizarding Society." Lucius replied.

"Who was to be Potter's guardian according to his parents' wishes?" Fudge asked.

Potter had been placed with his Muggle relatives before Fudge had been put in office.

Severus spoke up, "He was supposed to be placed with Black but since Black is an escaped killer,"

"No, no we can't place him in his custody. Oh dear, we, I mean the Ministry'll have to appoint a guardian. Who is someone that his parents would approve of?" Fudge paced.

Severus smirked, "Well, Lily would have approved of me but James would have been outraged at
the very idea. I would recommend Remus Lupin; I believe my opinion of his character was skewed
due to his association with Black and Potter in school. Lupin had a special relationship with Harry
last year; I should have controlled my temper. Then perhaps, we wouldn't have a half-mad ex-Auror
teaching students."

"Isn't Lupin a,

"Yes Minister he is a werewolf but he is also one of the quietest and gentlest men I've every known.
If Lily knew how I treated him last year she'd curse me straight into the Veil. I'll take responsibility
and I promise he'll be taking the Wolfsbane potion the week of the full moon. I'll brew it myself."

"Lucius, are you in agreement with this mad scheme? A werewolf carrying for the Boy Who Lived?
The press will eat me alive…"

"Do it for the Potters, I think it might be a very good idea if the Ministry silently investigated Harry's
claims about Pettigrew and Black. If there is any truth to them you might find yourself terribly
embarrassed. Pettigrew and Black's wands are at the Ministry; it should be very easy to determine
which one was responsible for blowing up the street. Was the finger ever tested to see if it was cut
off?" Lucius agreed with Severus, something wasn't right about any of this.

"Fine, but only for you Lucius." Fudge said throwing his hands into the air.

"Minister I would like to request a special annulment of my Bonding to Narcissa Black."

Severus stared at Lucius in shock.

"I would also like to file for an expedient Bonding License and the license for a blood adoption."

"Lucius what are you saying?"

"I am saying that I do not trust Narcissa Black near our Savior and I would like to keep her as far
away from him and my son as magically possible." Lucius said stiffly.

"By annulling the Bonding, you make your son a bastard." Shacklebolt stammered in shock.

"Not if he is immediately blood adopted by my bondmate, which cements him once more as my
heir."

"Why would a pureblood like you wish to annul a Bonding to a women with a pedigree like
Narcissa Black?" Shacklebolt was stricken in amazement.

"Simple, I never wanted to be Bonded to her in the first place. Father wanted me to; he thought by
joining a Dark Family like the Blacks I would be more agreeable to joining the Dark Lord's ranks. I
was very much against the idea, it took an Imperius curse to make me do that as well as marry Ms.
Black. Severus became a Death Eater because of me, he offered himself to Dumbledore as a spy to
try to save the life of his friend and her son. Dumbledore let them die, something Severus never
forgave him for." Lucius said, resting a hand on the younger man's shoulder.

"I'll sign the annulment and the other forms, the press will no doubt hear of it."

Lucius smirked, "I have no doubt."

Severus knew then that Lucius intended to finally Bond with him, he rest his hand over his stomach,
thinking of the child he had lost before he had a chance to tell Lucius. He knew how much Lucius
wanted to be a father, he had been too afraid to admit he lost it. He hadn't gotten pregnant since…
Chapter End Notes

It took two days before the paperwork from the Minister arrived by owl.

Lucius had persuaded Severus to join him and Draco for breakfast, leaving Treca to watch the Potter boy.

Lucius accepted the stack of papers from the Ministry owl, smirking as he skimmed them. "By order of Cornelius Louis Fudge, Minister for Magic; the Bonding between Lucius Ramirus Malfoy and Narcissa Lætitia Black is hereby annulled. Effective this day November 3rd, 1994; signed, Cornelius Louis Fudge. I'm sorry it took so long Severus, I told you I'd make it happen." He skimmed the next decree before reading it aloud; "By order of Cornelius Louis Fudge, Minister for Magic; the child Draconis Lucius Malfoy, son of Lucius Ramirus Malfoy and Narcissa Lætitia Black is hereby allowed to be blood adopted by his sire and the future bondmate of Lord Malfoy." He smirked at his long-time companion, "I'm sure you have the blood adoption potion already brewed in storage and the incantation memorized."

Severus nodded; his adoration of Lucius' son was obvious he was sure of it. "I wish…"

*Flashback*

"Mr. Snape, Nurse Pomfrey informed me of your condition. I'm disappointed in you, a boy of your talents that would be foolish enough to get pregnant. A pregnant unbetrothed Fifth Year Slytherin is an embarrassment to this school, your House and the Prince Family." Dumbledore shook his head in dismay, "What are you going to do? You're too ill to even attend classes and you're falling behind. I've held off informing your parents. Will you tell me who the father is?"

Severus was still in shock, he'd barely known for a day that he was two months along. He hadn't even gotten a chance to tell Lucius yet; his lover was too busy with NEWT level classes. Lucius was being forced to be Bonded to that odious Narcissa Black. He'd been betrothed to her sister Andromeda from the cradle but since Andromeda ran off with two months ago to be Bonded to that Muggleborn Hufflepuff they'd hoped the impending Bonding would be called off. Instead, Lady Walpurga Black insisted that her youngest niece be joined to the Malfoy heir. The middle sister Bellatrix was already betrothed to the Lestrange heir, another well-known Dark Family and it wouldn't do to alienate that family. So Lucius' hopes to convince his father to allow him the choice of his own bondmate were crushed. Startled by the Headmaster's question, he stammered, "What?"

"Will you tell me dear boy," the Headmaster attempted to look fatherly, "...who the father is? Perhaps, we can arrange a hurried Bonding."

Lucius was already betrothed, that wouldn't work. He cried out, "No!" then he twisted his robes in an attempt to control himself. "I mean it won't do any good. My father wouldn't allow me to be
joined with a man. You see; he's a Muggle sir. Headmaster, I,

"Then we are left with one option: ending the pregnancy."

Severus collapsed in his chair, as if he was a puppet and someone cut all his strings, "No, Headmaster please..."

"You won't name the father. You have no interest in being Bonded. I'm not running a School for pregnant Unbonded witches and wizards. This is a school dedicated to education, and you can't even attend classes. What makes you think you can attend almost three more years and care for a child? We don't have childcare and you've made it quite clear your parents will not support you. What other option do you have?" the harsh words weren't tempered by the man's insincere smile.

Severus was alone, he had no options. Lily wasn't speaking to him; he lost his temper the other day at Potter and called her a Mudblood. Two weeks ago, Sirius Black the scion of that woman who was intent on ruining his life Walpurga Black had tricked him into following Remus and Nurse Pomfrey. He'd discovered that Prefect Remus Lupin was a werewolf when he wandered into the tunnel under the Whomping Willow; Potter had saved him from Lupin's attack. He owed him a life debt; he owed his tormentor a life-debt. He'd been sworn to secrecy after being threatened by the Headmaster.

He'd kept his word and stayed silent, after that night he started getting sick. He was sure he'd caught the flu; he'd gone to the infirmary for some medicine and ten minutes later he'd been told he was pregnant. He was in shock, but he wanted this baby. If he couldn't be Bonded to Lucius at least he'd been given a child. Now he was going to lose the baby too, he wondered why Lucius Ramirus Malfoy bothered with scum like him. The Black sisters Narcissa and Bellatrix called him that filthy little Halfblood. He wasn't even safe from being bullied in his own House. Lucius would graduate this spring and he would be alone. Lily wasn't speaking to him, hadn't for weeks. If he ever needed a best friend it was now.

"Mr. Snape!"

Severus closed his eyes, "A person like me doesn't deserve anything."

Dumbledore spoke the incantation.

Severus cried out in pain, his child was gone...

"Go lay down and take it easy my boy. Everything will look better in the morning."

*End Flashback*

Severus shivered.

Lucius touched his arm, "Are you alright?"

Severus attempted to smile, "I was just thinking, that's all."

"You look upset and unwell Unc,"

"Draco," Lucius interrupted his son, "I think it would be preferable if you called him Papa."

Draco grinned, "Papa, I like that." Severus Snape had been a constant part of his life as far are he...
could remember. His brow creased, "Can I call you Dad?"

Lucius beamed, "I'd like that." He glanced at Severus, "So when would you like to become Severus Malfoy?"

Severus shifted nervously, "Since you last mentioned that I was granted the family title seeing that I was the last of the Prince family,"

"Very well then, when would you like to become Severus Prince-Malfoy?" Lucius amended.

Severus forced himself to smile, "Whenever you want."

"Then I'll send for the solicitor. We can make a settlement for the woman and then draw up the papers." Lucius checked his watch, "Isn't that dratted healer late?"

Treca announced the healer.

Severus absently squeezed Lucius' hand, "I'll take him up."

Lucius stared after him confused.

Severus escorted Healer Smythe to the room where Harry was resting he hoped, "The boy still hasn't wakened. Should we be concerned?"

"He had a bit of a shock, plus he's had a dreadful life. He maybe too frightened to wake up. I would recommend a good Mind Healer as soon as he wakes. The best I know is Ted Tonks."

Severus stiffened, "Tonks?" that was the name of that Muggleborn Hufflepuff who eloped with Andromeda Black…

"He married the eldest Black sister, disowned she was. Weren't you in the same House at Hogwarts?"

Severus nodded, "She was in Lucius' year." He reached out with a shaking hand to stop the healer, "After you examine Harry, can I ask you a favor?"

"Of course." the man dipped his head.

Severus watched on as the healer examined Harry.

"Just keep casting those potions into his stomach until he wakes. Then get him to eat something light like broth or oatmeal." The healer turned to the other man. "What did you need?"

Severus swallowed, "You see, this is very embarrassing to admit but when I was a Fifth Year I got pregnant. It was Lucius'; I didn't get a chance to tell him. I only knew for about a day. He was already in the middle of planning a Bonding to Narcissa Black at the time. I was pressured into an abortion, because I was very sick. I could hardly leave my bed when the Headmaster summoned me to his office. We've been intimate since but I've never gotten pregnant again."

The healer nodded, "Do you know what incantation he used?"

Severus shook his head, "It was too traumatic, I wanted my baby very much but the Headmaster wouldn't allow me to attend while pregnant if I wasn't bonded or at least betrothed. I couldn't have the child at home because I had an abusive Muggle father."

The healer cast a few spells and then grew angry, "How dare he! That spell's illegal!"
Severus felt cold all over, "What spell?"

"Your body bears the trace of an illegal abortion spell. It not only ends the pregnancy but renders the bearer infertile."

Severus fainted.

XoooooX

Lucius was about to floo call his solicitor when Treca popped into the study.

"Master! The Healer be calling you. It's Master Severus."

Lucius forgot all about his floo call and tore upstairs.

Throwing open the door to Severus' room, "What happened?"

"I gave him some very bad news and he fainted, Lord Malfoy."

"He is my intended, you will tell me." Lucius snapped.

"Until he permits me I cannot," knowing full well that the killing of a future heir should be reported to the head of that family.

"Was it about Harry?"

Healer Smythe shook his head, "No, it was about himself. He will be very upset when he wakes, you must not be angry with him. He was young and scared; he was very alone. He never foresaw this outcome. You will be filing a suit when he informs you, I'm sure."

"What are you talking about?" Lucius stormed.

"I'm torn between healer-patient privilege and what I should inform you of as Head of the Malfoy family." The Malfoy healer paced.

Irritated, Lucius sat on the bed next to Severus, "Eneverate." Casting the spell that would force his lover to consciousness before the healer could stop him.

Severus' eyes blinked, he sat Lucius' worried face and turned away. "I can't talk to you right now."

"Then tell Smythe he can talk to me. I have to understand. We're supposed to be Bonded." Lucius protested.

Severus couldn't look at him, "We can't be Bonded. I can't say it."

"Potions Master Snape was forced in school to have an abortion."

Lucius shook with fury, "Someone killed my child? My first born?"

"He was intimidated, he was so ill he couldn't attend classes. You were already going to be Bonded to Ms. Black so he couldn't have,"

Lucius turned Severus to face him, "If you were pregnant it would have voided the betrothal. Didn't
you know that? Father would have had to let us be Bonded. No Malfoy is ever born a bastard."

Severus sobbed, keening, "I wanted my baby."

"Lord Malfoy, the spell was illegal."

Lucius' silver eyes flashed, "Why?"

"Because, it's so powerful it makes those it's cast on infertile."

Lucius pulled Severus into his arms, "I'll ruin him. No one kills a Malfoy and avoids punishment. I'll fix this; you're still going to be Severus Prince-Malfoy. I'll find some way to reverse the spell."

The healer left them.

XoooooX

Draco heard his father run up stairs, he waited a bit and went up to check on Potter. Since Potter collapsed, he couldn't help thinking about him. He had been present when Uncle Sev, no Papa showed Dad the tiny Gryffindor's scars. He was furious, he and Harry might have been called school rivals and they fought more often then were pleasant to one another. Draco had been lucky to not really suffer any serious punishment. His mother had wanted to take away his potions lab but dad had told him that his punishment was that he was going to be locked out of the lab until he was well and only allowed inside with his godfather present until he could be trusted not to do something so foolish. Mother was furious, ranting and raving how he should be beaten for breaking rules. They weren't even her rules, they were Severus' rules and the lab had been a gift from his godfather and soon to be papa.

He hadn't really noticed the relationship between his father and his godfather, he was rarely alone with them to watch them interact. But seeing his godfather plead with his father to do something because of Harry and how easily they acted like they were a couple he was okay with it. His soon to be Papa had taught him and loved him, his dad gave him lots of gifts and rarely punished him, protecting him from his mother's wrath.

He made his way into Harry's room to find the boy was still unconscious. Draco was worried; it would be two nights since he fainted come dinner. His friends would laugh at him for worrying about Potter, but he couldn't help it. Come to think about it, the one who instigated all their fights were either himself or Weasley. He'd have to work on that, he got the feeling Harry spooked easily and didn't like to have his friends insulted. So what if Weasley grew up in a barn or Granger was a Muggleborn? He was lucky his soon to be Papa hadn't hear the things he'd said, he was sure he'd have been punished...

Draco sat on the chair beside the bed; he'd learn to curb his tongue. He wasn't going to let anyone upset the tiny Gryffindor. He hoped dad won, he wanted Harry safe from the people who hurt him.
Chapter Four

It took Severus a few hours to calm down; he still was upset that his forced abortion had left him infertile. He HATED Dumbledore for killing his baby and destroying any hope for continuing the Prince line. He hadn't forgiven the old man for letting Lily die or sending her son to live with Petunia, he should have fought against it. Severus was calmer by the time the Solicitor arrived to take the legal documents that bonded him to Lucius and made Draco his son.

They did the simplest 'ceremony' making him Prince-Malfoy but his heart was broken, how could Lucius not hate him for killing their child? Lucius was angry with Dumbledore and he was out for blood. He blood adopted Draco in the Malfoy's London house. He sat there twisting his ring after kicking Draco out to do something besides sit at Harry's bedside.

His son was very much like his father; beneath his arrogance was a protective young man who hated to see anyone hurt. Severus wondered if Draco might…

He shook his head; he shouldn't consider such things yet.

XooooooX

Harry finally woke, to find himself in a strange room.

"I wondered when you'd wake, you've slept nearly two days."

Harry tried to sit up only to gently be made to stay down.

"Don't get up too fast, rest a bit."

"What about,"

"School? The Board of Governors and the Minister of Magic have excused you from classes. Dumbledore is quite upset but Fudge for once in his life is being stubborn and for the right reasons." Severus leaned over to see if he had a fever.

"Snape!"

"Actually, it's Prince-Malfoy but that's another story. You fainted, do you remember that?" Severus asked.

"Yes, something about my name coming out of the Goblet of Fire." Harry said shivering.

"We're trying to get you out of that but they keep saying it's a magical contract. I've alienated the headmaster for good now. He's angry with me for taking you out of the castle. You weren't being treated properly and I was worried for you, especially when I saw your scars."

Harry paled.
Severus unbuttoned his robe; removing his own glamour, "See? You aren't the only Halfblood wizard to come from an abusive home. I'd like to apologize to you for how I behaved since you started at Hogwarts. I let my hatred of your father cloud my judgment; your mother would be very disappointed in me. I should have trusted you with Black but I hated him so much. I thought I put all behind me but when I had a chance to hurt him I took it."

"You knew my parents?" Harry asked in a whisper.

Severus smiled, "Lily Evans was my first friend. We met as children; I was the first person to tell her she was a witch. Lily was very talented; we were inseparable almost like siblings. Her older sister Petunia hated us because we could do things she couldn't. We were always together, I was trying to escape my abusive parents and Lily was trying to avoid her sister. Your father hated me; I think he was mostly jealous because he liked Lily from the start and she wouldn't give him the time of day because he wasn't nice to me. I never really liked James Potter, but he and I made a sort of peace and Lily ended up falling in love with him. You're safe now; Lucius is trying to get you away from Petunia. We're trying to locate Remus Lupin, he's been appointed as your guardian because of his friendship with your parents."

"I don't have to go back?" Harry asked.

Severus smiled, summoning a set of potions Harry was supposed to take, "Here, these will help. If you feel up to it we can join Lucius and Draco for lunch."

Harry's eyes widened, "Draco?" he stammered.

"Yes it seems that both Malfoys have a soft spot for abused teenagers. If it weren't for Lucius and Lily I don't know how I'd have survived. Granger and Weasley don't know do they?" Severus asked handing the boy the potions and helping him sit up.

Harry took the potions drinking them without complaint but making a face, "No. Ron knows they locked me in my room; they had to tie a rope to the bars and rip them out of the window using the flying Ford Anglia. The twins helped by retrieving my trunk from the cupboard under the stairs by picking the lock."

"I'm sorry I didn't know sooner. Are you feeling well enough to come attempt lunch? You've missed too many meals already, I can have Treca bring a tray."

Harry shook his head whispering, "I'll come. I don't want to cause trouble."

Severus helped the boy out of bed.

"Why are you being so nice? You're always yelling at me because I'm bad."

Severus shook his head, helping the tiny teen to the door, "You're not bad. I was just being stubborn. Like when you tried to tell me that Black was innocent and I wouldn't listen."

"Okay." Harry wasn't sure he believed him; it was a bit unnerving to have Mr. Snape being so nice…

XooooooX

"So Dad," Draco asked, "…when do I have to go back to school?"

"Soon, I thought you could use some time to get used to have Severus as your papa." Lucius was still furious that Dumbledore had killed his first conceived child but then he wouldn't have Draco. He
was even more irate that the abortion spell was illegal and made his Severus infertile, not that he would tell his son any of this at present.

Draco looked up hearing approaching footsteps to see his papa helping Harry, "He's awake."

Harry stiffened seeing the two Malfoys, even though Snape had said he was a Prince-Malfoy now, it hadn't really sunk in, "Malfoy? What are you doing here?"

Lucius gestured for Harry to take a seat beside Draco, across the table from him, "You've been in my care since Severus took you away from the castle."

"Why would he do that? I thought he hated me;"

Severus winced, "Because I was once a battered boy myself, I had to treat my own wounds. I never had a doctor growing up and Nurse Pomfrey wouldn't treat the injuries I sustained when I was bullied at school."

Harry nodded, "I know the feeling, it was called, 'Harry-Hunting.'"

Draco couldn't believe it, that was a horrible sounding game.

"Black called it, 'Snivellius-baiting' in my case."

"Sirius? No wonder you hated him." Harry whispered, "Did Mr. Lupin play it too?"

Severus shook his head, "No, but I resented him because he became a prefect and still wouldn't stop it."

Harry's eyes narrowed, "Malfoy said once his father was Head Boy, why didn't,"

Severus waved his hand, "No one really knew we were seeing one another, I made Lucius ignore it unless it happened right in front of him."

"Still made me furious," Lucius grumbled, "...at least Evans tried to stop it."

"Bit embarrassing being saved by a girl," Severus countered, "...but she was a good friend."

"So why am I here?" Harry asked softly.

"We saw how terrified you were when your name was called." Draco answered, "I saw you faint and felt your Glamour break."

"I was the one who picked you up and took you to the infirmary." Severus said quietly, "I felt your scars. Everyone immediately assumed you cheated and fainted to avoid punishment. Pomfrey barely examined you at all, I was angry about that and worried. Then Draco came and we decided to take you to Lucius. I showed him your scars knowing it would upset him and convince him to help."

"Admit it papa, you begged him." Draco said pouring himself some pumpkin juice.

Severus' sallow face turned a bit pink, "Draco!"

"It's true. I did help, I called our private healer and he gave you a proper examination. He told us you had to eat often and what potions you needed."

"He even recommended a Mind Healer to help with your recovery" Severus muttered, "He said Ted Tonks was the best."
"Andromeda's Muggleborn Hufflepuff of a bondmate?" Lucius asked a bit shocked.

The potions master nodded, "The very same. Lucius also called an Auror to see your wounds and the Minister for Magic."

Harry yelped, folding in on himself, "You told? But,"

Draco snapped, "Do you want to return to your abusive Muggle relatives?"

Harry whispered, frightened, "No…"

"Draco, do watch that tone, you're scaring him." Lucius admonished gently.

Draco hung his head, "Sorry."

"As we were saying, we informed the Minister to try to get you out of the tournament. We've started paperwork to get you away from Petunia, since Sirius was your godfather but he is currently a fugitive so he isn't exactly going to be handed custody. I can't have custody or rather it wouldn't be seemly because your father didn't like me. So I recommended Remus, sort of an apology for losing my temper and threatening to out him to the parents as a werewolf." Severus said quietly.

Harry whispered, "That was very mean, it meant that Mr. Lupin had to go away."

Severus sighed, "It was very wrong of me, that's why I thought he would make a decent guardian for you. He likes you and cares about your education, I promise that Lupin will receive his potion so he won't transform and act all scary again."

Harry shivered, "That was really scary, if it weren't for Sirius we would have all been hurt." He remembered last year when Dumbledore and Hermione bullied him into agreeing to use the timeturner to save Sirius and Buckbeak. He liked Buckbeak until he attacked Malfoy. Hagrid had really scary pets.

Lucius smiled at the boy, "It's okay to eat, the healer said to eat as much as you can. Draco will bring you a snack in a little while so you can eat something while you study. What do you think would be a good snack?"

Harry thought back to Dudley's idea of a snack, he said weakly, "Cake?"

Draco grinned, "What kind of cake?"

"Um…white cake with lots of frosting and cider?"

Draco chuckled, "Harry, you're my new best friend."

Severus snorted, "Isn't that what Goyle and Crabbe think a snack is?"

Draco shook his head, "No, they think that's dessert. They think a quarter of Honeydukes is a snack." He smirked.

That sent them all off into fits of laughter.

Harry was a bit surprised he was enjoying himself, this was Professor Snape who picked on him every day and Malfoys- all Slytherins. Didn't Ron and Hagrid say that Slytherins were all Dark Wizards? He was so confused…

Lucius, Severus and Draco gently prodded Harry to eat.
Harry was soon so full he was falling asleep at the table, it had been a while since he had eaten and his stomach shrunk again.

Lucius and Draco were soon confused, Draco was sure he'd seen Harry eat more at the Gryffindor table. The younger Malfoy was about to make a stinging comment.

Severus saw the crinkle of fury in his son's eyes, "Harry, it's quite alright. I can tell you're full. The problem with being starved is your stomach shrinks."

Draco flush in embarrassment, thankful that his papa kept him from embarrassing himself and hurting Harry's feelings.

"Draco, why don't you take Harry up to his room? Then go copy your homework assignments so he can do his later."

Draco nodded; Harry was already two days behind…

Chapter End Notes

Chapter 5- Remus arrives

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Chapter Five

It was the day after Harry woke up, when a very disgruntled Remus Lupin was delivered to the London house by an Auror.

John Dawlish, Lucius was sure not his father 'Hawk' Dawlish. He waved his hand dismissively, "Thank you Auror. That will be all. Do pass along our gratitude to Head Auror Scrimgour and Senior Auror Shacklebolt."

The Auror bowed and seemed happy to escape.

Remus Lupin crossed his arms, "Lord Malfoy, I would very much like it explained why I was arrested on sight."

Lucius laughed, "Lucius please, you weren't arrested. But an order was sent out by Minister Fudge's office to retrieve you."

Remus was not amused, "Why? It's bad enough I can't get a job because the whole Wizarding World knows I resigned under suspicious circumstances."

"I'll leave the explanation to Severus, I had Treca under orders to inform him when you arrived."

Lucius smiled.

Severus swept in, looking healthier and wearing more flattering robes. "Lupin! Please sit down; we have a lot to discuss. I suppose the Auror didn't see fit to inform you of anything."

Remus sighed, "No he didn't. Don't you think you caused enough trouble?"

Severus smirked, "No, I'm about to cause a whole lot more. I have a feeling that Black is going to want to eviscerate me."

"Now why would that be?" Remus asked sinking into a chair, he was actually exhausted not that he would admit it.

"Simple, because you Remus Lupin are now the legal guardian of one Harry Potter." Severus drawled.

Remus sputtered, "What?"

"It came to my shocked attention that that Harry was in Petunia's care and he was being beaten within an inch of his life and starved practically to death." Severus deliberately phrased the situation that way knowing it would make the werewolf highly protective of their childhood friends' son.

"Petunia..." the lycanthrope sputtered, "...abused Harry?"

"We wondered why Harry was so desperate to have Sirius pardoned, he wanted to get away from that horse-faced magic hating bint." Severus smirked, "I have since apologized for my behavior over
the last few years to Harry. I thought that you would enjoy being guardian to Potter's son."

Remus stammered, "Why of course, he's a good kid. Nothing really like his dad."

"He's upstairs doing make up work with Draco."

"I thought they hated each other." Remus blinked.

"They might have, until the Malfoy protective streak reared it's head." Severus smirked.

"Snape,"

"It's Prince-Malfoy," Severus corrected.

Remus stared, jaw dropped, "What?"

Lucius squeezed Severus' hand, "You heard him; he is my bondmate."

"You divorced,"

Lucius waved his hand, "Malfoys don't divorce, the Bonding contract between the woman and I was annulled by Minister Fudge. Severus Blood-adopted Draco so he is still my heir. If you wish to see your charge,"

"Yes, yes of course." Remus was dumbfounded. Snape was Bonded to Lord Malfoy, he'd adopted Draco and he'd gotten him custody of Harry? Harry was abused? "Does Dum,"

"Don't speak that man's name in my house, nor my presence." Lucius thundered, "We haven't seen fit to inform him of anything. I request that at this point you do the same. Our personal healer who has been entirely honest about his health is caring for Harry and he is in desperate need of a Mind Healer. I am trying to get Harry out of a magical contract."

Remus stared at him, "What magical contract?"

"Where have you been under a rock? Harry's name came out of the Goblet of Fire. At present he is magically bound to participate as a Champion."


"We know," Severus interrupted. "Everyone besides us, is convinced that Harry cheated somehow to get his name in it. Draco and I saw Harry's reaction to his name being read, he was terrified. The accusing whispers and angry, malicious glares frightened him so much when he got up to approach the head table, he passed out. No one even tried to help him until I picked him up. Pomfrey didn't even really examine him, she said he was faking."

"Harry fainted? She said he was faking? Harry's not a faker, did she say that after his soul was nearly sucked out by a Dementor?"

Severus shook his head, "I don't think so but I was too busy acting like a child at that point. Remus, he's been taking the Dreamless Sleep Potion so often the Healer said it's losing its potency."

Remus covered his face in his hands, "Why didn't I realize,"

"None of us did. He's such a nice boy that we wouldn't suspect he was suffering. He's always smiling and laughing, not like me. I was always brooding and sulking." Severus interrupted. "Come on, I know Harry will be pleased to see you. Draco did mention once that you were the only Defense
Teacher who knew anything."

Remus was perversely pleased that a Malfoy considered him intelligent.

Lucius waved them on, "Go ahead and see the boys, I have papers to deal with." He wondered briefly if anyone had been mucking about in the Potter vaults. He had documentation from the ministry listing Remus as Harry's legal guardian and if they pulled Black's will he was willing to be that Remus' name would be on it.

XooooooX

Draco lay on the bed next to Harry, talking him through the History of Magic assignment.

Harry listened intently; Draco Malfoy wasn't acting like a prat. He wasn't lecturing like Hermione or Percy. The Prince of Slytherin was really good at explaining a perpetually boring subject. He'd even been nice enough to help him with his Potions assignment for the Substitute Professor.

Draco gently corrected Harry's manner of holding a quill sighing, "Not meaning to be insulting but having a Muggleborn and Weasley as your friends didn't help you learn how to hold a wand properly or how to correctly write with a quill."

The way the Slytherin worded that didn't seem at all insulting so Harry let it go. He was still surprised one that Draco hadn't said one nasty remark about fainting. Last year after Draco Malfoy and his friends found out about him fainting because of Dementors they teased him incessantly.

"Harry? Harry did you hear what I said about the 1782 International Confederation of Wizards?"

Harry blushed shaking his head. "Sorry. I was just thinking how you hadn't made fun of me for fainting."

"Did you want me to? Because I didn't see the point, you were terrified. It was like you thought the entire Great Hall was going to attack you."

Harry closed his eyes, "They looked angry enough…"

The bedroom door opened.

Draco looked over his shoulder and saw his papa and Professor Lupin, "Good Afternoon papa. Hello professor."

Remus blinked, no snarky remark about his shabby robes? He said quickly, "Hello Malfoy. Harry?"

Harry rolled over and grinned, "Professor Lupin!"

Severus chuckled, "Minister Fudge had his Aurors looking all over for him. He's your new guardian."

Harry asked quietly, "I don't have to go to the Dursleys?"

Remus knelt and held open his arms, "Not as long as I'm your guardian. I have you to thank for this Severus. If the Ministry checked Sirius’ will he said if James and Lily predeceased him and Harry was still underage he wanted me to take care of Harry."

Severus snorted, "I guess I made the right choice in guardian. Draco, I think the make up work can wait awhile. Let's leave Lupin and Harry alone for a bit."
Draco frowned packing up the books and rolling up the parchment.

Harry patted the empty bed.

"You're not scared of me?" Remus asked quietly.

Harry shook his head; "You're not a werewolf right now. Besides, you forgot your potion right?"

Remus knew he was referring to the night he and Sirius were convinced not to kill Peter for betraying James and Lily. "I'm sorry I scared you."

"I just wish I didn't have to keep running away from you all night."

Remus was a bit confused, "What?"

"Dumbledore convinced Hermione to use her timeturner and drag me along. Ron had a broken leg so he couldn't come. We had to rescue Sirius and Buckbeak, I didn't want Sirius to be Kissed so I helped him." He shifted nervously, "I don't like Sirius much. He's scary."

"Did you want to live with him when he asked?"

Harry stared at his lap, "Anywhere has to be better then the Dursleys."

"Have the Malfoys been treating you well?" Remus had to know, he didn't really trust any of them.

Harry nodded, "They had me seen by a healer who realized I was malnourished, something Madam Pomfrey never did. I was using a Glamour before, it used so much of my magic. Professor S…I mean Prince-Malfoy mentioned it could be why I had such trouble with Transfiguration and Charms sometimes. Draco said it's 'cause I don't hold my wand right and I stumble over the incantations."

"So how are you coming in Defense? Did Dumbledore hire a decent Professor to take my place?"

Remus was curious how the Headmaster filled his hastily vacated position.

"Professor Moody is…scary." Harry gulped. "He…showed us the unforgivable curses. Neville really was upset when he showed us the Cruciatius Curse. Professor Moody thought it was all well and wonderful when he cast the Imperius Curse on me and I fought,"

Remus shook with anger, "Moody used an Unforgivable? On you?"

Harry scooted away, "He cast it on everyone, he said we weren't supposed to be learning about those curses until later but Dumbledore gave him special permission."

Remus kissed his hair and stormed out.

XoooooX

Lucius and Severus were reading and sipping firewhiskey with Remus stormed in.

"Malfoy!"

Both men glanced up, "Yes."

"Lucius Malfoy!"

Lucius sighed, "Yes Lupin?"
"Did you know Dumbledore hired Mad-eye Moody? That washed up crazy ex-Auror was casting Unforgivables on children! He used the Imperius on Harry!"

Lucius glanced at Severus.

Severus held up his hands in innocence, "Draco didn't tell me."

Lucius was annoyed, "He should have mentioned something like that. I kept that woman away from my son to avoid him being taught those curses. The Black family had a history of teaching the children from an early age using house elves as victims."

"So did the Malfoys, you told me that." Severus said sipping his Firewhiskey.

"We also used the Cruciatus as punishment, because unlike beating it leaves no marks." Lucius glared, "I never used either on Draco. We grounded him from the potions lab, he was forbidden to ride his horse or his pony. Sometimes we took away his broom but he was a rather obedient boy but spoilt."

"Surely as a Hogwarts Governor you have a problem with teaching Fourth Years Unforgivable Curses!" Remus scowled.

Lucius sighed, "Of course I do."

"Then insist that Moody be removed! I don't think any parent would be pleased they were being taught that."

Lucius summoned a house elf and sent for Draco.

The young Prince of Slytherin arrived, "Yes Dad?"

"What exactly happened when Moody taught you about the Unforgivable Curses?"

Draco sat in an armchair, "He had three spiders; he used engorgio to make them larger. Then he cast the Imperius on it, he made it tap dance and do back flips. Some of the students thought it was funny until Moody mentioned it could have been them. He cast the Curse on every one of us. I was one of the only ones it didn't work on." He smirked, "I'm too stubborn. I heard Harry broke his kneecaps, trying not to jump and jump at the same time." He frowned, "He didn't even cry. Even when he crashed and broke his arm he didn't cry. When he was blown off his broom last year he didn't cry either…"

Severus nodded, "I remember, growing back bones hurts but he didn't even whimper."

Remus sighed, "He should know it's okay to cry when it hurts."

Severus shook his head, "Crying gives an abuser or a bully too much power, staying stoic is the only way to have some control."

Remus' eyes narrowed, "How would you know?"

Lucius snapped, "Severus wouldn't hurt a child!"

"I can fight my own battles Lucius," Severus glared, "My father beat me and my mother slapped me around. She used to say I ruined her life. Like it was my fault I was born." He winced, thinking about his child that wasn't born. Because he allowed Dumbledore to kill his baby he was left infertile. A rather cruel karmic result…
Remus gasped, "I'm sorry. If I'd known,"

"I didn't want anyone to know. Lily knew because she helped patch me up sometimes and Lucius knew because I had nightmares. I knew prolonged use of the Dreamless Sleep potion weakens its effectiveness. Something Harry hasn't realized yet, then again he's a bit slow at potions,"

"He's actually quite bright. You just frighten him into making mistakes!" Draco protested, "I bet that is Longbottom's problem too. As for Ronald Weasley, he may just be an imbicle."

"If it weren't for Granger, Weasley wouldn't pass a thing."

"I think Harry' other marks are because Weasley distracts him and Granger gives him bad advice."
Draco stated his opinion.

Remus was surprised, "Why do you think that?"

"Because he catches on quick when he listens and his wand work is disgraceful because he listened to a Mudblood rather then Professor Flitwick."

Severus shifted nervously, "I remember a certain Fifth Year taking a Muggle-raised Halfblood to task for his disgraceful wand work years ago. Apparently, the entire house thought it was funny and didn't correct him. The Halfblood was nice enough to correct his Muggleborn best friend and together they had the highest marks in their year."

Remus tilted his head, "I remember you correcting Lily's wand work that year, James insisted on spying on you too. Said a snake shouldn't be trusted with a lioness."

Lucius scoffed, "Sometimes the fights Severus said they had reminded me more of brother and sister fights then best friend fights."

Remus raised an eyebrow, "How would you know? You're an only child same as us."

Lucius chuckled, "That's the problem with Arranged Bondings, if the couple in question don't like one another they stop sharing a bed as soon as a child is conceived. Sometimes if the first is a heiress rather then an heir they may try again. I was only too happy that Narcissa had a son so I could have a bed to myself."

Severus snorted, "You're only saying that because the room I had when I visited had a secret passage to your room."

"Of course, it was the mistress' room. It was quite common for the master of the house to have a mistress or at least a secondary bedmate to their legal spouse."

"I never would have pegged Lucius Malfoy as a cheater."

"Lucius isn't a cheater," Severus protested hotly, "We were together before Narcissa was even betrothed to him!"

"So," Remus teased, "You were cheating on him then Lucius."

Lucius sneered, "Once. I pumped the woman so full of Fertility charms and potions so it only took once but I waited until she was of age and graduated."

Draco was a bit surprised how quickly the three adults got to being comfortable to tease one another. He snorted, "If you don't need me, I'm going back upstairs to study with Harry."
"Bring him a dish of peach cobbler, he needs to eat." Severus reminded him gently.

Draco rolled his eyes, "And a nutrition potion I know."

Remus turned to Lucius once Draco was gone, "Are you going to continue to let Moody teach? He's obviously crazy."

"I think we have more pressing matters." Lucius retorted.

"Like what?" Remus asked incensed that something was more important then someone casting Unforgivables on children.

Severus replied first, "The Tournament, Harry being a Champion. Dumbledore keeps sending Howlers demanding we bring him back because they have instruct all the Champions together. We're trying to get him out of it but they keep claiming it's a magical contract and because Harry entered himself he's bound by it."

"Harry wouldn't," Remus protested.

"I know; I was there. They all assumed he entered himself and cheated somehow. James' son he maybe but he takes after Lily more, he's no cheater." Severus insisted.

"James wasn't a cheater either!" Remus snarled.

"I didn't say he was, I just said he didn't have much in common with James other then looks."

Lucius held up his hands, "No arguing, you'll upset Harry. Do yourselves a favor, grow up and act like adults."

Remus growled, "Fine!"

Severus shrugged.

"Now we have to make plans. We're running out of time. Remus, first thing in the morning; take the letter from the Ministry to Gringotts. Demand to see the wills belonging to the Potters and Black. Request that the goblins do a through inventory of all things belonging to Harry." Lucius smirked, "Until another guardian is named or Harry comes of age, you should be in possession of his vault keys."

Remus stared at him, "I still don't know why you're doing this. You were a Death Eater."

"Reluctant remember? My father and Narcissa made sure I became one, they also ensured that I became one of his most trusted servants. Much to my own dismay."

"What about you Severus, why are you helping Harry?" Remus was curious

"I never wanted to be a Death Eater in the first place, I only joined up so Lucius had one person he trusted completely who could watch his back. With people like Bellatrix around you needed someone to watch your back. She never trusted either of us and she's dangerously loyal to the Dark Lord." Severus said with a shrug. "Besides, I owe you for what I did last year and Harry needs someone who will fight for him and who better then a werewolf who no doubt sees him as part of his pack?"

Remus chuckled, "Pack? I guess he is. James was sort of the alpha of my pack, which would have made Lily alpha female and Sirius was beta." His eyes narrowed, "You know Harry was telling the
truth don't you? That Sirius was framed?"

Lucius sighed, "Fudge is looking into it. I mentioned it might be a good idea to reexamine the case. If it had been poorly handled it would be best to come out looking like he was a good Minister by being interested in the truth. After all, all we need to do is see which wand blew up the street right?"

"Still a bit shocked you'd fight for someone who made your bondmate's school life miserable." Remus muttered.

"Maybe I feel sorry for him being betrothed to the woman from the cradle. I'm a bit proud of him doing what I was too afraid to do. He ran away to avoid being part of his Dark Family, no doubt they would have tried to make him join the ranks of the Death Eaters too." Lucius shrugged.

"When it's safe for Sirius to come home and turn himself in I'll post an article in the Daily Prophet. If I word it just right he'll come right away."

"Some sort of secret Marauder code?" Severus half-sneered.

"I haven't seen him since he escaped Flitwick's office, Ms. Granger told me he got away." Remus shrugged. "I'd say something like: Padfoot, Moony and Prongslet miss you please come home. If I sign it as the name of the place to come home to he'll know. When I was living amoung the werewolves, James left a note like that so I'd know to come back when he found out they were expecting and when it got close to the birth."

"You're welcome to stay here until Harry is given a clean bill of health from his healer to return to school." Lucius said pleasantly, "We have a fourth bedroom prepared. Severus has been sharing my room so it's not been used."

"I know you've had your struggles but I'm glad you're still together."

"How come you're perpetually single Lupin?"

Remus looked away, "Only been interested in two people, neither ever looked at me. One was too busy shagging every girl in sight and the other, was practically betrothed. Besides," giving them a sad smile, "...who'd want to be with a werewolf anyway?"

"Same type of person who'd chance being with a Veela." Lucius chuckled.

Severus glared, "I thought we weren't telling anyone that."

Remus blinked, "You're a Veela?"

Lucius nodded, "It skipped father, he tried to arrange a bonding with someone not my mate."

"So Severus is,"

"His mate, it was very painful for both of us when he had to sleep with the woman." The Potions Master admitted bitterly.

"Sadly, I think most of Sirius' issues is being born a Black made him pretty crazy and warped. Only Andromeda seemed above being crazy."

"They didn't call her the Queen of Slytherin for no reason. That was one of the reasons we were expected to be Bonded, the Queen and the Prince of Slytherin seemed like a good match. Our tastes couldn't be more different."
Remus was left with a lot to think about, how in Godric's name was he going to manage to stay in a house with SEVERUS? He knew from living with werewolves the consequences of touching another's mate, he would have to make sure that Lucius didn't think he was going to force the potions master…

Chapter End Notes

Chapter 6- Magical Contracts and Wills

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Chapter Six

Lucius left for the Ministry to search the archives for instances of people unfairly trapped in magical contracts to see if any of them managed to get out. If he had specific instances to cite and could prove Harry didn't enter himself, which he was sure he could then they might be able to get the boy out of it.

XoooooX

Severus was overseeing Harry and Draco's make up work and planned to have Draco 'tutor' the tiny Gryffindor in brewing. He summoned Treca and insisted she bring over his lab from Spinners' End and arrange it exactly the same in one of the rooms in the cellar.

XoooooX

Staying at Malfoy's London house wasn't so bad; Remus hadn't eaten so well since Hogwarts.

Armed with his letter awarding guardianship of Harry, he exited the floo in Diagon Alley.

The huge imposing white structure of Gringotts Bank dwarfed all the surrounding building.

When he entered and walked to the counter he was greeted.

"Mr. Lupin, it's been a long time since you were here. It's Griphook."

"Aw yes, the one who showed Sirius the will from his uncle, which gave him his Vault and a house." Remus said politely.

"How can we help you Mr. Lupin?" Griphook asked gruffly.

"You see I've been appointed Harry's legal guardian. Lord Malfoy thought my first order of business was to ask you to pull Sirius and the Potter's will. My second was to ask for a complete inventory of all vaults that belong to Harry."

Griphook frowned, "All Black holdings reverted to Sirius Black when his family all perished it is custom."

"Sirius is currently on the run from Magical Law Enforcement since his escape Azkaban. According to Wizarding Law he can't use it, it would be best to transfer his property to his heir. We don't want a repeat of what happened when the Ministry possessed the Dumbledore properties." Remus bowed, staying on the right side of a goblin was difficult. He needed all the support he could, "Think of me as an executor, I don't have complete control I just insure that his inheritance stays intact until he comes of age."

"Very well, I will pull the Potters and Sirius Black's wills. Come with me."

Remus followed the goblin.
Griphook led him into a private room, "Wait here. I'll retrieve the wills. Ministry and their overreaching policies, not bothering to check wills."

Remus wisely held his tongue, Severus- he couldn't rightly call him Snape anymore considering the man was Bonded to Lucius Malfoy and had officially accepted his place as heir to the Prince family. He wished, no, Severus had already given his heart to Lucius when his wolf wanted him for a mate. It was his cowardice that prevented him from pursuing Snape, since James and Sirius disliked him immensely. Beside, he doubt very much he'd win in a duel against Lucius Malfoy and Severus already made his choice.

Griphook returned with too musty parchments, "Not to leave Gringotts, may copy."

Remus accepted the wills nodding, sitting at the desk in the room ignoring the goblin's penetrating eyes.

The Last Will and Testament of James Charlus Potter,

I leave all my worldly possessions to my wife Lily who with my best friend Sirius Black are to act as custodians of my estate until our son Harry comes of age.

At which time I will our house in Godric's Hollow to Lily and the rest of the Potter properties revert to Harry.

I leave Vault # 612 for Lily to spend as she wishes for the remainder of her life, which her ministry pay has been deposited along with other monies I have added since we were Bonded.

To Remus Lupin, my good friend I leave two thousand Galleons.

To Peter Pettigrew, I leave the same.

Lastly I leave Harry my cloak, which is to come into his possession when he goes to Hogwarts.

James Charlus Potter, 25th Lord Potter'

Shaking his head Remus sighed, James was a good sort, even leaving something for Peter. He'd do the honorable thing; he'd give it to Peter's mother since he was declared dead. No need to upset her by telling her that her son was alive, had betrayed his friends, become a Death Eater or allowed an innocent friend to be sent to Azkaban.

Opening Lily's will was hard, they'd become friends due to being prefects together though she was very upset when he wouldn't punish Sirius and James for their treatment of Severus.

The Last Will and Testament of Lily Diane Potter nee Evans,

I leave my golden locket from my mother to my son Harry.

I leave my books on Charms to my friend Remus Lupin, along with all my notes on my experiments. I trust he will publish my research jointly.

I leave my books on potions and the contents of my lap to my oldest and dearest friend Severus Snape. I hope he knows how much he means to me.

If James and I perish before Harry is of age, it is my wish that Sirius befriend Severus because I want them both to look after my son.

If anything happens to Sirius, then Remus Lupin is named guardian of Harry. He is an honorable
man.

*I do not wish for my son to be in the custody of my sister Petunia, I love her but she has a cruel streak and hates anyone with magic.*

*Lily Diane Potter*

Remus chuckled; Lily left him books…

He wasn't the least bit surprised; he copied the wills to file them with the Ministry. He wished the house hadn't been destroyed. He would have gladly published her Charms work in her name alone.

He knew he would show the will to Severus, it would do the man some good to know he was remembered even if the books had been destroyed.

Joint guardianship with Sirius? He doubted very much that Sirius would have gone along with it. He on the other hand had no objection to shared custody with Severus Prince-Malfoy, it would be easier if he could get Moony interested in someone else.

*The Last Will and Testament of Sirius Orion Black,*

*Since I am an unrepentant playboy, I leave a majority of my possessions to my godson Harry Potter.*

*To Remus Lupin, I leave Baskerville Hall. I know having to sell your parents’ home to cover their debts was painful and you need a place that's yours. I also leave him a two thousand Galleon annuity in case prejudicial gits won't give him a job.*

*I leave James my knife that will open any door or lock- within reason of course. Don't go breaking into Gringotts Prongs.*

*I leave Lily, my communication mirrors so she can always talk to James when she wants to tell him off.*

*If James and Lily predecease me, I appoint Remus Lupin guardianship of Harry and the Ministry be damned. He's as honorable a bloke as any I know.*

Sirius Orion Black

Remus sighed; Sirius was arrogant even in his will. Not that he wasn't grateful for the money and the house, in fact now he had a place for Harry to live which would fuel his case for continued guardianship of his charge.

**XoooooX**

Lucius was pouring over files that were open to members of the Wizengamot regarding magical contracts. Most of them about those who tried to break magical contracts for foolish reasons.

*Slytherin's beard!*

He needed at least two cases when someone was trapped in a magical contract that they didn't agree to that was broken. Surly in the history of the British Ministry for Magic there had to be at least that many.

Finally after hours of searching he found one.

*Athens Peverell vs. Alphard Minias*
Apparently Athens claimed that the Betrothal contract between his father Troyus Peverell and Alphard Minias regarding himself and Hera Minias was forged and thus invalid. He was protesting it's validity in light of a Betrothal Contract between himself and Amaryllis Black signed on his eleventh birthday in 1783. The contract between Troyus and Alphard was from 1772 could not be valid because his father would not have entered into a Betrothal Contract with Lord Caden Black if a previous contract had been signed. Troyus Peverell was an honorable man.

Alphard protested that Troyus could not be honorable if he signed two Betrothal Contracts eleven years apart for the same child.

Which proved Athens' point, the Betrothal Contract between himself and Hera Minias was invalid.

Why a Peverell would agree to a Betrothal Contract with a Black was beyond Lucius' comprehension. The Blacks had always been a Dark Family even back to Merlin. They were descended from Morganna weren't they?

The Betrothal contract between Troyus Peverell and Alphard Minias was proved forged and declared in invalid. Minias was stripped of his title and seat in the Wizengamot. He was also fined severely.

Copying the file Lucius felt more confident.

Magical contract could be broken if both parties weren't in good faith.

If Harry didn't enter the Triwizard Tournament because he never wrote his name on a slip of paper or asked anyone to put it in for him, how could he be bound by a magical contract?

Smirking, he planned in his mind the article he'd arrange for Rita Skeeter to write.

'The Boy Who Lived framed! Rumours of young Mr. Potter's fraudulent entrance into the dangerous Triwizard Tournament greatly mistaken.'

Lucius had to have the memories Harry had regarding the Tournament copied and given over to Madam Bones. She might not like him but if Harry was being treated unfairly then she would have little choice but to declare his Championship status be rescinded.

Chapter End Notes

Remus and Draco helped Harry finish all of the make-up work.

Remus even helped Harry work on his Transfiguration work; his Glamour had sapped a lot of his magic making it difficult for him to accomplish his practical Transfiguration work. Ron's distraction also was also a factor in why his marks were so terrible. Remus was surprised that Harry had his father's natural talent for Transfiguration when he was focused.

Remus ruffled his hair affectionately, "I'm impressed; the turtle to turtle dove is a Fifth Year Transfiguration ability."

Harry blushed, joy shining in his face, he hugged the werewolf, "You're a good teacher."

Draco chuckled, "And you're no 'dunderhead'. He's actually pretty decent at Potions when he reads the directions and pays attention."

Harry glanced around, "You're a better teacher then Sn,"

Draco put a finger in front of the boy's lips, "His name is Severus Prince-Malfoy and he's my papa. Don't call him Snape."

Before Harry could reply, a house elf Apparated into the library where they were studying.

Remus and Severus had decided that it was foolish for the boys to continue studying in the bedroom and Lucius had agreed.

"Master Remus, there be a Healer Tonks calling for you."

Remus blinked and then remembered he'd sent an owl requesting that the mind healer come at his earliest convenience. Harry needed to see a mind healer due to his over usage of the Dreamless Sleep potion and the abuse that caused his scars. "Tell Healer Tonks I shall join him. Where is he?"

"Treca be putting him in the front parlour. Should Treca be telling Master Lucius or Master Severus about company?"

Remus was about to shake his head and then thought better about it, "Yes, inform them. They might have something to say that the healer should here."

Harry asked nervously, "Mr. Remus, are you sick?"

Remus shook his head, "No, I just asked him here to talk." He glanced at Draco, "Why don't you two play wizard's chess? Take a break from studies." He turned to the elf, "When you finish informing Lucius and Severus, bring the boys some cake and juice."

Treca nodded, "Yes Master Remus." Before disappearing with a soft pop.
Severus was brewing more nutrition potions as well as experimenting with a potion like Dreamless Sleep that would help his old friend's son sleep easier when Treca Apparated into the lap.

"Master?"

Severus spun around, "Stupid elf! Potions are delicate things. You could cause them to explode by Apparating!"

Treca wrung her hands, "Next time Treca knock. Master Remus said Treca tell Master Severus that Healer Tonks is here."

"Very well. Where are they meeting?" Severus muttered, placing the potion in stasis until he could return.

"Treca be putting Healer Tonks in the front parlour."

"I see. I'll be along shortly." Severus dismissed the elf.

"Treca so sorry Master. Treca be telling Master Lucius about Healer Tonks for Master Remus."

"I'll tell Lucius myself." Severus said brushing past the elf.

Remus entered the front parlour on silent feet, it was a bit unnerving to be in a place like this after all these years, much less on that belonged to a Malfoy. He cleared his throat, "Healer Tonks?"

The former Hufflepuff turned, "Mr. Lupin, I was a mite surprised to receive your owl. Much more so to find out that house you summoned me to belongs to Lucius Malfoy."

"Imagine my surprise when I was deposited here by an Auror." Remus said with a forced smile.

"How can I be of assistance?" Ted Tonks asked curious.

"I have recently been given custody of Harry Potter, who is heir to the Black family." Remus began after a bit of silence in which he used to collect his thoughts.

"Andromeda has had no contact with her family since her disownment." Ted said confused.

"I know that, I wasn't implying she had. You come highly recommended by Healer Smythe." Remus said trying not to ruffle feathers.

"I am pleased with his endorsement but I don't see how that's pertinent."

"You see Ted, Harry was severely abused by his Muggle guardians and is in need of your services." Severus said as he entered the room with Lucius at his heels.

Ted Tonks stiffened as his wife Andromeda's former betrothed entered, "Malfoy. Snape."

"Actually, it's Prince-Malfoy," Severus corrected gently.

"Either way. He was abused?"

Severus nodded, "He had a panic attack at school and fainted. His name came out of the Goblet of
Fire and the School's collective reaction was that he cheated to get his name in it. He reacted as if they were all going to hurt him and crumpled to the ground. Even Nurse Pomfrey refused to treat him, giving him the worst excuse for an exam. He was seen by Healer Smythe who discovered he was suffering from severe malnutrition and showed evidence of prolonged physical abuse.

Remus was a bit annoyed that Severus had taken over the conversation but didn't say anything.

"So you want me to see Harry so we can work through his abuse?"

Remus nodded, "Yes, I'm not sure how receptive Harry will be but he needs it."

"If possible, it would be prudent for you to examine his memories and retrieve any and all relating to the Triwizard Tournament. I believe Harry when he says he didn't enter but untampered memories, which prove his truthfulness, would be of great assistance. An abused child who was frightened by the School's reaction to his name coming out of the cup has no place in a tournament with a high death toll." Lucius added.

"I am sure I can accommodate that, I agree a dangerous tournament is no place of a boy of Harry Potter's years." Ted said sternly.

"He also has been taking the Dreamless Sleep potion so often that Healer Smythe says it is losing its effectiveness." Severus said the thought just occurring to him.

"How long has he been taking it?"

"Probably since he first came to Diagon Alley and read the label at the apothecary." Severus said with a shrug. "I know he can't brew it at his ability level and I can't believe anyone would sell a potion like that to a minor. They are supposed to be regulated and purchased with a prescription from a healer..."

"We'll have deal with the reasons why he was relying so heavily on them. If we deal with the memories then perhaps he won't have nightmares about them." Ted Tonks nodded, already agreeing to take the case.

"I hope he'll agree to talk to you." Remus said quietly, "He is a very private person."

"Like his mother, Lily wouldn't tell anyone how Petunia treated her. Even her parents never knew that I know of, I don't even think she told James." Severus sighed, "I only knew because I helped her when she was crying. She knew I could understand."

"You were abused too, weren't you?" Ted interrupted.

Lucius covered Severus' hand with his own and squeezed it gently. "How did you know?"

Ted nodded, "I've treated many abused persons of all ages."

"I think you'll do quite well." Severus said squeezing his bondmate's hand back.

"Could I meet Harry?"

Lucius and Severus waited; this was Remus' decision to make.

Remus sighed, "If you wish."

Lucius summoned Treca.
"Master be wanting Treca?"

"Inform Harry that he is wanted in the front parlour."

Treca nodded and popped away.

XoooooX

Draco was literally wiping the floor with Harry, not that Harry was surprised. He was a terrible after all.

Draco sighed, "You're not even trying. Seriously, pay attention. You could play well if you paid attention. If you said knight to L4 you could take my bishop."

Harry blinked, "Oh. Knight to L4."

Harry's black knight beheaded Draco's white bishop.

Harry winced.

Draco sighed, maybe this game was too violent for Harry.

Treca Apparated into the room.

Draco raised an eyebrow, "Yes?"

"Big Master be wanting you, Little Master Harry."

"Did dad ask for me?" Draco asked.

"Master Lucius didn't say Master Draco." Treca said shifting nervously.

Draco smiled at Harry, "Come on. Where is dad?"

"Master Lucius, Master Severus and Master Remus are in the Front Parlour with the Healer still."

Draco led Harry out of the library.

XooooooX

Lucius, Severus, Remus and Ted Tonks talked quietly waiting for the boys or at least Harry.

Draco entered first holding Harry's hand.

Harry noticed the new face; this must be the healer. He gave the man a small smile but he wanted to run away Harry tried to give Remus a pleading look.

"Hello Harry. My name is Healer Ted Tonks, I'm a specialist in dealing with patients who have suffered trauma."

Harry laughed to himself, "I doubt you've seen a patient like me."

Ted looked thoughtful, "Why would that be?"

"How many slept in a kitchen cupboard until they were three?" Harry shrugged.

Lucius and Draco hissed in horror.
Severus paled.

Remus' hands clenched into fists and he growled.

Ted blinked slightly, "None that I've met but I had kids forced to sleep outside or on cold tile floors with only a thin blanket."

Lucius stiffened.

Severus shrugged, "I didn't have a bed until I went to Hogwarts. Tobias wouldn't buy one. He figured that a wizard didn't need such things. Sometimes he'd lock me in the closet for hours while he was out and Eileen was 'ill'. One time he was gone for three days, Lily came looking for me and let me out." He blushed, "It was pretty embarrassing…"

Remus dug his nails into his hands, "Is he dead?"

Severus stared at him, surprised, "Yes, murder-suicide was the police's determination. It happened while I was taking my OWL exams. Eileen didn't come to King's Cross for me so the Evans took me home. Lily walked me in and we found their bodies together."

Ted said quietly, "Must have been a relief to find them dead, they couldn't hurt you anymore."

Severus shrugged, "I suppose so. Not that it ever felt like a home anyway. I've been tempted to sell it but between training for the status of Potion Master, first class, being a spy and then a professor I hadn't had time to look for a new place."

Harry grimaced, "I can't imagine coming home to find the Dursleys dead. The whole neighborhood would be convinced I did it even it happened while I was away at school."

"Why would that be Harry?" Ted asked.

Harry frowned, "Because the Dursleys told them that I was attending St. Brutus' Secure Centre for Incurably Criminal Boys. Or at least he told his sister that, she quite enjoyed the idea that they caned me. I sounded too jovial about it and she thought I wasn't being caned hard enough. She told him to tell them to hit me harder." He shifted nervously, "I think she would have gotten along with Fitch well." He reached down to rub one of the bite marks from Ripper.

"What is bothering you Harry?" Ted asked gently surprised he was actually talking about this.

"Nothing much just a dog bite."

Draco stared at him, "You were bit by a dog?"

Harry shrugged, "It was bred as an attack dog, all her dogs hated me. I was often chased by them and ended up climbing trees to get away." Then he clammed up, he's said too much already.

Severus saw him closing down, "I think that's enough for now."

Ted nodded, "You've done very well. I would recommend we have at least three more sessions before he returns to school."

Draco was furious, knowing Harry…just when did his former rival become Harry rather then that glory-obsessed Potter? Never mind that, Harry had been starved, forced to sleep in a kitchen cupboard until he was three, attacked by dogs. He remembered Harry's reaction to the angry faces in the Great Hall and schooled his face into the impassive Malfoy mask. Draco reached over to squeeze
Harry's shoulder.

Harry flinched.

Draco's eyes filled with pain and dropped his hand.

Harry couldn't stand to see that look; he twisted his fingers in his shirt and looked down at the ground.

Severus and Remus saw their interaction.

Severus understood Harry's reaction, he remembered telling Lucius about his home life and flinching away from the older then teen's comforting touch. Lucius had been hurt but had forgiven him. It was like seeing himself and Lucius all over again…

Lucius noticed it too, "Draco, why don't you and Harry go have some chocolate and some biscuits."

Draco nodded mutely, standing slowly.

Harry stood up and shuffled his feet as he followed the slightly older teen out.

"He's right," Ted said when he was sure they were gone, "I haven't treated anyone like him before. Do you have any idea what things he hasn't told me?"

"Well," Severus began, moving farther from Remus and closer to Lucius, "his first year he was riding in the first Quidditch match and Quirrell was wandlessly jinxing his broom. Harry was nearly thrown off."

Remus snarled, "Good thing he's dead."

"I was muttering the counterjinx until Miss Granger lit my robes on fire. I assume she believed I was trying to kill Harry, I may have disliked him because I was suffering from a mistaken impression that he was just like James." Severus shook his head at his own foolishness. "I was the referee for the next match and he was safe. The end of that year was when Quirrell decided to break into the underground chamber to take the Philosopher's Stone for the weakened bodiless Dark Lord."

Lucius, Ted and Remus stiffened.

"What happened?" Remus was both curious and worried he wouldn't like what he was about to hear.

Lucius had already heard about this previously but it didn't stop upsetting him. He wished he'd succeeded in getting Dumbledore removed as Headmaster and keeping his out of Hogwarts. Granted his motives hadn't been the purest, he'd been a bit foolish with that placing of that Dark Artefact in Ginny Weasley's cauldron. Severus had raked him over preverbal hot coals for agreeing to the woman's terrible idea to make Arthur Weasley look bad.

"Well, the entrance was guarded by a Cerberus and Quirrell knew it. I managed to head him off on Halloween. The other professors went in search of the Mountain Troll that got into the castle but I went to head him off. That vicious dog thing that that oaf calls Fluffy bit me. During that time Harry went to save Hermione from the troll, which had wandered into one of the girls' bathroom. He knocked it unconscious with it's own club using the flying charm he'd learned in class that day."

Lucius gently ran his thumb over the scar.

"Then what?" Ted asked, wanting to know more.
"Well he didn't get in the first time but he did the second time. Before that Harry had an encounter in the Forbidden Forest when he was in Detention when he stumbled upon Quirrell drinking the blood of a slain unicorn for the Dark Lord. I believe Granger, Weasley and Harry thought I was the one after the stone. They managed to escape all the challenges."

Ted pulled out some parchment and a quill; "Tell me about them."

Severus shrugged, "Well you had to get past the mutt by playing some music then you went in a trap door and landed in Devil's Snare. That was Pomona's challenge to protect the stone."

"So you needed to create light to get past it." Ted said thoughtfully.

"I suspect that was Granger, since she was awarded points for it." Severus reluctantly admitted. "Then came the chamber that was Filius', he had charmed a bunch of keys to have wings and fly. You had to use a broom to catch the right key which Harry probably did since he was the better flier out of the three. The next was Quirrell's, he had a Mountain troll enclosed in it; he had a 'gift' with them you see. Then was Minerva's, her's was a giant Wizard's chess set. My challenge was right after her's; once you stepped inside the chamber purple flames blocked the doorway. The doorway in front of you was blocked with black flames. I left a logic puzzle that one had to solve; there were seven bottles of different sizes and shapes. Two contained poison, three had nettle wine, a potion to go back through the purple flames and one to get through the black flames. Hermione solved it, I think Harry might have been able to if he hadn't been worried about an unconscious Weasley, his mother could have solved it."

"Then what happened?" Remus was on the figurative edge of his seat.

"Well, Harry took the potion to get the black flames only to find Quirrell flummoxed by a mirror."

Remus snorted, "A mirror?"

Severus chuckled, "Not just any mirror but the Mirror of Erised, the one that shows not your face but your deepest desire." He frowned, "I shattered it later afterwards, I was so upset by what I saw."

Lucius rest a gentle arm on his shoulder; his bondmate had ended up in his bed that night. He'd been unable to sleep alone and wouldn't speak for hours only to tell him what he saw was them with a bunch of kids including Draco.

"You see the headmaster managed to place the stone inside the mirror, only someone who didn't want the stone for selfish reasons could retrieve it. Quirrell with the Dark Lord egging him on forced Harry to look into the mirror. He told us that he had looked into the mirror only to see himself place the stone in his pocket and he felt a weight there." Severus finally spoke up again.

"And?" Ted gently prodded.

"Quirrell tried to touch him but touching Harry caused his hands to burn, it was because he was being possessed in a fashion by the Dark Lord. In the end, Quirrell ended up dead and the weak and bodiless Dark Lord disappeared. Harry was discovered after Miss Granger had told us that Harry was in the chamber. They were sure I was there but were surprised that I wasn't. I was one of the first to reach him, the Headmaster returning while we rescued Harry who had passed out when Quirrell attempted to strangle him."

"Wait!" Ted interrupted, "You're telling that all that happened to an already traumatized boy when he was eleven?"

Severus nodded.
Remus was irate and twitching with anger.

Lucius was the only one who knew all this, but it had a different meaning knowing that Harry had been severely abused prior.

Severus winced, "His next year was worse."

Ted's eyes widened, "Wasn't the year the Chamber of Secrets was opened again?"

Severus glared at Lucius, "Yes it was; a possessed Ginny Weasley was responsible for six people being petrified. Harry was convinced to enter the Chamber and face the monster within to save Ginny Weasley. Which only increased her worship of him sadly. As if having Granger petrified wasn't traumatic enough."

Lucius shifted nervously, knowing full well he was very much responsible for that whole series of incidents.

Remus didn't notice Lucius Malfoy's guilty behavior, "What was the monster?"

Severus shivered, "A basilisk. Harry was somehow a parslemouth, so he was able to enter the Chamber. He killed the Basilisk but not after facing the shard of the Dark Lord's soul that inhabited a diary and was draining life from Ginny Weasley. Harry killed the basilisk, stabbing it with the Sword of Gryffindor and then using one of the basilisk's fangs to stabbing the diary."

Remus' eyes blazed with fury, "My cub faced the Dark Lord twice before he was thirteen! He was nearly killed in front of me his Third Year!"

Lucius was a Veela and could hold his own but he wasn't willing to admit to the werewolf that he had a hand in putting Harry in danger.

Ted held up his hand, "I think I've learned enough to start thinking about how best to help Harry."

"Recently my Bonding to your bondmate's youngest sister was annulled. If she would like to meet her former nephew, I'm sure it could be arranged. Severus recently blood adopted Draco." Lucius said rising.

Ted nodded stiffly, "I'll pass along the message. I'll owl you when to expect me again so we can discuss when Harry's next session should be."

Ted left.

Remus stormed off, too irate to stay there another moment.

Lucius collapsed back on the settee, "I hate to know his reaction if he knew who was responsible for Ginny Weasley having possession of that book."

Severus sighed, "I certainly won't tell him." Taking Lucius' hand, he'd already forgiven him and even knowing how badly the Dursleys had treated Harry he couldn't be angry with his bondmate. Especially, in light of how Lucius had forgiven him for letting Dumbledore kill their child…

Chapter End Notes
Harry had been out of Hogwarts for a week.

Lucius and Severus were dodging floo calls and Howlers from Dumbledore, McGonagall and Molly Weasley. Sirius even sent one,

'Snivellius!

I knew you couldn't be trusted from the beginning! You let my godson go. You take him back to Hogwarts. Don't worry I'll still make you pay!

I already owe you for getting Remus fired! You just enjoy giving me reasons to hate you. Why kidnap Harry? What are you planning? If you try turning him into a Dark Wizard I'll kill you!

Remus glared at the letter as it exploded, he waited until their hearing returned. "You didn't deserve that. You're only trying to help Harry."

Severus sighed, brushing the ash from his robes, "Black doesn't know that. Dumbledore got to him first and Black is still determined to think the worst of me. I was responsible for Pettigrew escaping and I wanted him to be Kissed. He has every right to want retribution."

Remus held out his hand, "I'll give you a Wizard's oath that I won't let Sirius hurt you."

Severus blinked, "Why in Merlin's Name would you do that?"

"Because after finally getting what you wanted after so long is important. I've never seen you happy before and I'd hate for you to lose that because Sirius is being his usual arrogant self." Remus said as honestly as he could to avoid admitting Moony had decided long ago that they were mates.

Lucius' eyes narrowed, he saw barely restrained desire in Lupin's eyes as well as respect. His Veela was not pleased to see their mate being gazed at like that but Lupin made no effort to claim what was already his.

Remus looked up and winced, he'd forgotten Lucius was here. He took his hand back, "I'll make that oath when you're ready. I have things to discuss privately with Lucius."

Severus looked from one face to another, something was brewing and he wasn't welcome. It hurt some but he let himself out.

"That's my mate you were looking at." Lucius snarled.

Remus held up his hands in gesture of surrender, "As a man I know that, I knew when he introduced himself as Prince-Malfoy that I never had a claim on him. He was already yours when Moony decided he was our mate. I've lived with werewolves; I know the consequences for daring to lay a hand on another's mate. I had hoped that my ill-placed desire for Severus would escape your notice."
"Surely, your wolf can tell he's infertile." Lucius glared.

Remus fish-mouthed, "In," he couldn't speak the word, "how?"

"Dumbledore," Lucius spat out the name, "found out he was with child and forced him to agree to an abortion. If he'd informed me that he was expecting then my Bonding to the woman would have been off. As much as I wish that child would have lived, we wouldn't have Draco."

Remus' hands clenched into fists, nails clawing into his palms as his eyes glowed with gold, "How dare he!" it didn't matter that the child's sire had been Lucius' and not his, his would be mate had had a child torn from him. "How did he ended infertile though?"

"The spell used in the abortion was illegal and makes the bearer infertile. Severus doesn't believe he is worthy of me because he can't bear my children."

"He is completely infertile?"

Lucius nodded, "He can neither bear nor sire children."

Remus swallowed, "I offer myself then."

Lucius stared at him, "What!"

"It's possible right? For someone to bear a child for a lord in secret and the Lord's bondmate adopts the child at birth making them their own." Remus gulped, "I'm sure I read it somewhere."

"I won't sleep with another." Lucius said his voice cold.

"I didn't mean that. I meant." Remus paused to choose his words carefully, "I meant, you could use my seed to create a child and magically implant the fetus in Severus. I don't think I could carry a child with my curse. That is if the thought of Severus carrying a child that has blood of a Veela and werewolf doesn't displease you."

Lucius sighed, "As pure as that offer might seem there must be another way."

"He was your mate first and I have never tried to claim him. My offer was made to you and not him. I am sure his infertility was meant to make me not want him anymore but I am a man of honor and integrity. I am angry such a cruel act was done to him and I understand why when he looks at Draco he has that strange look of love, longing and sorrow." Remus said softly, "If you want a wizard's oath not to ever attempt to come between,"

Lucius held up his hand, "I trust you, you've proven that you wouldn't do anything dishonorable. For now we will trust each other."

Remus knew that that trust might be rescinded at anytime.

XooooooX

Within two hours of the conversation between Remus and Lucius an owl arrived from Gringotts.

Remus opened it,

'To Mr. Remus Lupin,

Guardian of the Heir of the Houses of Black and Potter
This is to inform you that our inventory of the Potter heir's inheritance has brought to light unlawful entry to the vaults. We regret to report a loss of monies and heirlooms. Potter monies have been used to purchase stocks in broomstick companies notably Nimbus and Comet, the Daily Prophet, publishing firms and apothecaries. Black monies have disappeared and properties have been unlawfully sold.'

Remus growled, someone had stolen from Harry and Sirius. He stormed into Lucius' study waving the letter, "I want someone of impeccable lineage and honor to serve as Harry's Wizengamot proxy. We need to protect his interests." He couldn't serve; he was a Halfblood and a werewolf.

Lucius stroked his chin, "I can't. The maximum votes a person can hold are two. I already vote for the Prince and Malfoy lines because Severus doesn't wish too. Though I can claim to vote now as my bondmate's proxy. I can recommend only one; the Weasley line though poor already holds their own vote and the Prewett's through Molly. Why not ask Andromeda? Don't mention Sirius to her, I heard though sources that she took Sirius' betrayal of James hard. She thought he was a decent sort for being part of the same Dark Family. She'd consider it an honor to reclaim the family I'm sure."

Remus blinked, "I thought you didn't like the Blacks."

Lucius sneered, "I hate Narcissa and Bellatrix, I detested Regulus and I wanted Sirius' head but I envied Andromeda. She did something I was too cowardly to do, she turned her back on her family and ran off to be Bonded to the man she wanted to have as her Bondmate."

Remus sighed, "I doubt she'll see me. I remind her of Sirius."

"Invite her to meet Harry. I'll be away at the Ministry and Severus and Draco can brew in the lab. You can tell her as little or as much as she needs to know. She may already know something; her Bondmate is Harry's Mind Healer. Who knows what their definition of Pillow talk is. I tell Severus everything because I know he can be trusted. You can always ask if she can accompany Tonks on his visit today."

Remus nodded, it was weird knowing that Ted Tonks who had agreed to help treat Harry because of his abuse by Lily's relations and his terrifying 'adventures' at school.

Neither bothered to read the rest of the Gringotts letter, they were sure that Dumbledore had something to do with the raiding of the vaults.

Chapter End Notes

Chapter 9- Four Letters and a Summons

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Chapter 9

Draco had helped Harry in brewing before Lunch, he'd discovered the Gryffindor had talent that had gone unnoticed due to Weasley's constant blabbering, Granger's continuous correcting and his papa's overbearing, sometimes frightening to non-Slytherins teaching methods.

Harry managed to properly brew most of the potions that his papa had had taught them in class over the last three years.

Draco had grown up brewing so they were quite easy, he could almost do it blindfolded and was accused of being Professor Snape's favorite.

Four owls arrived; two flew at Harry and the others at Draco when they entered their study room with the Wizarding Chess set.

Harry read his a bit nervous.

'Harry,

Mate, where are you? It's bad enough that you cheated to get into the Tournament without telling me. Why couldn't you enter it for the both of us? Some best mate you are.

What was the fainting bit for? Some pureblood bint attempt to avoid punishment? Serves you right, what is it like being kidnapped by Snape? Is he forcing you to scrub cauldrons? Professor Slughorn is a better teacher anyway. I hope they arrest the greasy dungeon bat and throw away the key.

Do us a favor you embarrassed our house enough. So don't bother coming back.

Ron'

Harry felt crushed; Ron believed he was a cheater? How could Ron abandon him like that? His eyes filled with tears as Harry opened the second letter.

'Oh Harry,

What were you thinking? Didn't you listen when I mentioned the death toll? I know you think you're brave because of what we've done the last few years but why did you put your name in the cup? How did you manage to fool the Headmaster's age line?

I can't believe you fainted to avoid punishment. You should admit what you did. You embarrassed our school Harry and upset the visiting school. You are holding up the Tournament. I'm not sure I believe Snape kidnapped you. He really doesn't like you and you're both gone.

Why don't you just come back and apologize for upsetting and worrying everyone. I don't think it will change the fact that you're a Champion but it might make everyone less angry.

You're falling behind Harry so do hurry back. I want to see you for myself so I know you're okay.
Harry dropped the letter, he felt so isolated from them. How could they both believe he would cheat or fake fainting?

Draco gently wrapped an arm around Harry, holding him as the boy shook with silent sobs. He didn't react, giving the boy as much privacy and comfort as he could. He opened his first letter.

'Draco,

How could you leave school without telling me? I'm so hurt. We've known each other since we were children. It would make our mothers very happy if we were Bonded.

It isn't true is it? Professor Snape didn't kidnap Cheater Potter did he? I can't understand why he would. Potter's useless. His marks are below mediocre, his manners and attire are atrocious.

I don't know why they let such people attend Hogwarts. Thank Morganna that he's not a Slytherin. That would make it even more appalling.

Your devoted

Pansy'

Draco scowled; mother wanted him to be Bonded to that clingy, loathsome girl? Her hair was all right but her nose totally ruined her face. She acted like she was the prettiest girl in Hogwarts but she was far from it.

He opened the next letter.

'Draco,

"When are you coming back? You owe me two Wizarding Chess matches. Plus you owe me for the Goblet of Fire poll in Slytherin House. You bet twenty-five galleons on Adrian Pucey. It came out Diggory and the House- meaning me won because no one guessed that. It was surprising that Flint bet on that Angelina Johnson.

It is a bit nice to be the highest ranked boy in our year. Don't hurry back on my account unless you're willing to pay up. Your shadows Goyle and Crabbe are absolutely useless without you. They stare at the wall and stuff their mouths.

Blaise Zabini’

Draco chuckled, for all his protests not to care for him it was easy to tell that Blaise had a crush on him. The Halfblood was too proud to admit such a thing.

Harry managed to cry himself to sleep and dozed off on Draco's shoulder.

Draco was perversely pleased that Harry had come to trust him in such a short period of time.

XooooooX

Severus, Lucius and Remus were taking tea in the front parlour when Treca announced that Mind Healer Tonks and his bondmate Andromeda had arrived.

Lucius nodded, "Let them in."
Ted entered looking surprised, his Bondmate Andromeda looked like a blend of her sisters; she had Narcissa's face and Bellatrix's hair but the expression in her eyes was softened. Her hair was loosely pinned to the top of her head in a bun.

Severus bowed, gesturing politely to sit. "We are quite grateful that you could join us."

"I apologize for the short notice but revelations keep coming abruptly." Remus apologized. "Harry's been abused for years by his Muggle Aunt, he's had a terrifying few years at Hogwarts and his inheritance has been robbed. I can't represent Harry's best interests in the Wizengamot or vote on the Board of Hogwarts governors. I haven't the background for. I hoped you might be willing. Harry desperately needs your bondmate's services as a mind healer."

Andromeda sighed, "Ted and I have no secrets when it comes to one another. He often talks to me when he wants to have a second opinion. I know everything about Harry and his life before now. I never trusted Dumbledore. I was against Ted joining the Order but he thought it was the right thing to do. I said my piece and I let him do as he saw fit. If you want me to be Harry's voice in the Wizengamot and on the Hogwarts Board of Governors I shall. I still can't believe he robbed Harry's inheritance."

"I have banned him from access to Harry's vaults and the goblins vehemently insisted on the return of his vault keys. He was threatened with incarceration in Nagnok prison beneath Gringotts if he did not. The Goblins are threatening to take him Goblin Court to stand before Urkhar the Judicious for embezzlement and theft which hold a term of life imprisonment." Remus smirked.

Lucius snarled, "Life imprisonment isn't good enough for that bastard. He killed my firstborn and for that I want his life!"

Severus winced at Lucius' vengeful tone.

Remus nodded, "For that he should be killed."

Severus' eyes snapped to the werewolf, "Why would you say that?"

Lucius glared at Remus, his eyes clearly informing him to watch his words.

"I'd be just as angry if it had been Lily's child. If that bastard forced her to have an abortion I wouldn't forgive him either." True but not the entire truth, his wolf wanted vengeance for his mate's pup's murder. He had not claim on Severus, he had made that quite clear to Lucius but he had to maintain a distance between them so not to give Lucius cause to want his head.

Andromeda blinked, "He killed the firstborn of the heir to the house of Malfoy? Was this after I eloped with Ted? You mean to say Dumbledore killed your child?" Andromeda had suffered two miscarriages after Nymphadora and had been forced to have a permanent contraceptive charm placed on her womb when the last miscarriage nearly killed her. "I can understand how much you must have suffered losing your child. I lost two of my own."

"I don't like to talk about it. I didn't tell Lucius until I finally let a Healer examine me…he told me that the abortion was caused by a curse that not only killed my baby but…made me infertile. I can neither sire nor conceive a child of my own. I tried to break things off with Lucius even though he had his Bond with Narcissa annulled but he wouldn't let me." Severus smiled squeezing his mate's hand, "He knew what I needed more then anything was to be Bonded to him and to make Draco my son. Though looking after Harry has been a blessing. I haven't had much time to think…."

Lucius was grateful that Severus had finally told him about their child, he wished he could take away
the guilt and pain that his mate had. Their child had been ripped away from both of them before they had a choice. "We'll need all the support we can get."

Andromeda smirked, "So tell me besides annulling the bonding between you and my spoilt sister what are you planning to do with her?"

Lucius sneered, "She has been turned out of Malfoy Manor. All she has is what she came with; her Bonding robes, the clothes she wore as a student, her trust vault and your parents' house. Unless of course you want it."

Andromeda winced, "I turned my back on them, I am a Black only by blood. I followed few of the old ways. I mostly picked and chose. I did ask Amelia who had been a mentor to Ted if she would consent to being godmother to our child. I wonder if that is why she was sorted there, the Bones family have been Hufflepuffs for generations and have strong magic.

Ted spoke up, "Sometimes love is helpful in treating emotional and mental scars. Severus, may I call you that?" he couldn't call him Snape but he wasn't comfortable calling him Prince-Malfoy yet.

Severus nodded.

"I think you too need my services. I insisted that Annie see a colleague after losing our children. As a healer I couldn't in good consciousness treat her myself anymore then I could attend to my own pain. You admitted that you were abused and also dreadfully bullied in my presence."

Severus stiffened, he wasn't comfortable seeing anyone and telling his tale of his sordid life.

Ted sighed, "If you won't seek treatment for yourself how can you insist Harry see me? Don't you see? You have to set an example. He's been told his father was a hero and your existence makes that a lie. He seems to have never admitted the truth of 'Harry-Hunting' until you told him about 'Snivellius-Baiting'. He will rely on you more heavily because only you can understand him. I know that Remus is his guardian but you Severus understand his pain and frustration for being abused and responsible adults turning a blind eye to it."

Severus thought of Harry being forced to sleep in a cupboard, he winced remembering times when his father would lock him up in dark spaces: sometimes a cupboard and other times the basement. It wasn't until he learned to brew that he turned that basement prison into a sanctuary. He learned that brewing required little to no wand use and that their house was shielded so even the Trace was practically invisible and unusable.

Ted noticed the haunted look in the younger man's eyes; he recognized it having seen it so many times. "Did they lock you up in the dark as well?"

Severus clenched his robe in his hands, "They did, until I learned to use the dark and harness it. I turned it into my first potions lab. I...it was in the dark...in the dungeons where I met Lucius."

Lucius hugged him; "My world was pretty dark until you anyway. I didn't understand how much you meant to me until I turned sixteen and came into my inheritance. Father was furious. He'd planned my life from day one and being Veela was never a part of that. Though I had a brief moment of freedom when you and Ted eloped. I wished I had your courage; I was too cowardly to risk everything. If I'd even guessed about our child I would have thrown it all away. After we were legally bonded I would have come back informed father my Veela mate was pregnant. He would have begrudgingly accepted Severus. You see despite our dark history we have had Veela running through our blood. Those who are proved Veela when they come into their inheritance are destined to follow the light. By forcing me to bond with your sister who was not my mate my powers were
stifled. I had much of my inheritance bound, father wanted me for the Dark Lord and my being Veela was a hindrance to that. He promised me from birth as my wife did to Draco. Only problem, I know my son is Veela. It won't be proved until he comes into his inheritance at age sixteen but he is Veela. Legally, Severus is my bondmate but there is much that has to be undone before he becomes my mate under Veela laws."

All those who are proved Veela by their sixteenth birthday are subject the authority and expectations of the leader of the Veela communities. They all swore fealty to the Queen of the Veelas a woman named Ruxandra Sorina Vulpes. Lucius had, he'd been summoned before the court as soon as he came into his inheritance. A portkey was usually sent in the shape of a bird.

There was a tap on the window. Severus rose to open it.

A swan with an arch of golden feathers upon its head landed on Lucius' knee with a scroll and a golden mesh bag containing one of their infamous portkeys.

Lucius gasped, "A letter from the queen?" he unrolled it and read.

'My son,

It is our wish that you and your mate come to court. Our seer has made a prophecy that you must be made known of. We expect you to arrive with your mate, the wolf, your son and the boy whom you rescued. You are to arrive no later then one hour after you receive this.

Your Queen,

Ruxandra Sorina'

He blinked, "Severus, get the boys. Have them dress in their finest. We've been summoned." He glanced up at the Tonks, "my apologies for the abrupt end of our meeting. Remus, write up a letter authorizing Andromeda as your political voice. Then you and I must dress. I am afraid Severus and yourself must borrow something of mine. I have had little time to see to the proper wardrobe for my bondmate and yourself."

Severus stood on shaky feet, "I shall hurry the boys. I'll join you in our room in ten minutes." He'd never had a chance to meet the Veela queen who insisted on meeting her children and their mates.

Remus was shocked, he knew so little about his kind but he was sure that none he had met in his time as a spy for the Light had ever been summoned.

The Tonks rose.

"We'll see you as soon as you return. Farewell." Andromeda said ushering her bondmate from the parlour. To her knowledge there were no Veela in the Black line but there was some other creature blood. It was assumed to have died out…if such a thing was magically possible.

XooooooX

Severus threw open the door to find Draco softly singing to a sleeping Potter. Two pieces of parchment had fallen from Harry's fingers.

Draco looked up and hissed, "You'll wake him."

Severus sneered, "That would be the idea. We've been summoned."
Draco stared, "By who?"

"The Queen."

Draco's jaw dropped, "I'm not sixteen yet."

"From what I know about her you come when you're called. The five of us have been summoned and the five of us will go. Now wake Harry and take him to your rooms. Find your two best outfits and dress robes and get dressed. We're running on a schedule not our own. I must dress as well."

"Is Lupin coming?"

Severus fixed him with his 'Are you a dunderhead' glare, "I said the five of us, what do you think?"

Draco sighed, gently shaking Harry as he whispered in his ear, "Harry, wake up. We've got to hurry."

Harry woke screaming.

Draco winced, hugging him, "It's alright. You're safe."

"He's going to hurt me." Harry sobbed.

Draco held him closer, "Never, never again. Come on dry your tears. We're going some place really special, some place no ordinary wizard gets to go. Come on Harry, we've got to get changed. The Queen wants us."

Harry choked on a sob, "The Queen? Why would the Queen of England want to see me?"

Draco laughed, "Not the Queen of England, the Queen of the Veelas. We don't have a lot of time. You come when she calls."

Harry felt his face; it was grimy with dried tear tracks. "I can't go like this."

"We'll take a fast shower." Draco said helping him up, "But we've got to hurry."

Severus left them behind.

XoooooX

"Why would the Queen of the Veela want to see me? I'm a werewolf. Unlike a Veela, I'm a Dark Creature." Remus protested.

Lucius rolled his eyes, "Ours is not to question but obey. She summons; we go. That is our way. Don't the werewolves have an Alpha that all serve?"

Remus scowled, "How should I know? I try to have as little to do with them as possible. Every werewolf and wizard know the name of Greyback but I surely hope he isn't the true Alpha."

Lucius pulled out a pair of black linen pants, a yellow silk shirt with almost a golden hue and a white bow tie. "Put these on." He pulled out a pair of raw silk trousers, a green silk shirt and a black tie with a serpent on it for his mate. Severus got cold easily and raw silk held heating charms better.

Remus reluctantly cast a refresher charm on himself before stripping to his boxers and dressing.

Severus walked in to see Remus buttoning his trousers; he coughed slightly, "Oh I didn't realize
Lucius glared at Remus, "You're not. You're going in there," pointing at their en suite bathroom, "you're washing that gunk out of your hair and freshening up. No use wearing the Glamour, it won't work in her Castle."

Severus winced, "Salazar preserve us. This is unfortunate." He took his clothes and went to put himself together. He was not happy about having to show his true face to anyone. It was bad enough Lucius could see beneath his Glamour from day one.

Lucius dressed himself and stood before a mirror recombining his hair before tying it up. His best robes were slung over his shoulder and he reached for his snake-headed cane.

Severus reluctantly emerged, wearing his clothes from Lucius and wavy black hair brushing his collar. His nose like Dumbledore's had been badly broken and not healed properly, his fingers had the same crooked look and he walked with a limp.

Remus grabbed one of the posters of Lucius and Severus' bed, he could hardly breathe. His wolf was furious; this is what Severus looked like? He wasn't greasy or ugly at all, not that he really thought his mate- he bit his lip. Severus was not his mate.

Lucius clapped his hands, "We better hurry. I hope the boys are ready."

Remus fought to hold his temper; he was meeting the leader of all Veela. It was an honor he wondered if he truly deserved.

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Draco helped Harry from the room, but not before summoning all the letters.

Harry shuffled after him, a bit nervous. Why would a queen want to meet him? HE was just a useless freak. It didn't matter if the Wizarding World suffered under the delusion that he was some great Hero who defeated the Evil One when he was just a baby.

Draco pulled him into the bathroom, "Just get undressed." He used his wand to turn the bathtub into a two-person shower. It was just a smaller version then his one in the Dungeons that he shared with Blaise, Theo, Vince and Greg.

Shyly Harry undressed, he was self-conscious about his scars.

Draco chuckled, "By the way don't try wearing a Glamour when we go. They don't work in her castle. Dad said so. Papa won't like it."

Harry gulped, "You mean they'll see all my scars? Oh…why can't I stay here?"

"Because like papa said, she calls we go. We haven't a choice. She wouldn't call us if it weren't important.

They washed quickly and went to dress.

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They all entered the parlour.

Lucius checked his watch, "We have one minute. Grab on." He floated the portkey in front of them and five different hands grabbed it.
Harry sagged to his knees when the portkey dumped them. When he no longer felt ill, he looked around to see exquisite marble floors; the walls shimmered like diamonds or crystal.

In front of them bearing gold and silver spears were two guards wearing white robes.

Standing before them was a young woman with golden hair, "Her majesty is waiting."

Draco helped Harry up.

Lucius took Severus' arm, gesturing for the others to stay close.

The guards followed behind Draco and Harry who were at the end of the party leaving Remus in the middle.

They entered a large hall, seated on a velvet and gold throne was a about the age of the Black woman, she had gold hair that felt to the floor like a cape. Seated on the floor at her feet was a young girl, who looked vaguely familiar whose golden hair cascaded around her shoulders like a short cape.

A honeyed voice spoke, "Lucius my son. Come closer."

A set of five chairs appeared.

Lucius settled Severus in the center one, gesturing for Remus and Harry to sit on his other side.

Draco bit back a scowl, he was not happy to be separated from Harry. He was too well bred to show his displeasure.

"Now pet you may speak."

The girl rose to her feet, "Last night in the tower I had a dream, a vision. Unlike you young Malfoy I was born Veela. I was born a Veela seer and as such I was born with my abilities. My name is Luna, Luna Avalon Lovegood. Don't laugh Sir. I have my Veela blood through your cousin."

Lucius dare not speak after stifling his laugh. Lovegood was the name his cousin Xeno Bonded to after his father banished him. Xeno's soul was so pure that the mark would not appear even when marked by the dark lord. The memory had been removed and Xeno released but not before Abraxus tortured him with the Cruciatus.

"You are his mate, I've seen you. You were prevented from mating long ago but you're almost free. You bear a mark Lucius that binds your Veela and makes you weak. Severus took the mark out of love. One who doesn't bear the mark can remove it out of love. You are a special case, born as mate to two pure of heart. One born a creature of light but made dark and the other made a creature of darkness but still pure of heart."

Remus shook his head, "He's already Lucius', and I can't stand in the way."
The girl laughed, it was like music and birds singing, "You cannot change path fate has chosen. You are the third, the curse that one bears can be broken. Only if he can be loved by one of light and one of dark."

Remus' wolf was thrilled; he would have his mate. Remus felt guilty.

The girl walked towards Harry, "You are different it is true. Born for a Veela though thou art not. There has never been one quite like you. You were born for the House of Black though you were born a Potter. When you come into your inheritance you will know, that the one you were meant for is at your side. You will not find your mate among your own kind."

Harry whispered, "What am I?"

The girl laughed, "You little lion are a rare and beautiful, the first sign of your inheritance is your ability to speak Parseltongue. Though not dark, thou are not a creature of light. You child are gray. You should have been a Slytherin for you are destined to change many things." She turned to her queen, "Should we invite your other guests? It might be best if he learns the truth of his origins from one of his own."

The Veela Queen waved her hand.

Three attendants left.

"The Prophecy you see regarding Harry Potter is this:

The chosen one
Is more then he seems
He speaks with a hiss
Holds a power unseen
Grounded by light
He shall make all things right
The signs have begun. The stage is set. You young Malfoy will ground the first Chuvash born to mate a Veela."

Draco gasped, "Chuvash? There haven't been Chuvash in generations."

"I know. I'm the last."

They all looked over their shoulder.

"I am Sirius Black, I am the last known Chuvash born into the Black Family. All pureblood have the blood of magical creatures running through their veins. I mated among my own kind and left the family. I have over the years risen to the leadership of my kind. I have had Chuvash children myself but you child have the dark wild hair of the Blacks. Who was your Black ancestor?"

Harry was overwhelmed. "I...don't know."

Lucius spoke up, "Dorea, the daughter of Cygnus Black and Violetta Bulstrode. Cygnus was the son of Phineas Nigellus Black. Dorea was his grandmother."
"Phineas' granddaughter? That makes you my great-great-grandnephew. I am so pleased to meet you."

Harry looked at the man; he was huge. He must be over six feet tall, he looked taller than Bill and Charlie Weasley. He stammered, "Hi. Will I look like you?"

Sirius shook his head, "No. I believe the missive I received said you would be a submissive. I hope that your mate is powerful enough to ground you because the power I sense in you is vast."

Luna spoke again, "He will. The power within Draco Malfoy is great, his love is vast and his desire to protect will only grow. At his side shall stand the Chuvash children Zabini and Longbottom."

"What about Ron and Hermione?" Harry whispered.

"They will turn their backs on you."

Harry broke, crumbling to the floor his chest shaking in silent sobs.

Draco strode over to him and wrapped his arms around him. He never liked Ron Weasley; he always knew there was something off about him. He swore that he would never abandon Harry; never.

Luna blushed, "I am one born without a mate."

Lucius blinked, a Veela without a mate? How could that be? A Veela needed a mate to ground them, to comfort them.

"The key to the removal of your marks lies in Harry. He must speak to them; only by understanding them can he change them. When they have been reborn so shall you Lucius."

Lucius bowed, "Sirius, it seems that your young great-great-grandnephew is in a spot of trouble. He was trapped in a magical contract."

"His guardian is here?"

Remus raised his hand.

Sirius sniffed, "Werewolf? Interesting, a werewolf protecting a Chuvash. I've never heard the like. Tell me about this 'contract'."

"His name came out of the Goblet of Fire."

Sirius laughed, "Oh that old thing. Those types of magical contracts are only valid if entered by a person of legal age. A wizard or a witch reaches that at Seventeen, a Veela and a Chuvash reach that at sixteen. Harry is what fourteen? Even though he has magical creature blood he cannot participate without permission from myself."

The Veela Queen nodded, "Lady Fleur Delacour begged for my assent when she was declared eligible to participate by Beauxbatons. I also gave assent for her sister to participate as needed. They needed her in one of the Tasks. I was assured that she would be unharmed."

Lucius knew the gist of Second Task, "How old is the child?"

Ruxandra Sorina laughed, "Merely nine. I met her; my seer told us that she was wanted for the tournament. She will be revealed Veela when she comes into her inheritance. A Veela parent can tell when they are mere hours old. NonVeela parents won't know until they come into an inheritance. Lucius knows his son is soon to join our numbers."
"I have a question your Graciousness."

"Speak Lucius, my child."

"How is it that this young seer has no mate?"

"Luna child would you like to answer?"

Luna nodded, "You see, I wasn't born incomplete. There is no other half of my soul. A true Seer, one destined to See for the Queen is always born complete. They are born Veela they do not gain an inheritance at sixteen. I have been having visions since I was two and prophesying since I was four. I assume a different appearance at school; I don't want anyone to guess my abilities. The last thing I need is Dumbledore to take me away from my Queen. I live to serve her alone. True Veela Seers are rare, fate trades in our soulmates for our abilities."

Lucius nodded squeezing Severus' hand, "You are sure that he was born as a mate to both of us?" he really wasn't keen on sharing, but is this girl spoke the truth Remus held the key to removing their marks and freeing them.

Luna laughed, "Why do you think he was born so powerful? Almost no one has the temperament or the power to be mated to a child of light and a child of dark. He needs two mates. Remus breaks the mark on Severus, Severus breaks the mark on Lucius and together Severus' mates shall break his infertility curse."

"How shall we do this?" Severus asked quietly, his hand over his stomach.

"By reversing the curse Professor."

Severus gasped, "Revers…"

Luna smiled, "Yes. Reverse the curse and all will be well. Send the curse back from whence it came."

"Will everything be as it was before?" Severus was a bit hopeful it might return his child as unlikely as it was.

"Before you were pregnant? Yes, I wish I could tell you that you would be pregnant once more but I can't. I only see the curse reversed." She turned to Severus and Harry, "When their powers are granted, your mates will heal what pain has been inflicted. Remus and Lucius need to practice the Triad Charm, using Remus' power Lucius can reverse the curse. The mating trinity you will form will share your abilities. Severus will be able to wield your healing, Lucius Severus' spell creation and Remus will be able to brew."

Severus gasped, "Remus can brew without blowing up cauldrons?"

Remus blushed, everyone knew his talent at potion making was nil. To even have a tenth of Severus' ability was a gift.

Severus scoffed, "Well I can't have a mate who is a danger to my lab."

"You won't be able to brew yourself if you were pregnant. Who do you think you would want brewing for you? Some stranger? Or someone whose shares your talent?"

Severus blushed, after belonging to Lucius for so long how could he considering sharing his heart and body with another? He remembered Remus' reaction to Albus' murder of his child and wondered
just how much he was cared for.

The Veela Queen rose, "I think I'd like to retire for dinner. You are welcome to see yourselves out my children. Sirius, it is a pleasure to be in equal company. I hope to see you soon."

The man laughed, "My dear, it is my pleasure. To think that our kind will be bonded is a joy. If your child Lucius does not object I would like to accompany him. He and his mates will need all the information I can give. Helping a Chuvash with his inheritance is a bit different from helping a Veela. His magic will be hard to control and his mate will be needed to ground him."

Lucius bowed, "It would be an honor."

Together the six took their leave.

Luna called out, "Professor?"

Severus turned.

"If I have need to tell you anything important when you return I will get myself detention. Until then you don't know me any better then any other Ravenclaw."

Severus bowed, "Thank you child." He would have to avoid favoritism for her even though he seemed to owe her.

Chapter End Notes

Chapter 11- Past, Present and Future

Chapter 11

Draco lifted Harry into his arms after they used the portkey to return them home.

Harry buried his face in his former rival's shirt, was it crazy that Draco Malfoy of all people made him feel safe? He was so used to having to put aside his own fear to protect and save other people.

Draco was still surprised at how tiny Harry was compared to himself and how little he still weighed despite the steady stream of food and potions they made sure he had. He glanced at his father who seemed lost in thought, "I'm going to take him up to bed. He needs to rest."

Severus nodded, "Go ahead. He's had a shocking experience."

Draco walked away carrying the tiny Gryffindor.

Sirius Black looked around, "Nice place, it's aged gracefully. So you're a Malfoy and a Veela at that. Veela shows up in the blood more often then Chuvash anyway."

Severus was a better host then that woman was, "Why don't you join us in the parlour so we can talk."

"I closed Black Manor after I mated and cut myself off from the Black family. How have they been faring?"

Lucius snorted, "You know anything about the current Dark Lord?"

Sirius nodded, "There were repeated requests for us to join his ranks. I heard the giants and the werewolves did. The centaurs weren't foolish enough to throw in with them."

"Well the previous person to hold the title of Lord Black, Orion was the husband of Walburgha, they were second cousins. Walburgha hated anyone who didn't have two magical parents of the right ancestry. I have a feeling she wouldn't have been someone you would approve of. She insisted on arranging bonding for every Black child from the cradle not just her own. Her eldest niece was betrothed to me, her second niece was betrothed the Lestrange heir and the youngest was betrothed to her eldest son. My father was furious that I was Veela, because it ruined his plans. He promised me to the Dark Lord as an infant and my being born a creature of light was embarrassing. Even worse I found myself drawn to Severus but I was trapped in a betrothal contract with Andromeda Black. She eloped and married a Muggleborn wizard who has since risen to be the most praised Mind Healer. I attempted to approach my father about bonding to my mate but your descendant had previously blasted her son your second namesake off the family tapestry and disowned him. Thus leaving her youngest niece without a future Bondmate, my father and Walburgha conspired to betroth me instead to Narcissa."

Lucius spat the name in distaste. "They forced me not only to bond to someone not my mate but to forced me to take the mark. It bound my magic; I am weaker having lost access to the magic I received on my sixteenth birthday when I came into my inheritance as well as my healing abilities. As long as I bear his mark I cannot access my Veela and mate to my beloved."

Sirius was furious, he roared, "She dared stand between a Veela and his mate? Traitor!"
Abomination! Shame of my flesh! Filth! Scum! By-products of dirt and vileness! How dare you befoul the House of my Ancestors! I'll remove her from the family tree! Does she still live?"

Lucius flinched, casting a privacy web around the room to prevent Harry from hearing. "She died nine years ago. One son joined the Dark Lord and died in his service before then I believe. The woman and her middle sister Bellatrix joined as well. Walburgha convinced them that they were a Dark Family and had to help clean the Wizarding world from Muggleborns, Halfbloods and creatures."

"Yet not realizing that her own niece was Bonded to a Veela?" Sirius snapped. "Or that the blood of Chuvash runs through our heritage? If it weren't for the blood of certain magical creatures we would inbreed ourselves. It creates squibs and madness! Has she forgotten?"

Remus, Severus and Lucius watched as he transformed with a roar.

He stood in Chuvash form at over seven feet; his wings were a mix of stormy gray, black and dark blue scales overlaying a wingspan of over thirty feet. Sirius Black I had talons rather then hands and feet. His face had changed shape and he started cursing in Parseltongue and what also must be the ancient language of Draconic.

Rumor had it that there was also Chuvash in Slytherin's line, Ravenclaw was said to have Veela in her line.

"Who is the current head of the House of Black?"

"Begging your pardon sir," Remus spoke up, "there is none officially."

"What?" surely the House of Black couldn't have dwindled so drastically.

Remus steeled himself, "Currently, the only surviving son of the House of Black besides yourself sir is my school friend your namesake. He…was falsely accused of betraying your descendant James Potter whose mother was your grandniece. He was sent to Azkaban without trial, he escaped, probably saving the life of young Harry and is still on the run. Your namesake is his godfather. His younger brother Regulus died neither betrothed nor bonded thus without issue. His title reverted to his mother since Regulus predeceased his father. The title can only be truly passed to a son according to the entail of its original grant. Though he was blasted off the family tapestry upon his mother's death it reverted to Sirius. Now Gringotts who manages most inheritances doesn't care if he is in Azkaban he is still the closest related male heir to the last holder to the title. They get very upset when a title is stripped from the family entirely such as the whole Dumbledore Debacle back in 1891. Percival, the father tortured and possibly killed three Muggle children who tortured his six-year-old daughter. He was stripped of his title and lost much of his inheritance leaving his wife Kendra to raise Albus, Aberforth and Ariana. She bought a small house with her own money and moved to Godric's Hollow. She was no longer a great lady and was forced to live a life far from what she was accustomed to. Both his mother and sister died tragically soon after his graduation from Hogwarts and he was left with only his younger brother." Remus paused to take a breath and then continued. "Despite his two-year difference in age the brothers couldn't be more difference and Aberforth finished with far less significance. Now Harry as Sirius' godson is named as his heir, I asked the Goblins to put everything that reverted to Sirius due to the fact that most of the males died during the war in Harry's name. 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The Black inheritance was like I said reverted to Sirius due to the fact that most of the males died during the war in Harry's name. The Black inheritance was like I said reverted to Sirius due to the fact that most of the males died during the wa
and became an Auror."

"Thanks to this Walburgha my family went Dark? Who is left?"

Lucius counted them off, "Narcissa and Sirius age thirty-four, Bellatrix age thirty-six and Andromeda age thirty-nine. Callidora Black's descendant Neville Longbottom. The Weasleys who descended from Cedrella Black who was Bonded to the current Lord Weasley and was disowned for tying herself and her magic to a 'blood traitor'.' He grimaced, "Harry. The descendants of Lucretia Black who was Bonded to Ignatius Prewett. They had one child a squib, who became something called an accountant and married a Muggle. They had a daughter Malfalda who recently started attending Hogwarts and was Sorted into Slytherin. Cassiopeia died two years ago childless. Pollux Black died in 1990 and his cousin Arcturus died mere months later. Most blacks perished during the war. Neither Pollux nor Arcturus took the title because they suffered from injuries they received during the war. I believe they regretted being forced to join the ranks of the Death Eaters. Walburgha ruled her husband and threatened to repossess an inheritance or vault under the archaic laws if they did not join in purifying the Wizarding world from Muggle scum." He paused to breathe before he counted them to himself, "One Potter, one Longbottom, one Prewett, four Blacks, Cedrella had two sons, Arthur, Bilius and oh who was it? Oh yes, Cador. Septimus only became Head of the House of Weasley because his six older brothers died. Bilius died mysteriously, the third I know little about. Arthur was an Auror during the war but was demoted who went on to have seven children; six boys and one girl. Severus do you know of any Weasleys other then Arthur's?"

Severus thought about it, "Bilius had no children. I remember hearing something about Bilius talking about how he'd seen a grim and was going to die."

Remus chuckled, "Oh posh. He saw Padfoot. I told him it was a figment of his drunken mind. He didn't believe me. He had a stroke and died because he believed he was going to die. Foolish sod." He said his voice devoid of jollity.

"Back to whether Cador had children...yes three sons but no daughters. Until Ginevra Weasley there apparently hadn't been a daughter according to Hogwarts at least in seven generations. Cador had twin boys Andret and Branor, called Andy and Bran who were a year behind Bill. Their younger brother Calibom they called Cal and he was in Charlie's year. They were more studious then Fred and George." Severus said thoughtfully. The three were more like Bill and Charlie. Percy was too high strung and tried too hard to be noticed by professors because of his obsession with the rules, therefore he annoyed me. Honestly when it seemed he started taking Head Girl Penelope Clearwater on Hogsmeade Weekends I was surprised. He wasn't very social with his peers, his Seventh Year he seemed to have a personality transplant. I wish I knew why he changed, he had only one friend I noticed prior and that was Oliver Wood. They had nothing to do with each other last year, for a time I thought they were seeing each other."

Lucius put that thought aside, "According to my calculations because of the war there are only nineteen of your descendants; one Potter, one Prewett, one Longbottom, four Black- Draco doesn't count because he's Veela despite his Black bearer, and twelve Weasleys."

"I wonder how Ginevra came about, Weasleys don't have daughters. They trace their line back to Arthur and even Arthur only had sons. According to legend he had Amhar, Gwydre, Llcheu, Loholt, and Duran. Some say the son of his half-sister Morganna Mordred was also his son but legends alter as the years pass and tales are retold." Sirius mused having calmed slightly from his fury at Walburgha. Perhaps, he shouldn't have cut himself from the family.

Severus shrugged, "Molly was a Prewett. She had twin brothers but was the only girl. It is possible that she had a girl,"
Remus snorted, "Oh please, Women don't determine gender even Muggles know that. It's a male thing. If Weasleys only have males what is Ginevra? Is she truly Arthur's child?"

Severus blinked, "You want me to believe Molly cheated? She's been obsessed with Arthur since forever."

"How else do you explain a girl? Unless she blood adopted a child, I don't see how a Family with a history of only male children dying young managed to have a daughter." Sirius mused, "Very strange, especially when it is said that souls are reborn to the line from which they come."

Severus snorted, "I never understood that."

"That is why if a line dies out it's magic does too. If the Black line dies out there will be no more Chuvash. Just as if the Malfoy family dies out there will be no more Veela."

"I have a cousin named Xenophilus whose daughter we met briefly, although Luna is not a name appropriate for a descendant of the House of Malfoy. I will be reinstating him as a Malfoy. He lost his claim to it but I can restore it not that he needs it holding the Lovegood seat through his wife. It is strange how many Aunts Molly has still living, both Muriel and Tessie. The Prewett Inheritance is also entailed which is why Septimus speaks for Molly considering her twin brothers Fabian and Gideon died in the war. Arthur has little drive for politics. Neither does his youngest brother for I have heard nothing about him. I suppose the titles with most likely pass to Arthur's sons being that he is the eldest son and the Bondmate of the last child of the previous Lord Prewett."

XoooooX

Harry was glassy-eyes when Draco reached his room; it was as if he'd disappeared into himself. It had been a trying day. He knew he should make Harry eat something but he seriously doubted that Harry could. He removed the dress robe, his hands shook too much and he was shy. He Draco Malfoy was too shy to do something he would do for Blaise without a thought. Then he remembered what the Veela Seer said, Harry was his mate? It was rare that a Veela didn't take a human or another Veela for it's mate. He was mating outside his own kind. It didn't matter if his mother's family had Chuvash in it he was Veela. He couldn't undress him, it was wrong not without Harry's consent. He touched his wand and switched the nice clothes for a pair of his own nightclothes. He changed himself after levitating the quiet boy and turning back the sheets. Unable to hold himself back he climbed into bed with the tiny Gryffindor, with no thought of eating dinner himself he lay arms around Harry's waist and his face pressed into the boy's neck.

He felt at peace and content as he held onto his former adversary all thoughts of dueling or cross words forgotten.

XooooooX

The four; Lucius, Severus, Remus and Sirius I talked long into the night making plans how to deal with Harry's predicament as a Triwizard Champion.

The house elves delivering dinner, coffee, whiskey and cakes as they absently requested.

Two hours from dark they broke yawning.

Lucius took Severus' arm gently, leading the way to the next floor.

Remus reluctantly parted from his mate.
Sirius was shown to his room by his host.

Quietly they yawned as they bid each other good night.

The plan that they hatched would shock the Minister of Magic and the Headmaster.

XoooooX

Lucius pulled Severus into their room, locking the door. It was late but he needed to be as close to one with his mate as he could.

Severus felt Lucius pull him tight, and couldn't stifle a moan as he was kissed roughly. He didn't like being told he had to let someone else into his bed and heart.

Lucius' hand crawled, caressed and groped Severus' body, grinding against him as they made their way to bed. "Mine."

Severus kissed him back, "Yes..." other then Lucius' one night with that woman they had been faithful. The mark may keep them from bonding as a Veela and their mate were supposed to but his body was still Lucius'.

Lucius shoved his mate on the bed.

Severus could sense the primal need radiating off his Bondmate, his own desires reflected in Lucius' eyes. He still belonged to his old friend.

Lucius cast a lubrication charm and then thrust roughly into Severus' body.

Severus whimpered but felt his cock stiffen in need, "Yes. Harder. Lucius..."

Lucius needed to lay claim to his mate, to stake a claim. Without access to his Veela, he couldn't transform, he couldn't mark his mate and he couldn't heal the damage Severus' abusive parents had caused.

Severus rocked back into the deep penetrating thrusts, "Yes!"

Lucius scratched and bit, his Veela hungered for it but his creature side trapped he had little outlet.

They came screaming their climax.

XoooooX

Remus stripped and crawled into bed, his mate...

Severus was truly his mate...

How to learn to share with a protective Veela?

He reached down, thinking about how good looking his mate was when they visited the Veela Queen. He had random flashbacks to the times Sirius and James used the levicorpus spell Severus created. He remembered how firm and touchable that arse looked. He had an overwhelming urge to touch it, fondle it, hell even spank it. He might even enjoy watching Severus squirm as he ate him.

He pinched his nipples, wrapped his hand around his cock and began to wank. He rarely afforded himself this luxury especially when his desired mate belonged to another but Severus was half his. He could desire him and wish to lay claim to that pale body, to kiss and lick every scar as he
memorized each spot that gave his mate pleasure. He wanted to kiss him and take him to bed. How could he discuss sharing such a talented and beautiful man with a protective, jealous and possessive Veela?

His mind filled with memories of Severus he came with a loud groan, taking a few breathes to steady himself before vanishing the mess and drifting off to sleep.

What do you think their plan is?

Chapter 12A- Discussions of the Present and the Future

Harry woke up and for the first time in his life he felt safe. He was warm and he felt the gentleness in the arms that wrapped around his waist. He smiled, sleepily reaching to cover Draco's hand with his own.

Draco's breath on his neck was warm. He had no memory of being held like this, he knew he had parents at some point who had by all accounts loved him but he still had never been held like this. He'd never had anyone hold him when he cried or worry about him when he was ill before he woke up here with Severus watching him. He'd fallen asleep crying after receiving Ron and Hermione's letters. He'd really thought they were his friends. He thought back to his second meeting with Draco on the train, he pushed the thought of his haughty tone away and focused on the words.

"You'll soon find out some Wizarding families are much better than others, Potter. You don't want to go making friends with the wrong sort. I can help you there."

"Be careful who you choose then. Choose riffraff and Blood traitors you'll turn out just like them…"

"Well if you're going to choose people like Weasleys who have lots of red-hair, no money and second-hand everything over your own kind then to hell with you."

He was right…

The Weasleys did have no money, red hair and second-hand everything. Ron was rotten if he was just pretending to be his friend. Ron was the wrong sort of friend. Some Wizarding families were better then others just look at Severus and Lucius they weren't even supposed to like him, they were Death Eaters and they did more to help him then the Weasleys who claimed to care for him.

His eyes filled with tears, how could he have been so stupid? He'd thought Hermione out of both of them was a true friend. He saved her…granted he locked her in with the troll but he did save her from it in the end. Did she blame him for that? It wasn't his idea really to go after the Sorcerer's stone or to go searching for the Chamber of Secrets. He just didn't want to be called a coward. He shook with silent sobs for the loss of a friendship that might have always been one-sided.


Those simple comforting words broke something inside him and he let out a strangled cry that sounds as it something was dying.

It was sound of a boy who lost everything he thought he had.

"Hush now. It's alright. You're safe." Draco gently rolled Harry over to face him.

Harry buried his tear stained face in Draco's pajama shirt. "Why? Why would they pretend to be my friends? Why would they think I would cheat? I was too frightened to even consider trying to enter. People died in that Tournament! I don't want to be a Champion. I just want to be a normal kid. I
don't want to be in danger all the time."

His Veela might not be awakened but Draco silently swore an oath on his magic to do everything he could to keep Harry Potter safe. He rocked him, "I don't know why they would do that. I knew from the beginning that that Weasley wasn't trustworthy but I didn't think he would be so cruel." Ron Weasley was a Weasley and a Gryffindor at that; they weren't supposed to have friendships that weren't friendships. What would convince him to commit such a farce? Granted 'friendships' to a Slytherin were very different from ones formed by other people. He was 'friends' with Crabbe and Goyle but he didn't trust them at all. Well other then to watch his back against threats from non-Slytherins. He wasn't friends with Pansy but she didn't know that. He didn't trust Theo at all his father was almost manically devoted to the Dark Lord. Out of all his housemates he probably trusted Blaise the most, not that he would admit it. With Blaise he always knew where he stood. Blaise mentioned that he wanted to know when he was coming back because he owed him money and two chess matches. He'd let him know when but only when he knew himself.

Harry let Draco comfort and soothe him; there was something so completely genuine about how nice Draco was to him. It was a bit shocking to remember that this boy who could barely say anything nice before November first had quickly become his constant companion, his tutor and his friend. That Luna said Draco would be his mate? Mate…

He felt as Harry started to relax, he rubbed his back, "Why don't we go see about breakfast? Neither of us ate dinner and because we were summoned by the Veela Queen we didn't have tea."

Harry's stomach took that moment to decide to growl and he blushed, "I guess I'm hungry."

Draco felt the urge to preen for guessing what his mate needed but pushed it away, "Come on, let's just put on robes and go get something to eat. We're too hungry to worry about dressing."

Harry glanced down and realized that he wasn't wearing the fine clothes from his visit to the Veela Court. He blushed deeper, "Did you,"

Draco shook his head, "I just used a switching charm. I didn't think you'd be comfortable if I undressed you myself."

"But I'm supposed to be your mate…" Harry said confused, he remembered Uncle Vernon denouncing poufs as useless freaks better off dead just as much as his lot- wizards. He accepted that Draco's father and Severus were a couple but he still wasn't sure whether it was truly okay to be a pouf.

"Just because that's in the future doesn't mean at fourteen I get to take liberties. Besides, if Dad can't get you out of the Tournament I say you flout tradition and let me be your date to the Yule Ball. You may be my mate but that doesn't mean I can't court you and spend two years proving I'm worthy of you before your Chuvash goes into heat and calls for me to satisfy you and help you conceive a child." Draco teased.

Harry gulped, Courted? He'd have to look that up but his new friend seemed so serious. "You mean you want us to date and get to know each other before our hormones run wild?" Heat? Called Draco to satisfy him and quench the fire inside him? What was he talking about? He'd have to talk to that Chuvash they'd met yesterday, if he could find him. Surely Mr. Black could answer his questions, like why he had the same name as his godfather…

Draco laughed, "That's one way to put it. Come on let's get you some food before you lose anymore weight and we end up backtracking on all the progress you've made."
They rose, put on robes and went to find some breakfast.

XoooooX

Lucius woke to find Severus' head resting on his chest; the Glamour his mate usually wore was nowhere in sight. He played with the black hair that tickled his skin as the Potions Master breathed and snored softly. Not that Severus would ever admit to snoring.

How could he share him? His Bondmate, his mate, the one he'd ached for all these years. It didn't matter that they were intimate his Veela longed to be free. It had been rattling at its chains for years. As he felt the scars on his mate's skin he wished in vain for his Veela to be able to heal the scars and badly healed bones. Why? Why had it been so imperative that he became a Death Eater? He railed silently against his dead father, at times he hated the man and had been perversely pleased to watch the man suffer when he came down with Dragon pox. Somehow the inoculation didn't take. Draco had been alive then but he refused to allow his son in Abraxus' sickroom. He wanted the man to suffer as he had.

His Veela was furious about having to share his mate and honestly he wasn't thrilled about it either. To add insult to injury his Severus' other mate was a Dark Magical Creature. To permit that person to touch someone as perfect in spirit and love was just cruel. His Veela understood why Severus took the mark and forgave him for but Lucius suffered from severe self-recrimination for allowing himself to be sullied by Darkness.

He could feel the pressure of Severus' morning wood, it's familiar presence made it harder to believe that his mate wasn't just his alone. He ran his nails up Severus' spine and back down to his arse where he fondled it.

XooooooX

Severus moaned in his sleep, snuggling closer to Lucius.

XooooooX

Lucius spread Severus’ thighs, pulling his mate closer so his prick rested against the younger man’s entrance. He kissed Severus’ neck, stroking him as he reached for his wand to cast the charms he needed.

Severus woke with a gasp as he felt charms preparing him and the familiar pressure of his mate’s prick on his arsehole. He clung to Lucius’ with his thighs, arching back eager to feel his mate inside him, moaning in French. “Je te voux. Baise-moi!” (I want you. Fuck me!)

Lucius felt his prick sink into Severus’ arse a little and thrust in deep. “Comme te veux” (As you like.)

Severus clung to him, kissing him hard, muttering in French, “Baise-moi!” (Fuck me!)

Lucius chuckled, kissing him back, “Tu me rends fou.” (You drive me fucking crazy)

Severus arched, rocking into his mate’s deep thrusts, “Yes.”

Lucius loved the freedom of waking up to make love, it was especially rare during the school year.

Severus came hard screaming his climax.

Lucius came as he felt Severus’ cum splashing him;
Severus blushed, laying there gasping as he felt his own cum covering himself and Lucius. His mate had come hard; he could feel it dripping out of him.

Lucius carried him into the bathroom where they went for another round of sex in the shower before finally washing, and dressing.

Before heading down to breakfast, Lucius rapped on Remus' door. They would have this out now without witnesses.

XoooooX

Remus woke at once to the loud banging on his door. He could smell the faint smell of sex and potion ingredients. He cast a refreshing charm on himself and summoned a pair of trousers. He wouldn't greet Lucius and Severus smelling of dried spunk and naked. He opened the door and attempted to smile, "I just wanted to be presentable."

Lucius strode past him.

Remus noticed Severus seemed nervous to be in his company. He gestured for them to sit on the bed after he used a charm to make it properly, "I'll just sit here." He said quietly as he turned a comfortable armchair to face the bed. Lucius was probably coming to discuss the mate issue and he wasn't going to make things worse by talking about it while sitting on his bed. It was impolite.

"I know you said you wouldn't come between us when you admitted your wolf wanted Severus as your mate." Lucius addressed him after he was seated comfortably on the recently vacated and made bed.

Remus nodded, "I still don't. He was your mate before he was mine and I know he cares for you deeply. To try to separate you would be cruel."

Severus glared, "Don't talk about me like I'm not here."

Remus coloured, "Sorry, I was merely trying to state my intentions not to make you feel as if we were ignoring you. I could never ignore you, I'm sure Lucius is as acutely aware of your presence as I am."

Lucius sneered pulling Severus closer, "I am always aware of my mate, not as well as I would be if my Veela were free to claim him."

Severus pushed him back, moving over slightly to give himself physical space. It was hard to think with Lucius so close especially after two rounds of sex. "I am yours Lucius but we need to talk and I need some space so I can concentrate fully. I have the right to have input since it's my fault I have two mates."

Lucius was not happy about Severus pushing him away in front of the werewolf but his mate had a slight point. "Why is any of this your fault?" Severus believed this was his fault? He thought Severus had grown away from being things that couldn't be blamed on him were his fault.

Severus sighed, "Because my magic is so strong I need two mates to ground me?"

"That's not your fault!" Lucius glared, "How could you be at fault? It's not like you seduced the wolf!"

Remus winced. "Until last year when I was a fellow professor Severus and I had no contact since Lily and James died. All he did for me was brew my Wolfsbane Potion. I never pursued him because
he made it quite clear he couldn't stand me. He made it impossible for me to continue on as a Professor and I had to resign. I never felt the need to be angry with him for that. My behaviour wasn’t seemly as a professor, I didn't inform anyone when I found,"

He didn't wish to confuse his old friend with their new ally though they shared the same name and chose a difference name to refer to him, "Padfoot. I left the map out where anyone could read it. Severus may not have had entirely pure motives but he was worried because it was a full moon and I might have hurt my students. As far as he knew I had been working with Padfoot all along. I went to find Wormtail and prove that Padfoot was innocent. Wormtail escaped because I didn't take my potion, if I had gone for help that wouldn't have happened. Until you sent Aurors to look for me and I came here I had no contact with Severus since I left Hogwarts. The moment I found out you were Bonded I knew that Severus wasn't mine to pursue. I would like to have a piece of his heart but since he's been with you all these years I don't want to cause trouble. It's not fair to force you to share him Lucius just because some seer claims he's half mine."

"She's not some seer, she is a Veela Seer and that puts her at nearly the same level as a centaur." Lucius protested haughtily. "Besides, that Seer is my cousin and the Queen trusts her words. If they both claim that I am supposed to share my mate with a Werewolf I have to."

"I don't know much about Triad Bondings…” Remus began, slowly. Knowing what he did about magical creatures, a werewolf was about as opposite of a Veela as you could get. "but I have no objection if you as his primary mate are the only one he is legally bound to. I wouldn't dare attempt a sexual advance without your knowledge. I don't know how we would learn to share if that is what Severus agrees to. I know you wouldn't leave me alone with him, I wouldn't ask you to but as difficult as it would be for me to watch you pleasure him I can only guess how you would feel about it. To you I am an interloper and I understand that. I don't want us to rush into this it will take time. Perhaps, we should start by trying to find a way to reverse, remove or at least lessen the curse's effects. If I can give Severus something back perhaps, I will prove that I belong with you, both of you. Your Dark Marks, I want to help remove those as well. It would be cruel of me to lay complete claim to Severus before your Veela can. You were together first and you deserve to Bond to your mate properly before I do."

Once again Remus' selflessness surprised Lucius, "Though your wolf is free to claim Severus and not chained like my Veela you would restrain yourself until my Veela is free?"

Remus nodded.

"You'll help Lucius' Veela be freed so our magic can be bound together completely? You'd promise to help find away to give me back the way to have a child? Why would you want to have a relationship with someone is incapable of having a child? I let someone kill my baby!" his voice cracked and he shook, they should hate him.

Before Remus realized he'd moved, he was beside Severus.

They were both trying to comfort their mate, Lucius understood that but it infuriated him to see Remus touch his Severus. "You were young and scared, Sev. It wasn't your fault. You didn't know you wouldn't be alone. He forced you to do these. He stole not only your child, I mean our child but also your ability to have another. He knew you were the last of your line and he wanted to prevent you from continuing it. As if his letting Potter and Black hurt you wasn't cruel enough."

"He'll pay. We'll make sure of it. No one has the right to decide who should have children and who can't." Remus said an edge in his voice; "No one had the right to take your child from you or to take away your ability to have children."
Severus couldn't explain the feelings of safety and contentment that he had with Remus and Lucius holding him, comforting. He felt as if something more then gratitude and hatred had sprung up in his breast for Remus. He was embarrassed about his thinking about Remus while he and Lucius were being intimate but the genuinely honest offers and promises the werewolf was making before touched him. Remus maybe a werewolf but he was gentle, gentle in a way that Lucius was not. Lucius was abrupt and rough but he cared and wormed his way into his heart even before the older Slytherin's Veela decided they were mates. He would be terribly embarrassed if any of his students saw how weak he was right now…

Lucius kissed his hair, "We should eat. I have to summon Percy Weasley; he is Crouch's assistant and has helped immensely set up this blasted tournament. He might be able to help, plus there is that whole issue about what Severus mentioned regarding his abrupt change in personality. I am sure that blasted Headmaster had something to do with it."

XoooooX

Harry and Draco just barely finished eating when the Chuvash entered.

Harry thought for someone so old he didn't look it. Wasn't he supposed to be older then Dumbledore? His face wasn't wrinkled and his hair just seemed to get silver streaks in the thick black strands. His godfather and this man did resemble each other.

"Well now, if it isn't my adorable little great something nephew? It would be my honour to make your acquaintances, Sirius Black the first as I understand. I believe you are related to me by your grandmother, Dorea I believe they said her name was."

Harry stammered, "I'm sorry but what is a Chuvash? I've never heard of them…"

Sirius laughed, "It seems your education has been found wanting little one but I shall tell you. Chuvash are Magical Creatures believed to be related to dragons. They are reptilian in appearance and stand on two feet. Like dragons they have wings on their backs, but unlike many dragons their wings are brightly scaled in a variety of colours rather then just one. They are omnivores but prefer fresh meat and they have very long life spans. Chuvash are considered shape shifters and are believed have been around about as long as dragons have been. They are highly intelligent with an inborn talent at Transfiguration and are very may choose to blend in with wizards by spending most of their lives as humans. Many of them have careers in which they can pursue their own interests; such as raising rare snakes with whom they can communicate or working with Dragons for which they have a natural affinity. Others choose to go into retrieval or rare potions ingredients or hunting Dragons for skin, blood and heartstrings for wands. Though another Chuvash can scent a Chuvash at birth as can a Veela, most Chuvash aren't known until they come into their inheritance unless they exhibit signs such as speaking and understanding Parseltongue or even speaking to dragons. Nearly all Chuvash young display an inborn talent to fly and a resistance to spells."

His voice took a more serious tone, "When you come into your inheritance if your mate young Mister Malfoy hasn't healed your scars and broken bones that I sense have weakened your magic's stability you will find when you come into your inheritance that you will have healed. Since few Chuvash have any physical infirmities until late in life I expect that you will find you no longer need those spectacles.

Harry gasped, "I won't need my glasses?" then the word submissive dawned on him, "What is a submissive?"

Sirius' lips twitched, "Well when Chuvash come into their inheritance you see either they are a dominant like me, I am nearly eight feet tall in Chuvash form and the external scales of my wings are..."
a mix of stormy grey, black and dark blue covering overlaying a wingspan of over thirty feet. In Chuvash form I have talons rather then hands and feet." He removed his Glamour and allowed his hands to shift to show them, "You see, my skin isn't skin at all, it is more like scales, it helps with our natural spell resistance. It appears as skin except at close examination and like Dragon hide it can repel spells. It unnerves Wizarding folk and since we are rare and some rather nasty characters try to obtain our scale-like skin for a variety of reasons when we are among the Wizarding Community we use Glamours. Since you will a submissive, your scales and wings will be more demure colours, probably not a true white perhaps a soft somber gray. If you were mated to a Chuvash, your the scale-like skin on your left shoulder would change to match the pattern of your mate's wing scales. Considering you are the first Chuvash since probably Arthur to be mated to a Veela I seriously doubt your scales will change colours unless of course and I haven't truly seen a Veela in their glory to know if their wings have colour. I hope for your sake that they do, otherwise unmated Dominant CHuvash will no doubt forcefully pursue you. If Veelas are anywhere near as possessive as we are, you Mister Malfoy will not take that well."

Draco scowled; the very idea of anyone pursuing his Harry upset him.

"A Submissive is the bearer of any children conceived." Sirius began gently.

"Men can have babies?" Harry was shocked, he'd never heard of such a thing.

"Only wizards and those with magical creature blood which probably is where it came from in the first place. Though not as many wizard couples have children now, more and more couples are finding themselves infertile sadly. Either that or their Bondings were arranged and they can't stand each other enough to have another child after the heir is born."

Harry nodded, "I see." A baby? A child of his own, could he really have one? Or had the Dursleys made that impossible? He doubted his inheritance could heal that…

Draco saw the sadness in his eyes and reached for his hand, as long as there was still breath in his body no one was going lay a hand to cause him pain again.

Harry tried to smile when he felt Draco's hand cover his own. "Is there anything else I need to know about my future inheritance?"

Sirius shook his head, "No child. I'll explain more when you get closer to your sixteenth birthday. Although I'm sure your mate and I will have a nice long talk. I happen to have an adorable male submissive myself; I don't need to tell you Young Malfoy how rare a jewel your Harry is."

After all he'd been through, Harry was shy, sweet and sensitive. Harry rarely if ever lost his temper especially if he himself wasn't trying to start a fight.

Harry blushed, a rare jewel? Him? He liked this Sirius a lot more then his godfather who was a rather intimidating person.

What do you think their plan is?

Chapter End Notes

Chapter 12B- Discussions of the Present and the Future

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Title: Unlikely Heroes

Pairing: Future DracoxHarry, LuciusxSeverus, one-sided RemusxSeverus

Fandom: Harry Potter

Summary: A battered Boy Who Lived finds his world come crashing down when his name comes out of the Goblet of Fire. Shockingly, the only ones to come to his rescue are those he'd believed were his enemies.

Notes: Is compatible to the Selection of Triwizard Champions.

Chapter 12

After breakfast and the intimate discussion between himself, Severus and Remus Lucius owled Percy Weasley and insisted he bring a copy of the complete rules and regulations regarding the Triwizard Tournament.

It was almost lunch time when Treca announced Percy Weasley from the Ministry.

Harry and Draco were off brewing probably, the adults had chosen to give them space after last night. Today was about making new allies and acquiring information.

Lucius gestured for his visitor to take a chair across from him, “Sit down Weasley. We have much to talk about.”

Percy entered slowly; he didn’t like to be alone with powerful men. “I brought the information you asked for. I don’t know why you need it.”

“We have more to discuss then just the Tournament. You’re welcome to leave the door open and check for any listening or recording spells. I assure you that the tea has nothing in it.”

“No Veritaserum?” Percy asked weakly and silently cursed himself.

“No,” Severus said speaking up from his corner, “Let’s just say we leave such distasteful tactics with their master the Headmaster.” his voice quivering slightly.

“Sounds like you don’t think much of him.”

“Hard to when he thinks he owns me. He likes to brag that he made me a spy, I offered myself. I hate him for what he did to me.”

Percy felt the sorrow in that voice, Snape was very different from what he remembered. “What did he do, if you don’t mind me asking.”

“He murdered my child and cursed me barren.”

Lucius was surprised, as was Remus that Severus admitted it to this possibly untrustworthy person.
Percy started to shake, something half-forgotten teased the edge of his memory. “Why? Why would he do that?”

Their guests’ magic became momentarily unstable and the four adults noticed it: the faint echo of the imperious and an obscure memory charm.

“When were you alone with the Headmaster?” Severus asked quietly.

“He called me up after Harry and Ron rescued Ginny from the Chamber of Secrets. He wanted to ask how we were if she was alright. He mentioned that I was being considered for Head Boy and wondered how well I got along with Prefect Clearwater. Then…it gets fuzzy.”

“Who is your best friend?” Remus asked.

Percy glanced at him, dumbfounded, “I… I don’t have one.”

“What about Oliver?” Severus asked, “You used to always study together in the library. You were often partners in potions or projects.”

Percy frowned, “That Quidditch obsessed git? Never.” Why did that feel like a lie? It wasn’t was it?

“Did you know you bear the echoes of the Imperious and memory charms?” Remus asked.

Percy shook his head, “Not possible.” Would that explain his fuzzy memories?

“Would you like them removed?”

Did he? Did he want someone mucking about in his brain?

“How can I trust you? You’re Death Eaters and a werewolf. Then there is that silent one over there.”

“My name,” Sirius said quietly “is Sirius Black the first and I was born before the Headmaster. My brother was Phineas Nigellus Black.”

“Shouldn’t you be dead? You don’t even look that old.” Percy said dumbfounded, recently growing arrogance vanished.

“I have Chuvash blood, I am the leader of those people. I have come because one of my people is in mortal danger.” Sirius said in the same low, non-threatening voice.

“Your people? Mortal danger?”

Sirius nodded, “You see, they were entered in your little tournament against their will. A person with Active Magical creature blood cannot enter a legally binding Magical contract without the permission of the leader of their people.”

Percy’s eyes narrowed, “You mean you’re here because of Cheater Potter?”

Sirius snapped, “I smell lies and that boy did not enter that tournament. He is terrified of it. Besides, even young Chuvash years from coming into their inheritance is under my protection. He is a descendant of my brother which makes him family.”

“My apologies sir. What’s this nonsense about me having echoes of past magic?” Percy asked changing the subject, not sure he trusted them.

Severus sighed, “You have twelve Outstanding N.E.W.Ts and you’re telling me that you don’t
know that certain magic leaves echoes?"

Percy flushed, “I know that but who would cast an Unforgivable on me and get away with it? They’re supposed to be illegal and casting them can get you sent to Azkaban.”

“The curse he cast on me was illegal too, it stole my chance at a family. I am the last of my line, the last of the Princes. If I can neither sire nor bear children my entire line and our magic will die.” Severus continued.

Percy collapsed in his chair, “I stopped completely trusting the headmaster especially after he made me Head Boy. I don’t know why but deep down despite what mother says, you see he makes me uncomfortable.”

“Do you want me to give you back your memories?”

Percy nodded, “Even if it hurts me I need to know why and what he did.”

Severus nodded, standing and walking towards him, his robe billowing like black wings. He knelt and whispering, “Legimens.”

Percy stiffened, unable to push him out and he couldn’t move.

‘You’re safe. I’m only going to release the memories.’ True to his word Severus moved around not even opening the books that manifested Percy’s memories. He found a corner of the library in Percy’s mind, that was half hidden in shadow and seemed to be covered in dust and rot but was full of ‘books’ that weren’t half as old as they appeared. Severus whispered a spell that made the shadow retreat that was the manifesting of the memory charm that made Percy forget these memories existed, another that dissolved the Imperious not before Severus could see the memory that both spells were entwined in.

_Dumbledore was sitting behind his desk, “Come in Weasley, so good of you to come so promptly. Tell me how is your sister doing? Is she recovering from her terrifying experience? Poor thing. It really is dreadful that she’ll have to serve those detentions. She really wasn’t in control of her actions entirely but students were attacked.”_

Percy nodded dismally, his emotions and magic had been rather out of sorts since then and if it were for Oliver he’d had broken down by now.

“Have some tea.”

Percy nervously took a cup, sipping it slowly.

“Tell me about your lessons and plans for next year.”

_Percy found himself admitting far more then he intended including his hope that when he got a job at the ministry he and Oliver could find an inexpensive apartment to share._
“Oliver? Oliver Wood?” Dumbledore asked, his voice losing all of it cheer.

Percy swallowed, looking up to see hard, cold eyes and nodded, “He’s my…boyfriend.”

Dumbledore stood up quickly, “This won’t do. No, this won’t do at all.”

Before he could move or think…

“Imperio. Now listen you little ingrate. You’re a Weasley, you’re going into the Ministry and that Quidditch obsessed idiot is just going to hold you back. You will forget about him and have nothing more to do with him. Now when you receive your badge as Head Boy you’ll find out that Prefect Penelope Clearwater is Head Girl. You will befriend her and Court her. She will make an excellent political wife when you start your rise to Ministry of Magic. What the!”

Dumbledore stopped in his tirade to cast diagnostic spells on Percy, “Merlin! You little slut! What kind of school do you think I’m running here? I’ll teach you to dare have sex at Hogwarts! Mortis fetus!”

Percy felt ill, his abdomen cramping. Fetus? Baby? He’d been pregnant? No! No! NO!

“Some expello! Now you will forget this all occurred. There was no child. You have no lover. You have no friends. You are a rule-obsessed prat whose one wish is to become Minister for Magic. You have no patience for rule-breakers and people who are too lazy to study. Above all you HATE Quidditch and those who play it because deep down you are jealous because you have no skill of your own.”

After Dumbledore calmed down, he cast a sleep spell on Percy. The next thing he remembered was being woken up and told he’d dozed off.

Embarrassed he’d apologized and left, horrified he’d fallen asleep in an interview with the Headmaster. Deep down he no longer trusted him and never would…

Severus was highly embarrassed when he extricated himself from Percy’s mind. Instead of ‘I’m sorry for seeing that memory’ being the first words on his lips, he pulled the shocked young man to him,
“It’s okay it’s not your fault.”

Percy hadn’t cried in years but that memory broke him. Dumbledore…the reason he couldn’t trust him and avoided him was because he stole his dreams of a future. Dumbledore stole his lover, his best friend and their child. He sobbed, “I want him. I want Ollie.”

Remus, Lucius and Sirius turned away, whatever private memory Severus released it wasn’t right to pry.

After ten minutes Percy pulled away, banished all trace of his tears, “Tell me what you need me to do. I want a piece of him. If it weren’t for you, I wouldn’t know what he did to me, to us…”

“Tell us what they are doing about the tournament.” Lucius was curious and working in the International Relations Department with Crouch Percy would have the most current information.

“They keep postponing the Weighing of the Wand Ceremony because all Champions must be present. Beauxbatons and Durmstrang still threaten to leave to which Moody and Crouch tell them they are magically bound to stay. The Daily Prophet keeps clamouring for an interview but with a missing Champion they have to put them off. The First Task you see is scheduled for the 24 of this month. The longer Harry is gone the less time they all have to prepare.” Percy said quickly, he owed them a debt and he would do all he could to repay it.

Lucius nodded, “I see. So if we can’t get him out of the contract prior to that date we will have to allow him to complete.”

“I won’t allow it.” Remus and Sirius snarled in unison.

Percy shifted nervously, “Tell me how you plan to get the so-called Cheater Potter out of a magical contract.”

“First off he’d underage and can’t enter a contract without permission of his guardian. At the time of his supposed entrance he was legally though unfiled the ward of Sirius Black the third. Sirius wasn’t in the position to grant that permission because he was on the run. Harry didn’t enter his name in the Goblet of Fire. According to the case of Athens Peverell vs. Alphard Minias from 1790, a Betrothal Contract between Athens Peverell and Hera Minias was declared invalid because it had been forged. The Contract between Troyus Peverell and Lord Caden Black was deemed the only valid contract, thus Athens Peverell and Amaryllis Black were bonded. If a forged betrothal contract cannot be held valid then if Harry’s name was added to the Goblet of Fire without his knowledge or the consent of his guardian Sirius Black III or Sirius Black I, leader of the Dracken then he isn’t bound by a contract he didn’t enter. They can argue that Harry didn’t know he had to ask permission of the leader of the Dracken because he didn’t know he was one but it makes no difference. Legally he cannot be forced to participate.” Lucius said before pausing to pour himself a drink.

“What I don’t get is how exactly someone could have gotten close enough to confound the Goblet of Fire to convince it there were four schools.” Percy said quickly.

Severus was surprised, “Where did you hear that?”

Percy stared at him, “Professor Moody. He claimed it was once his job to think as Dark Wizards do when Headmaster Karkaroff asked him how he knew that happened.”

“Well as powerful as he is, I doubt Harry has the ability to confound a Magical Artefact as old and as powerful as the Goblet of Fire. He wouldn’t have even considered it. Besides, he is not old enough to cross that Age Line. An aging potion didn’t even work and if Harry used it he would have
sprouted a beard. I watched the names being put in the Goblet, Harry never approached it and I
never saw him approach anyone old enough to enter prior to putting their name in. In fact he looked
surprised that Angelina Johnson was old enough. Out of everyone who entered he knew her the best.
Unless the person used the Imperious I don’t see how his name got in. I know the ward that sends
out an alarm to the Ministry about use of Unforgivable Curses isn’t working because otherwise they
would have known about the casting of the Imperious on Percy Weasley.” Severus mused. “It is
more likely that a Durmstrang student who is taught neutral and sometimes Darkish magic was
placed under the Imperious to enter Harry’s name as well as their own but it would be hard to
prove.”

A swan flew in through the cracked window and landed on the arm of Severus’ chair.
Confused he took the letter and the bird disappeared as quickly as it came. He read it.

‘Professor,

Do not attempt to deal with the Infertility Curse until the Marks have been dealt. Only
Harry Potter can affect them, tell him to speak to them. You must also be magically
bond to both of your mates prior to attempting to affect the curse.

Luna’

Severus read it a few times before sending it silently to Lucius to read and gesturing that Remus
should read it as well.

“When are you and the boys returning to Hogwarts?” Percy asked not rude enough to ask what the
letter was about.

“The day after tomorrow I think. We need to have Andromeda summon the Wizengamot to hear our
case regarding Harry’s release from an improper Magical Contract. Dumbledore and Crouch will no
doubt be present as well as Fudge. We’ll be petitioning Madam Bones the head of Magical Law
Enforcement. Ted can enter Harry’s memories regarding the Tournament that prove he didn’t enter
the Tournament. If this works it will hopefully have Harry out of the Tournament. We also have the
leader of Harry’s people on our side. If they don’t believe that he has the right to prevent Harry’s
participation we can bring up Mademoiselle Delacour’s sister and herself having to request
permission from the Veela Queen to participate because they would be put in some amount of
danger.” Severus replied.

Lucius continued, ‘Dumbledore will have a fit when he realizes that Remus and I will both be
staying in Severus’ quarters. I’m not sure I trust Remus in Severus’ bed yet but I’m not cruel enough
to tell him to sleep on the floor. I’m sure he can transfigure a chair into a cot or something.’

Remus’ wolf was furious but Remus dipped his head in acceptance as Moony raged. The fact that he
was going to be allowed to stay in their bedroom at Hogwarts was more then he’d expected.

“How can I help?” Percy asked.

“By being our eyes and ears in the Ministry.” Lucius began. “We’ll see about approaching Oliver.
No doubt he suffered a similar fate and his memories locked away. Memories of a love affair that resulted in children cannot be erased only hidden and are easily broken. Your child whether you knew it or not bound you and your Oliver together making a permanent impression in both your memory and your magic. Do not approach Oliver until we tell you.”

Percy missed his lover so much and wanted to tell him about their child but he couldn’t. He would wait; he didn’t want Oliver to think he was mad if his memories had been locked away as well. Besides, the prudent thing would be to allow Dumbledore to live in ignorance.

Chapter End Notes

What do you think their plan is?

Lucius had through and with an agreeable Andromeda called for a special session of Judicial Council led by Madam Bones, Head of Magical Law Enforcement.

Their witnesses would be Mind Healer Ted Tonks whose creditability undisputable, Harry himself, Draco and Severus. Hopefully they wouldn’t need Sirius Black I, the Leader of the Chuvash people.

It was a very sombre party that were about to enter the Ministry.

Lucius called the Daily Prophet, Witch Weekly and even the Quibbler to the Ministry promising them a remarkable story.

The reporters were crowding the Atrium and the Ministry staff was trying to evict them when Lucius and his party entered the Ministry.

“Lord Malfoy what is this?”

“Lord Malfoy and Harry Potter?”

“Is it true that Harry Potter is the Fourth Champion?”

“Harry, tell us how you got your name in the Goblet of Fire.”

Lucius held up his hand, “Please you’ve frighten him. He isn’t used to such attention. He’s lived a quiet life away from the Magical World and I ask that you listen to me.”

The reporters’ voices died down.

“I am here to protest Harry Potter’s illegal status as a Champion. To be eligible you must enter your name in the Goblet yourself. I have it on the excellent authority of my former brother by Bonding Ted Tonks Britain’s Premier Mind Healer. Severus Prince-Malfoy,”

Lucius said with pride, “my Bondmate,” ignoring the shocked voices of the reporters, “the Head of Slytherin and friend of Harry’s mother from childhood will swear that Harry was both shocked and horrified when his name came out of the Goblet of Fire. Harry’s rival Seeker Draco, my son will also testify to the same. Our family’s personal Healer Thaddeus Smythe will testify that Harry was in a near comatose state of shock,”

Lucius stated firmly, “not a faint that was an attempt to avoid punishment for cheating that has been assumed. Harry has suffered I’m sure you all know from the dreadful things that have happened at Hogwarts since he started. A Mountain Troll that nearly killed him and two other First Years. Then a dreadful mad professor tried to jinx his broom nearly killing him. The next year a Bludger went rogue and nearly killed both Harry and my son. Poor Gilderoy Lockhart, through a slight mispronunciation managed to banish all the bones in one of his arms that day. Anyone who has had to have a bone regrown can understand the pain he suffered that night. The Chamber of Secrets was
somehow opened and many Muggleborns were in danger including young Harry’s best friend Miss Granger. His other best friend Ronald Weasley, grandson of Lord Weasley’s sister was taken into the Chamber of Secrets. We can only imagine what horrors he must have endured to save her. Then the next year we all know that Sirius Black escaped, he managed to get into Hogwarts, slashing the portrait guardian and later the bed curtains of Harry’s friend Ron. Later Black kidnapped Ron; can you imagine his terror? His best friend kidnapped by the man he was told was responsible for the betrayal and murder of his parents?”

Lucius avoided actually claiming Black was guilty and smirked to himself before continuing, “This poor boy has suffered enough don’t you think? How would you feel of all these things happened to your son? We ask only for justice for this poor boy who has been accused of cheating to enter a dangerous tournament. We know as the rightful heir to the Houses of Black and Potter he has no need for money. As the Boy Who Lived what need has he for fame? He is the son of heroes, Lily and James who fought against He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named to their last breath, not only to protect their son but also to protect us all. We all owe the Potters a debt of gratitude. That is why I fight for their son.”

“Lord Malfoy, weren’t you a Death Eater?”

Lucius’ face filled with true sorrow, “Yes, but like I told the Ministry I did not join of my own free will. When I was Marked by He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named I lost most of my powers. I was born Veela, a Magical Creature of great power and healing because we are creatures of Light. My Father promised me to He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named when I was born and he was furious when I came into my inheritance. He tried to separate me from my mate but as you can see I persevered. My Veela is still trapped because of the Dark Mark but hopefully some day I will be free.”

Severus reached for his hand, “I never agreed with the Dark Lord or his followers. I joined to protect the person I loved most. Amoung them he had no one he could trust, they needed a potions master and I offered myself. I served the Light in my own way, a way I believe that Lily would have understood. Even to the end we were still friends and she loved me like a brother. I will do anything to protect her son even from misguided fools who frame him for cheating to make him forced to participate in a Tournament that could possibly kill him.”

As they walked away Severus asked, “What did you tell them all that for?”

Lucius smirked, “Simple, sometimes truth is your greatest weapon. Let’s see what they make of it.”

XooooooX

They entered Courtroom ten and took their seats in the ‘defendants’ aisle.

Up on the dais were Madam Bones, Lady Augusta Longbottom, Cornelius Fudge, Lady Umbridge, Albus Dumbledore, Griselda Marchbanks, Tiberius Ogden, Elphias Doge, Kingsley Shacklebolt and Barty Crouch Sr.

Percy smirked briefly from his place as clerk.

Amelia rapped her gavel calling them to order at ten o’clock. “The meeting of the Council of Magical Law is now in session. The case is regarding Harry Potter? His voice is?”

Andromeda stepped up, “Myself. His guardian Remus Lupin asked me to be his voice and vote in the Wizengamot and the Board of Hogwarts Governors until he comes of age.”

“This is regarding Potter’s illegal entry and champion status?” Lady Umbridge asked.
Andromeda winced, “In a way yes. We hope to prove not only did Harry not enter the Tournament that he should in no way be bound by a Magical contract he cannot and never consented.”

Albus laughed and his eyes twinkled, “Oh come on Andromeda. No need for pretence. Of course Harry entered.”

“I beg your pardon Headmaster but he did not. My Bondmate is a Mind Healer as well as a highly skilled and regarded Legimens. He firmly believes that Harry did not enter the tournament. We would like to present our evidence.”

Albus Dumbledore was not amused as he agreed. “Proceed.”

“I would like to summon Harry Potter and Healer Ted Tonks. Would someone bring me a pensieve with a view screen?”

Shacklebolt nodded for a member of Magical Law Enforcement to obtain one.

“Ted? Please remove the memories regarding the tournament.”

Ted nodded, “Legimens.” Diving into Harry’s mind gently and opening the doors that was slightly cracked and bore signs that read Tournament somewhere on them. He emerged with the vial of collected memories. “My reputation has always been honourable and my services proved useful under both Madam Bones and Mr. Crouch. I have not altered these memories.”

The pensieve arrived as he spoke, “Here watch.”

The memory was grey and fuzzy as it played.

[We all know what happened when Harry’s name came out of the cup, I’m removing it because it’s too long and I’d rather have it all mine.]

Then the memory ended and the next began.

The memory shifted again to just before the Goblet choose it’s champions..

_The majority of the Students entered the candelit Great Hall around six, and it was almost full. The Goblet of Fire had been moved when they weren’t paying attention; it was now standing in front of Hogwarts’ Headmaster’s empty chair at the teachers’ table. Harry thought it was all over until, the flames were heard again. He felt icy dread flood his body._

_Fleur Delacour of Beauxbatons Academy, Viktor Krum of Durmstrang Institute and Cedric Diggory of Hogwarts School became Triwizard Champions._

_Then the Goblet crackled with flame and a fourth slip of singed paper came out of the Goblet of Fire._

_Dumbledore snatched at it and then snapped, "Pot…Harry Potter!"_  

_There was that awful tone, the one Uncle Vernon used before beating him. Harry looked up; all around him were looks of anger, betrayal and shock._

_"Potter! Get up here!"_  

_The Great Hall filled with hissing about cheating and how he was going to be punished._

_This was no small thing, it wasn’t like he could just scrub cauldrons or polish silver. He was going to_
be beaten; he just knew it.

Harry slowly wobbled to his feet, his face white with fear and his hands trembling. He hadn't done anything, why was his name in the cup? He didn't want to die; they were going to hurt him. He, Harry fainted, his magic did the strangest thing, it locked itself in side him and his Glamour the one he used so much magic to hide behind even betrayed him and crashed.

The memories ended.

Dumbledore looked aghast, “Healer Tonks are you sure that those are Harry’s only memories regarding the tournament?”

Ted glared, “Yes. Do you doubt me? After all the witnessing and service I’ve given to the Department of Magical Law Enforcement?”

“Come now Healer Tonks how much did Malfoy pay you to give this testimony?” Delores Jane Umbridge asked.

Ted snapped, “This I did for free. Remus Lupin hired me on another matter. One that will remain privileged until he deems it necessary to tell. I’ll make a wizard’s oath that the memories you watched me extract are genuine.”

Elphias Doge spoke up, “If Harry Potter didn’t put his name in, who did?”

“How did his name come out of the Goblet then?” Griselda Marchbanks asked.

Remus shrugged, “The only way a Fourth Champion’s name could emerge is if the Goblet was most likely convinced there was a Fourth School competing. That would have required a lot of power behind a Confundus charm. I am one of Harry’s former instructors and I know he doesn’t have that kind of power. He can cast a powerful Patronus but he hasn’t learned how to Confound Powerful Ancient Artefacts. Very few people could do that, not all of us have the magical fortitude that the Headmaster does.” It took all of Remus’ nerve to appear pleasant when Moony wanted to rip the old fool’s throat out for what he’d done to Severus.

Dumbledore scoffed, “Oh please Remus, it’s not that hard to confound a magical artefact.”

“Really?” Lucius interrupted, “We would be intrigued to be shown. I can’t do it but that’s probably because my powers are sealed. A real shame.”

Dumbledore ignored him and continued, “That is a terrible excuse for getting Harry out of this contract. I think he has you fooled.”

Draco scowled up at the headmaster, “So he starved himself too? And broke his own bones?”

Dumbledore nodded, “You see poor Harry suffers from a persecution complex and something that Muggles call Munchausen syndrome. He is convinced his Muggle guardians hate him. To make his story seem true he starves himself, and finds various ways to break his bones. If it weren’t for Petunia’s love for Lily and my insistence that he grow up under her roof he would have been placed in St. Mungos’ Janus Thickey ward with the Longbottoms. You see when I placed him in her care I didn’t know that the killing curse affected him in more ways then just his scar.”

“You’re saying that our Boy-Who-Lived is mad?” Cornelius looked faintly purple.

“I’m afraid so. I’m sorry Harry,” Dumbledore looked sad and mournful, “I’ve tried to protect you but you’ve forced my hand.”
Ted was furious, “He suffers from Munchausen? A Persecution complex? You’re a Transfiguration Master not a Mind Healer. I’ll thank you to stay out of fields you have no training in.”

“My dear man, no use in being angry at me. I’ve done nothing but speak the truth. Poor Harry is disturbed and needs treatment. It really is dreadful that he’s gotten you all involved with his fantasies.” Dumbledore said forlornly.

“He isn’t lying. If he was then I could smell it.” Remus protested hotly.

“To Harry, they aren’t lies. He honestly believes them. Remus, Remus, when have I lied to you?”

“Many times when you were convinced it was for your ‘Greater Good.’” Remus said his voice tight with anger. “I can tell the true between sincere truth and truth by belief.

“Your testimony ‘sir’ is out of order and is useless in this case. I don’t understand how dear Cornelius let himself be talked into letting a monster like you care for our Boy-Who-Lived.” Madam Umbridge said in a saccharine voice.

Remus produced copies of James, Lily and Sirius’ wills, “Copies of wills filed with Gringotts. Originals maybe viewed there if you don’t believe me. It was the wish of your ‘Great Heroes’ the Potters that I be guardian of their son and my friend who you decided without a trial to imprison for life also made me his guardian.”

“A friend that is still on the loose and may still desire the life of his purported best friend’s son? A son whose parents he betrayed?” Umbridge continued in the sickly sweet voice.

“Sirius is innocent. It’s that Pettigrew’ fault!” Harry snapped losing his temper, “It’s all that bloody rat’s fault!”

“Rat? But Pettigrew is dead because your godfather murdered him. Sirius Black blew up a street and killed sixteen Muggles. It’s a known fact.” Umbridge said sweetly.

“Peter blew the street up with a wand behind his back after yelling that Sirius betrayed James and Lily before Sirius could accuse him. I heard Peter admit it! You fools made my parents murderer a member of the Order of Merlin!” Harry glared at the woman shaking. He turned to Severus, “What is the incantation for copying and removing a memory?”

Severus told him.

Harry held out his hand, “I need a vial.”

Severus handed one to him.

Harry repeated the incantation, a silvery memory landing the vial and handed it to Ted. “Here make them watch that. It’s a long memory so sit down and keep quiet. You might learn something. Call me a liar will you? If I’m a liar then James Potter was a Death Eater and a traitor to the Light!”

The Council of Magical Law Enforcement stiffened and hissed at his words.

The memory was put into the pensive and the monitor played it.

Ron, Hermione and Harry had come to Hagrid’s hut under the invisibility cloak.

The Council and Harry’s supporters watched his memories of the night Sirius grabbed Ron and Harry discovered Sirius had been sent away for a crime he didn’t commit. [We all know what
happened in Canon that night, absolutely no reason for me to repeat it all right?]

Harry spoke up, “Is there anyway to speed it up and skip a bit?”

“Something you don’t want us to see?” Umbridge asked sweetly.

Harry shook his head, “Just some of this is meaningless and I’m sure you’d rather not be bored by trivial things.”

Shacklebolt moved towards the pensieve, “I can speed it up, just let me know when to stop.”

Harry nodded as Shacklebolt whispered a spell.

Chapter End Notes

Okay so I left it at a cliffy sorry. It's just too large for one post. I hope you all enjoy it though.

Chapter 13B- At the Ministry

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Chapter thirteen B

Harry waited until the him in his memory and Hermione used nox to extinguish the light from their wands. “That’s enough.

Shacklebolt nodded and the memory resumed playing at normal speed.

*Only one door was open. As they crept toward it, they heard movement from behind it; a low moan, and then a deep, loud purring. They exchanged a last look, a last nod.*

*Everyone watched as the Harry in the memory, kicked the door wide open with his wand held tightly before him*

They watched the vision silently.

"*So that's why Snape doesn't like you,*" said Harry slowly, "*because he thought you were in on the joke?*

"*That's right,()* sneered a cold voice from the wall behind Remus. *Severus Snape was pulling off the Invisibility Cloak, his wand pointing, directly at Remus.*

Harry asked Shacklebolt to once again skip to avoid embarrassing anyone. He liked Severus and Remus, the next bit would be embarrassing to them both.

Shacklebolt agreed.

*Harry made up his mind in a split second. Before Snape could take even one step toward him, he had raised his wand. "Expelliarmus!" he yelled*

*So did Ron and Hermione.*
The combined disarming spell resulted in a blast that made the creaky door rattle on its hinges. Severus was lifted off his feet by the three-fold spell and slammed into the wall. Where he then slid down on to the floor, a trickle of blood oozing from under his hair.

Severus had been knocked out and probably had ended up with a concussion. For which Harry now felt extremely sorry.

Sirius told them off for what they had done, telling them they should have let him handle it.

Hermione whinged about them attacking a teacher, which was silly considering that she really didn’t like Snape all that much.

Sometimes her obsession with following the rules was as bad as Percy. What they had done wasn’t right but it seemed to be the correct thing to do. Severus had been blinded by jealousy and hurt when he’d followed them into the Shrieking Shack.

Remus was struggling against the painfully bonds Severus had cast using the Incarcerous spell.

Sirius bent down to untie his friend.

Remus sat up, rubbing where the far too tight ropes had cut into his arms. "Thank you, Harry," he said.

"I'm still not saying I believe you," he told Remus.

Harry did now, seeing Pettigrew and hearing him confess to betraying his parents and letting Sirius get blamed.

Remus asked for Pettigrew after retrieving his wand and offer to give them their proof.

Ron was clutching Scabbers to his chest, weakly protesting about how unlikely it was that
Scabbers was Peter Pettigrew who was believed to be dead, murdered along with sixteen Muggles. Even trying to get Hermione to agree with him about the improbability.

Remus admitted that it was a fair question before turning to Sirius and asking how his friend had found out where he was.

Sirius reached into his dirty ragged robes with his skeletal hands that were rather claw-like and took out a crumpled piece of paper. Which they watched him smoothed flat on what was left of a damaged, dusty table and held out to show the others.

To everyone surprise it was the photograph of Ron and his family that had appeared in the Daily Prophet the previous summer after they won the Daily Prophet’s Galleon drawing. It was taken in Egypt where they had gone as a family to visit Bill and there, on Ron’s shoulder, was Scabbers.

"How did you get this?" Remus asked his friend, thunderstruck.

Everyone present- except maybe Fudge knew that Azkaban prisoners were denied newspapers.

"Fudge." Sirius said. Telling them about how the Minister for Magic had given him the paper and how due to his witnessing Peter transforming numerous times he’d recognized his supposedly dead friend on the front page.

"My God," exclaimed Remus softly, his eyes clearly drifting from Scabbers to the picture in the paper and back to him in Ron’s hands. "His front paw..."

"What about it?" Ron asked defiantly.

"He's got a toe missing,"

"Of course, so simple... so brilliant... he cut it off himself?"

Sirius described what happened when he’d cornered Peter on that Muggle street after realizing
that James and Lily were dead.

Remus and Ron proceeded to argue why and why not ‘Scabbers’ was Peter Pettigrew.

Ron protested that Scabbers was ill because of Crookshanks, that mad cat was trying kill him.

But that wasn't right, Harry remembered. Scabbers had been looking ill before he met Crookshanks. They met Crookshanks when Ron decided to pick up rat tonic and Hermione was planning on getting an owl. In fact, Scabbers had been ill since Ron's return from Egypt, so somewhere around the time when Sirius had escaped.

Sirius told them that Crookshanks wasn’t mad, nor was he trying to kill Scabbers. Crookshanks had been helping him after deciding that Scabbers rather them Sirius was up to no good.

"What do you mean?" breathed Hermione.

Sirius told them how Crookshanks tried and failed to bring Scabbers to him. Finally the cat stole a list of passwords from a boy’s bedside hoping that he would have better luck being a wizard rather them a part Kneazel.

Harry's brain seemed to be sagging under the weight of what he was hearing. It was absurd... and yet...

Sirius told them how Peter had discovered what Crookshanks was up to and tried to frame the Kneazel for his death. Having already succeeded in similar actions it must have been easy. Since there was blood on the sheets Peter probably bit himself.

These words jolted the Harry in the pensieve to his senses. He started yelling about why Sirius would try get to a hold of Scabbers and that it was to kill him like Sirius had killed his parents.

Harry winced, that tone of voice made him quake. He knew now that Sirius was innocent but to see and hear his own rage reflected was nauseating.
"No, Harry-" Remus tried to calm him down.

"And now you've come to finish him off!" Harry yelled.

"Yes, I have," said Sirius, with an evil look at Scabbers.

"Then I should've let Snape take you!" Harry shouted.

"Harry," said Remus hurriedly, "don't you see? All this time we've thought Sirius betrayed your parents, and Peter tracked him down -- but it was the other way around, don't you see? Peter betrayed your mother and father -- Sirius tracked Peter down --"

"THAT'S NOT TRUE!" Harry yelled. Stubbornly insisting that Sirius was their Secret Keeper and that he had betrayed them.

He was pointing at Sirius, who shook his head slowly; the sunken eyes were suddenly over bright.

Sirius protested weakly, accepting that he was to blame for Lily and James’ murders because Peter becoming Secret Keeper was his idea. That he had been responsible for Peter’s safety, yet Peter escaped. Sirius had discovered James and Lily dead, so he’d set out to track Peter. Because he realized that his pressuring James and Lily to switch to Peter had been responsible for their being betrayed.

"Enough of this," said Remus.

The tone of his voice was sharp like steel as he ordered Ron to give him the rat.

"What are you going to do with him if I give him to you?" Ron asked Remus tensely.

"Force him to show himself," said Remus. "If he really is a rat, it won't hurt him."
At first Ron hesitated and then handed Scabbers to Remus.

"Ready, Sirius?" Remus asked.

Sirius took Severus’ wand, croaking, “Together?

"I think so. On the count of three. One -- two -- THREE!” said Remus, holding Scabbers tightly in one hand and his wand in the other.

A flash of blue-white light erupted from both wands; for a moment, Scabbers was frozen in midair, his small gray form twisting madly.

Ron yelled.

The rat fell and hit the floor. There was another blinding flash of light and then --

There were gasps from the Tonks, the Malfoys and the Council of Magical Law.

As the spell cast from Remus and Sirius hit the rat.

The rat shimmered and grew like watching a tree growing in fast forward. Soon there wasn’t a rat but a chubby man with a bald spot and watery eyes who was wringing his hands.

"Well, hello, Peter. Long time, no see." Remus said agreeably.

Almost as though rats often were found to be old friends.

"S -- Sirius... R – Remus… My friends... my old friends..."

Pettigrew’s voice was squeaky and his eyes frequently darted toward the direction of the door in a manner that was decidedly shifty.
Sirius's wand arm rose in a threatening manner.

Then Remus grabbed his wrist tightly and give him a warning look, before he turned n to Pettigrew, his voice was pleasant. "We've been having a little chat, Peter, about what happened the night Lily and James died. You might have missed the finer points while you were squeaking around down there on the bed --"

Pettigrew squeaked about Remus believing Sirius after the later had tried to kill him.

Remus coldly acknowledged that Sirius might have tried to kill him however he wanted to clear up some things regarding the night James and Lily died.

"He's come to try and kill me again!" Pettigrew squeaked suddenly, pointing at Sirius, and Harry saw that he used his middle finger, because his index was missing. "He killed Lily and James and now he's going to kill me too.... You've got to help me, Remus...."

If looks could kill or at least cause serious pain Pettigrew would probably be thrashing about like he was under the Cruciatus curse. Remus winced at the expression on Sirius’ face, to cast an unforgivable you have mean it. If Sirius had cast it at that moment he would have definitely meant it and it would have done considerable damage. In his study of the Dark Arts and fighting them revealed that Dark Arts were fueled by the darker emotions. One had to hate the person they cast a Dark Arts spell on to cause pain and suffering.

"No one's going to try and kill you until we've sorted a few things out," Remus snapped.

Pettigrew protested the need to sort things out when clearly Sirius wanted him dead. Claiming that he’d been waiting for Sirius to come after him

Remus, his brow furrowed in surprise at Peter’s state about expecting Sirius to escape Azkaban. "When nobody has ever done it before?"

Pettigrew accused Sirius of having Dark Magic that no one knew about, that Voldemort taught him things.
Sirius started to laugh, a horrible, mirthless laugh that seemed filled the whole room. "Voldemort, teach me tricks?"

Pettigrew flinched.

As did anyone watching minus of course Dumbledore who always used it when referring to the current Dark Lord.

"What, scared to hear your old master's name?" Sirius sneered, “I don't blame you, Peter. His lot aren't very happy with you, are they?"

Pettigrew mumbled under his breath about not knowing what Sirius was talking about when his whole face was shining with sweat.

Sirius turned the tables, accusing Pettigrew of hiding from Death Eaters rather than himself and how rumours had even reached Azkaban about how they were gunning for whoever was responsible for their Lord's disappearance.

Shrilly Pettigrew continued denying the accusations though he tried to wipe the sweat from his face with a dingy sleeve. While asking Remus if he believe what Sirius was saying.

Remus calmly admitted difficult in believing an ‘innocent’ man would spend twelve years as a rat.

Pettigrew insisted in a squeal that he was ‘Innocent, but scared! Claiming that if Voldemort's supporters were after him it was because he put the spy, Sirius Black in Azkaban.

Sirius growled, sounding like a bear-sized dog, about being a spy for Voldemort. That he, Sirius had never snuck around people who were stronger and more powerful than himself? His annoyance was clear because that he hadn’t understood that Pettigrew was the spy from the start. Telling them that Pettigrew had always liked big friends who’d look after him. That it used to be himself, Remus and James...only to have clearly been traded in for Voldemort.

Pettigrew had wiped his face again and was almost panting as he denied still having been a spy. Claiming that Sirius must be out of his mind and seemed to be grasping at straws.
Sirius hissed, so venomously that Pettigrew took a step backward. Telling Pettigrew that changing to him as Secret Keeper at the last minute had been his idea because he’d been sure that it was flawless. That it would have been thought that Sirius himself was the Secret Keeper so he would have been a clear target. After all who would suspect they would have chosen a weak, talentless thing like you. Sneering that Pettigrew’s finest moment in his miserable life, when he told Voldemort that he could hand him the Potters.

Pettigrew was muttering as if he were clearly distracted.

Those viewing Harry’s memories in the pensieve could hear words like ‘far-fetched’ and ‘lunacy,’ but one couldn’t help noticing the ashen color of Pettigrew’s face and the way his eyes continued to dart toward the windows and door as if looking for an escape route.

Hermione timidly asked if she could ask a question.

To which Remus politely agreed.

Hermione made the point that ‘Scabbers’ or Pettigrew had stayed for three years in a dormitory and hadn’t harmed him. That if Pettigrew had done what they said wouldn’t he have?

Pettigrew shrilly, pointing at Ron with his maimed hand, agreed with her that he had never harmed Harry. Latching onto the statement as if it would prove his innocence.

Sirius told them that that Pettigrew never did anything unless it benefited him. That Voldemort had been in hiding for years and that he was said to be half dead. Pettigrew wouldn’t commit murder right under Albus Dumbledore’s nose, for a wreck of a wizard who'd lost all of his power. Voldemort had to be the biggest bully in the playground before Pettigrew would rejoin him. He sneered that the reason he, Pettigrew found a wizard family to take you in was keep an ear out for news. In case his old protector regained strength, and it was safe to rejoin him.

Pettigrew opened his mouth and closed it several times. He seemed to have lost the ability to talk.

Hermione then addressed Sirius.

Sirius jumped at being addressed in this manner and looked at her like she was an enigma.
Hermione then proceeded to ask him how he escaped Azkaban if he didn’t use Dark Magic.

Pettigrew gasped, nodding frantically at her. Saying that he wanted to know as well.

Remus glared at him and Pettigrew went silent.

Sirius was frowning slightly at Hermione, as he pondered his answer. Then he proceeded to tell them how his knowing he was innocent helped him keep his mind. It wasn’t a happy thought so the Dementors couldn’t steal it. When it got to be too much he transformed. Since Dementors were blind they didn’t know he transformed, his less than human thoughts were proof he was ‘going insane’.

Pettigrew shook his head, his mouth silently forming words he didn’t speak and yet didn’t seem to be able to tear his eyes away from his ‘old friend’. It was as if Sirius Black had him hypnotized.

Sirius continued that due Pettigrew’s decision to hide as a pet rat in a Wizarding family had Pettigrew perfectly situated. Pettigrew was in a position to deliver Harry over to Voldemort the moment he was sure of Allies. If he, Pettigrew delivered Harry to them, who’d dare say he’d betrayed Lord Voldemort? He’d be welcomed back with honors. In light of that Sirius had to escape to protect Harry, especially since he was the only one who knew Peter was alive.

Severus wondered if Sirius’ oath from Harry’s Wiccaning had helped push him into it. The oath was binding and hard to fight, after seeing Draco untransfigured from a ferret had him torn between avenging his godson and making sure he was treated.

Harry remembered what he overheard Mr. Weasley telling Mrs. Weasley. "The guards say he's been talking in his sleep... always the same words... 'He's at Hogwarts.'"

Sirius told them that it became an obsession, which was something the Dementors couldn’t take either. That gave Sirius or so he claimed strength and helped clear his mind. When the Dementors came one day to bring food Sirius in his animagus form had slipped past them when they came to feed him. As a dog claimed he’d been thin enough to slip through the bars. Then swam as a dog back to the mainland where he then journeyed north and slipped into the Hogwarts grounds as a dog. Where he had been living in the forest ever since, except when he’d came to watch Harry play Quidditch with Gryffindor. Then he told Harry that he flew as well as
James before telling his godson that he would have died sooner then betray Harry’s parents.

Harry’s eyes didn’t look away.

And at long last, Harry believed him. Throat too tight to speak, he nodded.

"No!"

the viewers watched as Pettigrew fell to his knees as though Harry’s nod had been his own death sentence.

Pettigrew was on his knees, groveling, his hands clasped in front of him as though begging.

"Sirius -- it's me... it's Peter... your friend... you wouldn’t --"

Sirius kicked at him.

Pettigrew recoiled.

Sirius snarled. "There's enough filth on my robes without you touching them,"

Pettigrew implored Remus, begging him. Asking if it was ever probable that James and Lily had changed at the last minute and not told them.

Pettigrew proceeded to beg them each in turn, Remus, Ron, Hermione and finally Harry.

Remus was disgusted, Ron looked at him with distaste and Hermione turned her back on Pettigrew.

Sirius blew up at the rat; incensed that Pettigrew had the audacity to speak of James to Harry. Shouting that he should have stood up to Voldemort, should have died rather then to betray his
friends: simply because that was what they would have done for him.

Harry finally stepped in when it was obvious that Sirius and Remus wanted to kill the rat, actually stepping between their wands and Pettigrew. Protesting that his father wouldn’t have wanted his friends to become killers even to avenge him.

Sirius reminded Harry that the crying balding rat of a man was responsible for his not having parents.

Harry then insisted that they turn Pettigrew in and let him be sent to Azkaban for what he did. Then Sirius could be found innocent and declared free.

Pettigrew then was practically kissing his feet, thanking him for his kindness.

Harry shook him off, or more accurately shoved him, and spat at him to get off. That it was for his father’s sake and not Pettigrew’s that he was doing this.

No one moved or made a sound except Pettigrew, whose breath was coming in wheezes as he clutched his chest.

Sirius and Remus were looking at each other. Then together, they lowered their wands.

Sirius told Harry he was the only who deserved to make the choice but to consider what he, Pettigrew had done.

Harry repeated that Pettigrew could go to Azkaban, that if anyone deserved that place, he did.

Lucius promised himself that if Pettigrew was caught that he would follow Harry’s wishes.

Pettigrew was still behind Harry and making wheezing noises.

Remus reluctantly seemed to give in and asked Harry to stand aside.
Harry hesitated.

Remus then swore he was only going to restrain the traitor.

So Harry stepped out of the way.

A silent Incarcerous and within a heartbeat, Pettigrew was wriggling on the floor, bound and gagged.

Sirius growled that if Pettigrew transformed they would kill him and asked Harry for an agreement.

Severus was more than a little annoyed at Sirius’ heavy-handed behavior. Seriously? Asking a thirteen year old boy for the right to kill someone?

Harry nodded when he was directly in Pettigrew’s line of sight.

Some of the members of the Council of Magical Law gasped.

Remus had turned to his students, telling Ron that he couldn’t mend bones like Pomfrey but he could make it easier for him.

Bandages spun up Ron’s leg, strapping it tightly to a splint.

Remus then helped him to his feet.

Ron clearly put weight on his leg and for once didn’t wince.

Hermione was looking at Severus’ unconscious form and asked what they were going to do about
Remus winced at the memory, glancing nervously at Lucius and Severus. He’d been a coward that day not standing up to Severus or against Padfoot.

Remus checked his pulse and declared that there wasn’t anything really wrong with him. Telling the teens they were just overly enthusiastic. Deciding it would be best to have him remain unconscious. Using Mobilicorpus to guide his fellow professor to his feet and using flicks of his wand to direct him.

Remus sighed, he’d wanted Severus to be revived by Pomfrey because he hadn’t much skill at healing medicine. Also he didn’t want to be forced to deal with their bickering at the time. Neither could be in a room without wanting to kill one another.

Sirius insisted that two of them be chained to Pettigrew to make sure he didn’t try to escape.

Ron and Remus volunteered.

Sirius then conjured heavy manacles from thin air; chaining an upright Pettigrew’s left arm chained to Remus’ right and Pettigrew’s right arm to Ron’s left.

Ron’s face was set hard like marble, his glances at Pettigrew were revealing extreme disgust. As if Ron viewed Scabbers's true identity as a personal insult.

Crookshanks was jaunty and buoyant as if he’d been vindicated.

Harry’s memory ended there, he hadn’t copied past that point.

He glared, “See? I told you Pettigrew was alive and no one believed me but the Headmaster. He shut us in the Infirmary after kicking everyone else out. Calmly mentioning to Hermione about three turns, knowing full well it was too dangerous for us to be outside the castle but if I hadn’t both Sirius and I would have been Kissed.”
Remus winced knowing too dangerous meant himself as a werewolf running loose in the Forbidden Forest.

“Three turns?” Fudge asked raising an eyebrow.

“Some brilliant person agreed with McGonagall and let Hermione take twelve classes. That required the use and special dispensation to use a Time-Turner. Clearly she violated the carefully prescribed uses.” Harry shrugged.

“We have in a pensieve memory the confession of one Peter Pettigrew admitting to his joining the ranks of He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named and betraying the Potters.” Madam Bones was very disturbed. “I can’t understand how the Wizengamot allowed such a travesty of justice.” Glaring at Crouch who was practically vacant.

“We should, um, copy this memory and add it to the file of the investigation I secretly ordered regarding the Black case.” Fudge muttered.

Shacklebolt nodded, clearly planning to watch the entire memory from start to finish to see if there was anything of import that Harry had hidden for him.

“It seems despite my esteemed colleague’s opinion that his memories are honest. I vote that he be released from the supposed contract and be free to return to school without consequences.” Madam Bones said, despite having attacked a teacher who considering said teacher’s support of Harry had no reason to press charges under either the authority of the school or Wizengamot.

Doge, Dumbledore, Crouch and surprisingly Umbridge disagreed.

Fudge, Kingsley, Lady Longbottom, Marchbanks and Ogden sided with Madam Bones.

With a vote of six to four the Council of Magical Law’s ruling was that Harry be released from the Magical Contract binding him to participate in the Triwizard Tournament.

Crouch was practically catatonic.
Dumbledore looked apoplectic.

Harry crumbled to his feet in shock.

Draco scooped him up, “You’re free.”

Harry silently sobbed into his new friend’s robes.

Lucius and Remus hugged Severus jointly.

Dumbledore’s face was white with anger.

Sirius could see beneath that hastily erected Glamour that Dumbledore was seething; if looks could kill Severus would be dead. He looked at Dumbledore, his voice purring, “Headmaster, do you know who I am?”

Dumbledore was shocked silent.

Sirius’ voice boomed in the courtroom, “My name is Sirius Black, the first to hold that name, not to be confused with my wayward great something nephew. I came to my attention that one of my descendants was in danger. My friend the Veela queen was only too delighted to invite me to court. You see Headmaster, Harry Potter is under my protection. I am the King of the Chuvash.”

He roared and the courtroom shook.

Kingsley Shacklebolt, Amelia Bones, Lady Longbottom and Cornelius Fudge quaked and bowed.

Lucius was surprised; he thought Sirius was merely a leader of the Chuvash not their king. This man was equal to his queen and he fell to his knees.

His companions following suit.
Umbridge’s pudgy face was twisted with hatred.

“You can’t claim him!” Dumbledore hissed.

“Tell me Headmaster why he speaks in Parseltongue? It is a trait shared only by those of Chuvash blood.”

“Because, because…because of Voldemort! The killing curse!” Dumbledore stammered and then snarled.

“You are a fool, wise but a great fool nonetheless. He is mine, touch him again and as the King of the Chuvash no matter what I do to you old man even your precious Ministry can’t touch me.” Sirius gestured for the Malfoys, Tonks and Remus to rise, “We shall be taking our leave.” He glanced at Lady Longbottom, “Be gentle with your grandson my dear. He is at a very delicate stage of his maturity. He will need your guidance; it wouldn’t do well to make him fear you. Oh, do him a favour. Buy him a wand.”

Lady Longbottom stared at him as they departed.

Percy signed his minutes of the case, handed them off to Shacklebolt and disappeared.

Chapter End Notes

Reluctantly, Harry agreed to a session with Mind Healer Tonks the day after they argued their case to have him excused from the Tournament.

They were in the Drawing room of Lucius' townhouse.

By they Harry meant: Lucius, Remus, Severus, Andromeda, her daughter Nymphadora—who insisted she be called Tonks but her father overrode her and said they could call her Dora, Draco and his ancestor Sirius I.

Harry gulped, "Why is there a pensieve?"

Ted smiled gently at him, "Because you don't like talking. I thought perhaps since you know the spell to copy and remove a memory we could deal with specific memories one by one."

Harry sighed and nodded, "Fine."

Severus pitied him and made a suggestion, "For every painful memory you show I'll show one of equal or near equal pain."

Lucius glanced at his mate; he knew how much Severus suffered both at home and at the hands of the 'Marauders'. He wasn't sure Severus should show his memories…

Harry chewed on his lip, "Agreed."

"Pick a memory Harry." Ted instructed gently.

Harry swallowed and chose his memory. He carefully copied it and saved it to a vial that miraculously seemed to find itself beside him.

The memory was poured into the pensieve and a screen attached so the others could watch it.

The memory began.

*Harry stood in the kitchen, clutching the mop for support, as Uncle Vernon advanced on him, a demonic glint in his tiny eyes.*

"*Read it!*" he hissed evilly, *brandishing the letter the owl had delivered. "Go on - read it!!"*

*Harry took it. It did not contain birthday greetings.*

*Dear Mr. Potter,*

*We have received intelligence that a Hover Charm was used at your place of residence this*
evening at twelve minutes past nine. As you know, underage wizards are not permitted to perform spells outside school, and further spellwork on your part may lead to expulsion from said school (Decree for the Reasonable Restriction of Underage Sorcery, 1875, Paragraph C). We would also ask you to remember that any magical activity that risks notice by members of the non-magical community (Muggles) is a serious offense under section 13 of the International Confederation of Warlocks’ Statute of Secrecy.

Enjoy your holidays! Yours sincerely,

Mafalda Hopkirk

IMPROPER USE OF MAGIC OFFICE

Ministry of Magic

Harry looked up from the letter and gulped.

"You didn't tell us you weren't allowed to use magic outside school," said Uncle Vernon, a mad gleam dancing in his eyes. "Forgot to mention it. Slipped your mind, I daresay." He was bearing down on Harry like a great bulldog, all his teeth bared. "Well, I've got news for you, boy. I'm locking you up. You're never going back to that school ... never ... and if you try and magic yourself out - they'll expel you!"

And laughing like a maniac, he dragged Harry back upstairs.

Uncle Vernon was as bad as his word.

The memory skipped of it's own accord to the following morning.

Vernon Dursley paid a man to fit bars on Harry's window. He himself fitted a cat-flap in the bedroom door, so that small amounts of food could be pushed inside three times a day. They let Harry out to use the bathroom morning and evening. Otherwise, he was locked in his room around the clock.

Three days later, the Dursleys were showing no sign of relenting, and Harry couldn't see any way out of his situation. He lay on his bed watching the sun sinking behind the bars on the window and wondered miserably what was going to happen to him.

What was the good of magicking himself out of his room if Hogwarts would expel him for doing it? Yet life at Privet Drive had reached an all-time low. Now that the Dursleys knew they weren't going to wake up as fruit bats, he had lost his only weapon. Dobby might have saved Harry from horrible happenings at Hogwarts, but the way things were going, he'd probably starve to death anyway.

The cat-flap rattled and Aunt Petunia's hand appeared, pushing a bowl of canned soup into the room. Harry, whose insides were aching with hunger, jumped off his bed and seized it. The soup was stone cold, but he drank half of it in one gulp. Then he crossed the room to Hedwig's cage and tipped the soggy vegetables at the bottom of the bowl into her empty food tray. She ruffled her feathers and gave him a look of deep disgust.

"It's no good turning your beak up at it - that's all we've got," said Harry grimly. He put the
empty bowl back on the floor next to the cat-flap and lay back down on the bed, somehow even hungrier than he had been before the soup.

Supposing he was still alive in another four weeks, what would happen if he didn't turn up at Hogwarts? Would someone be sent to see why he hadn't come back? Would they be able to make the Dursleys let him go?

The room was growing dark. Exhausted, stomach rumbling, mind spinning over the same unanswerable questions, Harry fell into an uneasy sleep.

He dreamed that he was on show in a zoo, with a card reading UNDERAGE WIZARD attached to his cage. People goggled through the bars at him as he lay, starving and weak, on a bed of straw. He saw Dobby's face in the crowd and shouted out, asking for help, but Dobby called, "Harry Potter is safe there, sir!" and vanished. Then the Dursleys appeared and Dudley rattled the bars of the cage, laughing at him.

"Stop it," Harry muttered as the rattling pounded in his sore head. "Leave me alone ... cut it out... I'm trying to sleep."

He opened his eyes. Moonlight was shining through the bars on the window. And someone was goggling through the bars at him: a freckle-faced, red-haired, long-nosed someone.

Ron Weasley was outside Harry's window.

The memory finally ended.

Everyone but Severus was absolutely furious. Dora wanted to arrest the Muggles and have them tried before the Council of Magical Law.

Severus closed his eyes, withdrawing a very painful and highly embarrassing memory. He placed the silvery memory in an empty potions vial and held it out to Harry, "As promised. I would prefer you viewed it privately but in all fairness you had to suffer letting us all see that. Therefore against my wishes for privacy I will allow all of them to view it. Only Lucius knows something of it and I have kept the complete shameful truth from everyone but your mother."

Harry blinked at the mention of his mother.

Severus glanced at Remus, "You believe I'm sure that my worst memory would be of the day I called Lily a Mudblood?"

Remus nodded.

Severus shook his head, "That would be third. First would be when Dumbledore ripped away my child, second would be this memory…"

Harry replaced his own memory in it's vial, not noticing Tonks had labeled it and put it inside her robe.

Severus glanced at Lucius and Remus, muttering, "What you see don't think too badly of me."

Harry poured the memory into the pensieve.

Severus was scrawny for his age like Harry, he slept in a small room a little bigger then a closet
but less than a true room. It was as if a Muggle-sized loo had all its contents banished. This was
the bedroom belonging to a young Severus Snape.

He could hear his mother's soft cries of pain as her Muggle husband beat her. How the mighty
had fallen, Eileen Prince had once had fine marks and was expected to reach great heights.

Her bedroom door slammed.

His room was opened, in the door stood the man who'd sired him. "Well if it isn't the little wizard.
You sleep well on that moth-eaten mattress? I'll break you like I broke her."

Severus was grabbed by his hair and dragged down the hall but he stayed silent, refusing to let
tears even fill his eyes.

He was dragged to the tiniest closet in their tumbled down near ruin of a house, Spinner's End. It
was an old broom closet and there wasn't room to even turn around.

Severus was thrown in.

Tobias kicked him and stomped on him; leaving him silent, defiant but bloody when he finally
slammed and locked the door taunting him, "Let yourself out if you dare. Using magic will get
you thrown out of yours and your bitch mother's precious school. I'll let you out when I return."
There was a truly malicious glee in those eyes.

Severus lay cramped; sleeping fitfully it was hard to judge the passage of time in the darkness of
the closet. But to his horror and shame both his bladder and bowels betrayed him more than once.
He hadn't eaten for two days before he'd been tossed in here, Tobias had locked him up and his
window was nailed shut so he couldn't sneak over to the Evans' house. Lily or her mother would
feed him if he was there...

To his embarrassment, he could hear Lily. He tried and failed to convince himself that it was the
product of a delusional mind, brought on from lack of food and water as well as sitting in a mix of
his own bodily fluids.

"What is that smell? It smells like something died."

His bedroom door sounded like it'd been opened. "Severus where are you? I know something's
happened. I haven't seen you in a week. The neighbors said Mr. Snape's been gone for four days.
Please don't be dead."

It was pride that kept him from making any noise.

To his terror, the door to his closet was opened.

"Alohomora. Oh my god! Severus!" Lily's eyes filled with tears, "Please don't be dead. I don't
know what I would do if you were. Who would make fun of that toerag with me? Severus?"

Reflected in her eyes was the beaten filthy thirteen-year-old boy, if Tobias saw him now he would
have won.

Lily whispered an ancient spell that hid all magic; calling on her magic she lifted her friend. "I'll
never tell a soul."

Severus lay half-dead with hunger and barely breathing as she levitated him onto a conjured stretcher.

Lily used her magic to push the stretcher into the bathroom; she turned on the water and made it nearly hot. Stripping down to her underwear she undressed her friend, there was such tenderness in her care of him. It was as if she was his mother or at least a nurse. She lifted him into the tub after conjuring a hair tie to hold her auburn hair back; with gentleness she bathed his body, washing everything away.

Severus was almost in tears; no one he'd ever known would do this for him. He was too weak to clean himself.

Three times she had to banish the water and refill the tub but not once did she say anything cruel or condescending. All that mattered was her friend…

When he was clean she used a spell to dry him off and then summoned clothes. Dressing her best friend and shoving clothes in his school bag, she had to use a featherweight charm to carry him. Lily called her dad and said that his parents were away and asked if he could spend a few days with them. After gaining their consent she hugged him. "I won't tell a soul. I'll take today's memory to my grave."

The memory ended.

Harry was in tears; his mother was kind and good. How could she have married someone like James Potter? Ron wouldn't have done that for him; neither would Hermione though she was often compared to his mother. He looked up at Draco and knew in his heart that Draco would have done the same to him as Lily had done for Severus. The difference was that his mother had clearly loved Severus as a brother and being his destined mate, Draco cared for him in a different way.

Lucius understood why Severus was so loyal to Lily; she was the only light in his life away from Hogwarts. The gentle care she gave to Severus that day and the solemn promise to never speak of it made him understand why his mate was so upset with himself for how he treated Lily's son. He remembered how Lily would defend Severus and understood for the first time; Harry's defense for unjustly maligned persons was his mother shining through.

Remus was sickened that Severus' sire had done something so cruel as to lock his son in a tiny closet for something like three days. He thanked the fates that his mate had had someone like Lily and wished that Harry had been so lucky.

Draco was glad his papa's father was dead, the man was beyond cruel and it hurt to see Severus like that, so broken and ashamed. As if any of that was his fault! Lily Evans was a wonderful person and he wished Harry had known her…

Andromeda had never liked Severus, she hadn't gone out of her way to make the Halfblood's life hell like Narcissa, Bellatrix, Sirius or James had but she hadn't stopped it either.

Ted hadn't realized such a traumatizing memory existed in the man he had once attended school with albeit in different years and houses. No wonder he was so cold and withdrawn until Lucius finally was able to be Bonded to him. Severus truly did need his services despite his reluctance.

Dora shook, a Muggle did that? She'd never see a soul so broken even someone tortured by the
Cruciatus and the Imperious had never looked that close to wishing for death. She thanked Hufflepuff that she'd had her parents to love her and show her how to be a good person. It could have been worse much worse.

Chapter End Notes

Don't hate me too much...even if I almost didn’t let them beat Dumbles but then I decided that they proved their case well enough. I suppose he is a homophobic manipulative bastard in a way. King Sirius will eventually rip Dumbles’ throat out if he attacks Harry in any way again.

Poor Percy, yes he was a prat but I don’t think he will be anymore except to Dumbles and good for him. As for Harry he really should return to school at least for a while. If necessary Remus will remove him, at school or not Ted will help him deal with the memories behind his nightmares so they can keep Harry from continuing to overuse the Dreamless Sleep Potion.

Chapter 15- Lucius' attempts to help Percy

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Chapter 15

Lucius owned an apartment building and for Percy’s protection, he offered him a place there and the young man graciously accepted.

He was a staunch Appleby Arrows fan but for Percy’s sake he would do this. He made an appointment to meet with the owner of the Puddlemere United team asking if he would bring his newly signed Keeper to Lunch at Antonio’s.

It was ten to noon when Brandon Puleston and Oliver Wood arrived.

Lucius nodded, “Kind of you to agree to join me.”

Oliver looked uncomfortable.

“My son told me that you were the best Keeper at Hogwarts. He was actually quite pleased when you were signed. Said it would be a real shame.”

Oliver paled, “Malfoy? He said that about me? I thought he hated Gryffindor. He was always picking fights with Harry. Harry was the one person he never won against.”

“With the way Wood’s been bragging about this Potter I wish the Hogwarts’ season hadn’t be cancelled. I would have liked to see him play.” Puleston admitted.

“I had the opportunity to watch him once; he’s the best I’ve ever seen. Put Regulus Black to shame and when I was at Hogwarts he was the best.” Lucius said.

“The professors said Charlie was better then Regulus and he was invited to play for three teams. Harry was better then Charlie his first year. It was an honour to teach him how to play and watch him grow.” Oliver said nervously.

Lucius gestured at their menus, “Order whatever you like before we get down to business.”

Oliver nervously ordered, a salad.

Lucius snorted, “Bring him Spaghetti al carbon. I’ll have steak Fettuccini.”

Puleston had something not that Lucius gave a damn. This ‘interview’ was all about Oliver.

“Tell me about Hogwarts. Did you have any favourite subjects? Friends?” Lucius wanted to see what Dumbledore had done to this boy.

“I had a friend once, I thought we couldn’t be closer. He helped me study and read through my essays offering corrections. Then the Chamber of Secrets was open and we became closer. Or at least I thought we did. Until a professor took me aside and said that they felt trapped and didn’t want to see me anymore. I was under strict orders to stay away. I was confused because we’d planned to move in together and we were planning a life together. I had every intention of asking them to Bond with me and supporting their political aspirations.” Oliver looked so lost, as if his heart had been broken.
Lucius was surprised that Dumbledore hadn’t wiped his memory, and then he realized that the boy had held something back.

Puleston stepped out to use the loo.

Lucius cast a ward and a privacy charm, “That’s not all the Headmaster said was it?”

Oliver looked faint, “How did you know?”

“Because he tried to destroy my boyfriend too.”

“I heard you recently were Bonded to Professor Snape.” Oliver stammered.

“Yes. So tell me please, what else did Dumbledore say?”

Oliver’s hands twisted into fists, “He implied I forced him and that Percy came to him in tears. He’d comforted Percy and made him forget. He told me if I so much as talked to Percy he’d turn me over to the Aurors. I would never hurt Percy!”

Nodding, Lucius handed him a scrap of parchment. “That is Percy’s new address. He wants to see you. He never told Dumbledore that you raped him. He told him under Veritaserum that you were going to move into together and that he loved you. The Headmaster was furious and forced Percy to not only forget your relationship but convinced him he hated you and Quidditch. He should be at this address by six-thirty.”

Oliver took the scrap of parchment and held onto it like a lifeline, “Thank you sir. You don’t know what this means to me.”

Lucius smirked, “Oh I can guess.” His countenance took on a sombre expression; “He needs you now more then ever. Listen to him but whatever you do don’t be angry with him.”

Oliver’s brow creased with worry. “Is he alright?”

Lucius said quickly, “I hope he will be.”

The Puddlemere owner returned.

Oliver slipped the parchment scrap into his jeans, and sipped his wine. He had a little more colour in his face.

Meeting ended with Lucius signing a check for the team with the understanding that Keeper Wood would be starting for the rest of the season.

Oliver was excited but more keen on finally seeing his beloved Percy.

XooooooX

Percy met with Penelope and withdrew his courting rights. He said that he’d decided they were fundamentally unsuited and that she would be better off with someone who appreciated her properly.

Crouch had disappeared and hadn’t been to work since the Council of Magical Law verdict came down.

Percy had been working like a dog trying to keep the Department of International Relations running as smoothly as he could. He was half-dead when he arrived at his new apartment.
Sitting cross-legged beside his apartment’s front door was a familiar person. A name fell from his lips, “Ollie…”

The figure sprang up, hurried towards him and pulled him close, “I’ve missed you so much. I’m sorry. I thought you hated me. I was told to stay away from you.”

Percy felt at home, in those familiar arms he was safe. He took Oliver’s hand and squeezed it, “Come inside. We have to talk.” He felt cold, so cold. He just hoped after he told Oliver his side of the story, his former lover wouldn’t hate him.

Once they were inside Percy gestured for Oliver to sit on the dreary settee he’d been given by Aunt Muriel. Choosing a worn armchair from Grandfather for himself.

Oliver was upset, “Percy why are you over there? Please come sit with me.”

Percy shook his head, pulling his knees to his chest and wrapping his arms around them. “I can’t. We have things we must speak about first. If I let us pick up right where I know we left off before Dumbledore discovered our relationship it would be unfair.”

Oliver decided not to push, “What do we need to speak about?” he vaguely remembered Lucius Malfoy’s words of caution over lunch.

Percy couldn’t look at the man the boy he’d loved had become. “You remember when Ginny was rescued from the Chamber of Secrets by Ron and Harry?”

Oliver nodded, “Yes.”

Percy bit his lip, “The Headmaster asked to see me to ask how Ginny was and to apologize for having to punish her for her part in Opening the Chamber and attacking her fellow students. He offered me tea, but Ollie he had Veritaserum in it. I didn’t know, I thought him trustworthy. Mum always said how devoted he was to the cause of the Light, so I trusted him. For that I paid a terrible price, the worst price I could have imagined. He asked me about my future plans so I mentioned us, how we were going to move in together and start a life. He…he said this won’t do…this wouldn’t do at all.” He felt trapped in the memory but he had to get through it. “He put me under the Imperious and,” his voice broke.

Oliver made a move towards him.

Percy put up his hand, “Don’t.” he swallowed and continued, “he said, ‘Now listen you little ingrate. You’re a Weasley, you’re going into the Ministry and that Quidditch-obsessed idiot is just going to hold you back. You will forget about him and have nothing more to do with him. Now when you receive your badge as Head Boy you’ll find out that Prefect Penelope Clearwater is Head Girl. You will befriend her and Court her. She will make an excellent political wife when you start your rise to Minister for Magic. What the!” his eyes filled with tears, “Ollie, I was pregnant. He didn’t even ask me what I wanted. He murdered our child!” his voice had gone extremely high-pitched and then he seemed to fall apart, “He called me a slut.”

Oliver was furious, absolutely incensed, that bastard dared accuse him of nonconsensual sex with his Percy but had mind raped his lover and murdered their child? He forced his anger down, moving to take Percy in his arms, “He called me a slut.”

Oliver made a move towards him.

Percy put up his hand, “Don’t.” he swallowed and continued, “he said, ‘Now listen you little ingrate. You’re a Weasley, you’re going into the Ministry and that Quidditch-obsessed idiot is just going to hold you back. You will forget about him and have nothing more to do with him. Now when you receive your badge as Head Boy you’ll find out that Prefect Penelope Clearwater is Head Girl. You will befriend her and Court her. She will make an excellent political wife when you start your rise to Minister for Magic. What the!” his eyes filled with tears, “Ollie, I was pregnant. He didn’t even ask me what I wanted. He murdered our child!” his voice had gone extremely high-pitched and then he seemed to fall apart, “He called me a slut.”

Oliver was furious, absolutely incensed, that bastard dared accuse him of nonconsensual sex with his Percy but had mind raped his lover and murdered their child? He forced his anger down, moving to take Percy in his arms, “It’s okay, I’m here. You’re not alone anymore. I swear on the sword of Godric Gryffindor I’ll get justice for you. Our child may not have breathed once but they shall be avenged.” He kissed him chastely, “I want you and I know you want me but before we do that we need to come to terms with our hurts. The last thing I want to do is hurt you further. We will mourn our child but first we will have to tell your brothers and your father. If your father is a Gryffindor at
heart, he will want to avenge the murder of his grandchild.”

Percy thanked Merlin and Gryffindor for a lover like Oliver, he clung to him and together they grieved the loss of the child they hadn’t known about until it was too late. Mum would no doubt agree with Dumbledore and call him a slut, telling him that Oliver would ruin his life but who else would accept him?

After about an hour of mutual sorrow, mourning their child Percy finally fell asleep.

Oliver wrote a quick letter to Fred and George, insisting they ask Bill, Charlie and their father to meet him in Hogsmeade in three days time.

He could only hope they would do the right thing…

Chapter End Notes

Chapter 16- Plotting and questions of honour

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Chapter sixteen

Harry and Draco had been sent up to bed after another trying attempt to deal with yet another of Harry’s memories of living with the Dursleys. Severus had true to his word offered up a memory of his abusive childhood. Both were heart wrenching but sharing the memories and knowing that you were believed helped put each one to rest.

Dumbledore, having quite turned the Malfoys, Remus, the Tonks, Harry, Sirius I, Oliver and Percy against him by his cruel lies at the Council of Magical Law. They had decided unanimously that the incumbent but incompetent and powermad Headmaster had to go.

As if his cruel mindrape of Percy and terrorizing of a teenage Severus wasn’t evil enough, he’d murdered their children.

“I want him ruined!” Lucius growled, it was one thing for Severus to tell him watered down tales of his life with his parents but to actually see the horrors he lived and know that Dumbledore did everything he could to make his mate’s life hell was repugnant.

“No thanks to you mere threats won’t work.” Severus muttered giving Lucius a dark look filled with censure.

Remus’ eyes narrowed, not sure what his mate was referring too but sure he wouldn’t like it.

“What we need is detailed intelligence.” Sirius I said, his arms resting on the arms of his chair while his fingers were steepled.

Dora’s eyes twinkled with mirth, “Perhaps, I can be of assistance.”

Sirius turned to observe her, “How so?”
“Well I am an Auror and I scored well on our Surveillance and convert investigation lessons.” Dora chuckled, altering her appearance to perfectly copy Lucius’.

Sirius I clapped his hand, “Capital I say. Metamorphmagus, you do come from my line.”

“How would you go about it?” Severus asked a bit disturbed to see this young woman wearing his Bondmate’s face.

Dora shrugged, “I’ve been working non-stop since I became a full-fledged Auror, in fact, I am the last person who was accepted into Auror training. Being a Hufflepuff I wasn’t expected to finish training, they actually had a betting pool going on how long it would take before I dropped out. I think Mad-Eye pushed me harder to make me drop out and instead made me one of the best. The only time off I’ve taken is when I’ve been injured in the field. I have two or three months of vacation waiting around for me to decide to use it; maybe more, I’d have to check. Head Auror Scrimmour is quite annoyed with me I believe because I’m hardly ever not at work. If it weren’t for my Metamorphmagus abilities and my skill at deep cover or mimicry, he’d drive me out. Thank Hufflepuff I’m between Deep Cover assignments and I can be free as soon as you like Lord,”

“Lucius please. I may no longer be Bonded to your aunt but I’d still like to be considered family. I would like you to start right away, the sooner Dumbledore is ripped from his place as Headmaster and other positions of authority as well as ruined in both reputation and monetary matters I maybe content.”

“Very well I shall inform Scrimgour that I’ll be on ‘vacation’ until further notice. I am authorized to use any means to discover any secrets about Albus Dumbledore?”

“Yes, any means necessary to discover his secret, the darker the secrets the better.” Lucius practically purred.

“By the way, don’t bother with invisibility cloaks or disillusionment type charms. Dumbledore has evidently evolved magically to be able to see through them or so he brags. He also claims to be able to see through Glamours.” Severus added.

“Helga grant me serenity! That boggles things up.” Dora grumbled.

“Can you alter the aura of your magical signature?” Sirius asked.
Dora smirked, “Best one in the entire department.”

“That is beneficial to our endeavours.” Severus observed mildly.

“I wonder what deep, dark secrets he’d hiding?” Dora licked her lips in anticipation as her features rearranged to her normal appearance of shocking purple hair and black opal eyes.

“He was raised in Godric’s Hollow for a while. I remember Dumbledore mentioning his younger brother owned and managed the Hogshead pub in Hogsmeade.” Severus mused.

Lucius’ lips were tight. “I believe his name is Aberforth. I think he was arrested for something years ago. Father thought it was funny, he thought Dumbledore should have done the prudent thing and disowned his idiot brother before he could embarrass him in such a way. Xeno’s oddness was why Father disowned him before he could embarrass the Malfoy name. There’s been muttering for years about an intimate relationship between Dumbledore and Wizengamot member Elphias Doge.”

Dora snickered, “I know what, I’ll investigate under the persona of someone researching for a tell-all in-depth investigation of into the life of Dumbledore. I plan on sending a copy of my investigation to Rita Skeeter if I turn up anything juicy. She’d sell her soul to write a book exposing Dumbledore’s ‘Dark Side’.” Her expression turned sombre, “Especially if two anonymous former students mentioned forced abortions and mindrape.”

Severus winced, Lucius glared and Remus growled.

“It would be something she would be interested in hearing.” Dora protested. “What happened to Professor Prince-Malfoy is too late to be prosecuted, unless Lucius tried under the Archaic Laws. A spell making someone infertile that is only allowed by the Ministry for truly horrific crimes and only if decided by the Council of Magical Law. In the case of former Head Boy Percy Weasley, the crime only occurred less then two years ago so the statute of limitations hasn’t ran out yet. If they; Oliver, the Weasley and Wood Patriarchs filed charges they would probably stick.

Ted stroked his chin in thought, “I wonder what would have motivated such cruelty? Manipulation, terrorizing and an illegal spell that not only got rid of Severus’ pregnancy but rendered him infertile was beyond callus. In the case of young Mr. Weasley, his pregnancy was unknown to himself until isn’t discovery and summarily destroyed by the headmaster. The spell Severus mentioned prior is common but should only be cast by a healer familiar with such spells. I wonder why the cases were treated differently.”
“What goes on in that twisted man’s head? Why was HE sent after Grindelwald I wonder?” Sirius I muttered eyes closed in thought.

Why indeed, Severus asked himself.

XoooooX

Receiving Oliver’s letter had been a shock but Fred and George remembered with a tremble how their former Quidditch captain had worked them almost to death and like loyal subjects, they sent off letters to their father, grandfather and two elder brothers. The tone of Oliver’s letter was neither jovial nor reminiscent. In their most audacious escape ever they used any number of secret passages to arrive at the statue of the humpbacked witch led to the cellar of Honeyduke’s. They arrived about seven to find a brooding Oliver staring into his firewhiskey.

Fred was about to make a joke that he looked as if his best friend just died but George shook his head before disappearing to order them some butterbeers. Instead he sat next his friend, “So what’s up?”

Oliver attempted to give him a smile but failed, “I’ll explain with everyone’s here and I’ve got a very powerful privacy charm up.”

By the time George returned with their drinks, both their dad and grandfather had arrived.

Oliver attempted to smile, “Thank you for coming on such short notice. I only wish it had been under happier circumstances.”

Bill and Charlie who Oliver remembered fondly arrived in time to hear the last of his short speech.

Oliver gestured for them to sit and cast a powerful privacy spell, as well as wards to warn him if it was either attempted to be taken down or if someone was attempting to listen. “I need to know how far you would go for family.”

The six Weasley men stared at him as if he’d said he was giving up magic to live as a Muggle and watch something called the ‘telly’ all day long.
“What?” Septimus Weasley glared at the young man, insulted, “How,”

“Pardon my interruption sir but I mean no offence. If a member of your family was cruelly violated by someone you trusted implicitly, how far would you go to avenge them?” Oliver said softly.

Bill’s eyes narrowed, “If it were any of my siblings I would want justice.”

The twins nodded, “Agreed. Unless it was Ron and he deserved it.”

Charlie said thoughtfully, “I love all my family and I would do my best to endure they received justice.”

Arthur nodded, “I love all my children and would do my best to ensure they were treated fairly. If they were hurt, I would do my best to help them recover as well as seek at least some justice.”

Septimus nodded in assent.

Oliver licked his lips, “Even if the person violated was Percy?”

They gasped as if he’d cursed Godric to the depths of hell.

“Who’d get the better of Big Head Boy?” the twins asked.

Oliver glared at them, “Don’t you dare call him that! His prattishness that year wasn’t his fault.”

“We always.”

“knew you.”

“Were sweet on him.”
The twins finished each other’s sentence out of habit.

Oliver glared at them, “I wasn’t sweet on him. We were best friends who fell in love until some arsehole decided it wouldn’t do to have Prefect Percival Weasley bent and in love with some pathetic Quidditch freak.”

Fred was incensed, “Who dared say that about you?”

“You were the best captain we ever had besides Charlie.” George added.

Charlie nodded, “I would have been proud to have you as a brother.”

Bill shrugged, “If you make Percy happy, I have no objection.”

“So what happened to our poor maligned brother Percy?” Fred and George asked together.

Oliver gulped, “He was called into see the Headmaster after Ginny was rescued from the chamber of Secrets to ask how you all were taking it. You know the near loss of Ginny, the knowledge that she opened the Chamber and set the monster on her fellow students as well as her subsequent punishment about having to scrub bedpans without magic for months on end. Dumbledore offered Percy Veritaserum-laced tea and asked him about his future plans. After Percy told about us and how we planned to move in together after Hogwarts, the Headmaster declared it wouldn’t do. He used the imperious on Percy and told him that, I quote, ‘Now listen you little ingrate. You're a Weasley, you're going into the Ministry and that Quidditch obsessed idiot is just going to hold you back. You will forget about him and have nothing more to do with him. Now when you receive your badge as Head Boy you'll find out that Prefect Penelope Clearwater is Head Girl. You will befriend her and Court her. She will make an excellent political wife when you start your rise to Minister for Magic.’”

There were six voices of pure outrage and Oliver was glad for his privacy charm but had the beginnings of a headache.

“How dare he?” came twin hisses of anger.

“Who Percy sees is none of his bloody business.”
“He should keep his broken nose out of other people’s personal lives.”

“He had no right to say that to a son of mine.”

“Arrange a Courting between my grandson and the Clearwater heiress without my consent?”

“I didn’t know any of this until just before I sent my letter to the twins. Dumbledore threatened me you see, he told me that Percy came to him and told him I pressured him into a sexual relationship. He accused me of raping the person I loved, he told me if I even so much as talked to Percy, that he would turn me into the Aurors. He’d wiped Percy’s memory of our relationship to help him recover. I was heartbroken. When I found out he’d mindraped Percy and made him forget against his will. I was furious.” His gripped the handle of his mug of firewhiskey so tight that he shattered the handle.

“That’s not all, is it?” Charlie asked.

Oliver shook his head, looking up his eyes filled with terrible anger, pain and lost, “That bastard killed our child. Percy didn’t even know he was pregnant and neither did I.”

For a minute there was utter silence.

Fred and George cracked their knuckles.

“Oh he’ll pay alright. Isn’t that right Forge?” Fred was absolutely outraged, he was quick to decide a grievance and slow to forgive real betrayal.

“Yes Gred, he’ll rue the day he made an enemy of the Weasley twins.” George said.

“I’m glad I was supposed to be here soon. I’ll have to stop by and check on Percy.” Charlie said looking both worried and furious at the same time. You could see barely restrained anger and fury, had he been holding anything it would have shattered in his clenched fist.

“I may get temporarily assigned to London. I can’t help Percy working out of Egypt.” Bill said in a
voice tight with righteous anger.

“I can’t believe after all we’ve done for the Order and the side of Light that this would be our reward; the murder of my grandchild.” Arthur rarely let himself get worked up about anything.

“I doubt Molly would believe this tale. That will cause a rift between her and her ‘favourite son’.” Septimus said thoughtfully.

Oliver about collapsed, “You believe me.”

Fred and George hugged him

“You git. Of course we do.” Fred punched him playfully in the shoulder.

“Mom sent us a nasty letter asking us if we knew where Percy moved and we told her we hadn’t the faintest clue.” George added.

“I know where he is but Percy can’t dealt with your mother right now. We’re going to have to take it slow because after what Dumbledore did to both of us and we both need to deal with the pain of losing our child so cruelly.” Oliver said with obvious anguish, “When we’re ready to try again,” he implored Septimus and Arthur with his eyes, “I want to court him properly. I am sorry I was imprudent enough to get him pregnant when we were Sixth Years but I love him with all my heart.”

Arthur pat him on the back, “If you make him happy and that’s what he wants I have no objections.”

Septimus nodded, “It took great courage to request all of us and to tell us what you have. Like Arthur said, if it’s what Percy wants.”

Oliver chewed on his lip, “I want him to be happy. He wouldn’t even let me hold him after he invited me in until after he told me everything. I hate Dumbledore for what he’s done to us. Percy’s so shy and uncomfortable with his age mates and he has a difficult time making friends. This betrayal is going to scar him for a long time. I just hope he can recover from this, I love him so much. I can’t believe Lord Malfoy,”
Arthur’s eyes flashed, “What did he do now? I heard he had something to do with Ginny and the Chamber of Secrets.” He was always more likely to believe the worst of a Malfoy.

Oliver winced, “He helped Percy move by offering him an apartment in a building he owns. He invited the owner of Puddlemere United and I out to lunch the other day. When the owner slipped out to the loo, he told me Percy wanted to see me and gave me the address. He warned me that Percy needed me to be calm. He asked me about my years in Hogwarts first and asked me if I had a friend. I was very vague until he called me on it and told me he knew it was Percy. I admitted what Dumbledore told me and he told me it was a lie. I knew it had been or at least I hoped it was. I was so lonely and hurt, I didn’t understand. One minute we were inseparable and the next, Dumbledore all but accused me of rape and threatened to call the Aurors on me if I didn’t leave Percy alone. He admitted to me he made Percy forget us…”

“Well, I’m not sure how much I believe of his interview at the Ministry. I hope Harry didn’t cheat to get into that Tournament.” Arthur muttered.

The twins shifted nervously.

“We feel awful.” Fred chewed on his bottom lip.

“Yeah,” George stared into his Butterbeer, “We owe Harry a lot”

“Without him we wouldn’t have won all those games, especially against Slytherin.” They said remorsefully.

“We’ll have to send him a letter.”

“apologizing for being jealous.”

“and not bothering to ask.”

“should have known Harry’s no cheater.”

“Besides every time little Miss know-it-all mentioned the death toll.”
“Harry was shaking and pale.”

“We’ll have to come by and visit Percy soon.” Arthur said.

“Yes and assure our grandson of our support. If Percy weren’t so sensitive and the crimes so heinous, I’d tell him to just forget about and get over it. I am not as foolish as all that. I expect you’ll see to it that he sees someone one.” Septimus fixed Oliver in his gaze.

Oliver nodded, “Percy mentioned a Ted Tonks, we’ll see if we can make an appointment.”

“Good. I’ll ask Cedrella to make him some meals he can just use a warming charm on. I never understood what you saw in that Molly, son. She wasn’t cut out of the same cloth as her brothers.” Septimus said glaring at Arthur.

The Weasleys soon parted ways and Oliver made his way back to Percy, satisfied that his brothers and father as well as grandfather were as honourable as he thought.

Chapter End Notes

Remus, Lucius and Severus decided that on November 19, the five of them would be returning to Hogwarts. On Wednesdays and Fridays, Ted had agreed to floo into Severus’ office to have sessions with Harry and Severus.

Harry was very nervous about returning, he didn’t know how to deal with Ron and Hermione. He also knew they would take his new relationship with Draco as a betrayal.

They were sitting at the breakfast table when the mail started to arrive.

A cheap barn owl that clearly belonged to Hogwarts landed in front of Harry, it carried a small box wrapped in brown paper and tied with string that secured a letter to the box.

Harry opened the letter.

‘Harry mate,

We’ve been right gits. You have every right to be angry at us. We failed you. We’ve always seen you as a little brother but at the first test of honour we betrayed you. We humbly beg your forgiveness and off up these gifts in hopes of reconciliation.

In this box you’ll find plenty of Weasley inventions complete with descriptions of what they do. We hope you’ll use them to prank Ickly Ronnikins who is a right nasty git. We despair of him often and doubt he’ll come to a good end. He’s spent every day since you left with Malfoy and Snape saying awful things about you. Rest assured Gred and Forge are on the case and he shall be properly
punished many times over. As for Hermione she’s the same as ever, completely disappointed in your ‘so-called cheating’. She thinks you should have owned up to it instead of getting out of it like you did. We await your wishes in regards to her punishment.

We also included using what little money we’ve earned since the beginning of term to buy you chocolate frogs and your favourite Honeydukes chocolate bars. We throw ourselves at your mercy and will accept any punishment you desire humbly. We only ask that you continue to regard us as friends.

Our deepest, humblest apologies,

Gred and Forge’

Harry laughed; it was so Gred and Forge. At least he hadn’t lost the Weasleys entirely; Percy was apparently on their side. The specifics of that hadn’t been explained to him, he guessed it had something to do with help he gave them to help get him out of that terrible contract. He hugged himself deciding that he would forgive them. He dearly loved Fred and George, especially for giving him the Marauders map that belonged to his father. Now he didn’t believe his dad was as wonderful as everyone said but he was still his dad. He was saddened that James Potter perhaps, had more in common with Dudley to whom he shared no blood.

Draco hadn’t read over his shoulder, respecting his friend’s privacy but shook him gently.

Harry glanced at the letter a moment before handing it to his new friend and tearing open the box.

Inside were Skiving snack boxes complete with the candy that made you appear sick and it’s counter candy to make you well again. Also there were something called Canary creams that, it looked like George’s handwriting but you could never be sure, claimed turned you into a canary for seven minutes of feathered fun. Some extendable ears and other Weasley inventions but what he enjoyed most was the chocolate.

Harry unwrapped a chocolate frog; barely noticing the card that accompanied it was Dumbledore. He tossed it into the air where it burst into flames and then crumbled into ash, he moaned. “Merlin I love chocolate.”

Draco looked up from the letter, his fourteen-year-old groin reacting strongly to the moan that fell from Harry’s lips. He decided his first courting gift would be chocolate, he saw the pleasure the
simple sweet gave his future mate and he had the nearly overwhelming desire to kiss the chocolate stained mouth.

Harry felt Draco’s eyes on him and looked up to see an unfamiliar look in those silver eyes. Something warmed inside him and he felt like he would purr.

Severus glanced from them to Lucius and chuckled under his breath. Sometimes, Draco reminded him so much of his father…

Although in Severus' case, it was rare but expensive caramel-filled cauldron-shaped dark chocolates, which were something like an upside-down Muggle truffle.

XoooooX

Despite his vigorous attempts to keep the Department of International Relations running smoothly, Oliver persuaded him to agree to a ten o’clock appointment at his apartment with Mind Healer Ted Tonks. Percy had, due to nightmares of having his child in varying states of age ripped from him from womb to babe in arms, finally agreed.

Oliver was quite worried for him having spent nights on his couch since Lord Malfoy brought them back together. Waking many times a night to hear Percy crying in his sleep and begging Dumbledore to return his child. It broke his heart to hear the man he loved brought down so low by such cruelty. Despite Percy’s shyness and fierce devotion to his studies as well as prefect duties, he had always seemed strong. Then again growing up with a domineering mother, a silent but no doubt loving father but lost in the middle of six brothersm Percy was a product of his home environment. His best friend and former yet hopeful soon-to-be once again his lover had never learned to rely on anyone but himself. Percy was clearly isolated, being close to none of his brothers.

Bill had been also a serious student, sometime Quidditch player but more social and had seemingly enjoyed being Head Boy more then Percy had. He always wondered why such a shy boy who cringed at social events would be drawn to the position of Minister for Magic. Percy would be unhappy because there was far too much socializing involved.

Charlie was more drawn to the outdoors, falling in love with forests, exploring, flying and tending to Hagrid’s increasing menagerie of magical creatures. Charlie would devour any book old or new regarding the subject of any and all magical creatures but particularly Dragons. He remembered visiting and hearing Charlie whooping through The Burrow after being invited to apprentice at the Harvey Ridgebit's Dragon Sanctuary by it’s current director Dragomir Ionescue. He hadn’t had any real hope but he’d wanted to work there more so then flying for any Professional Quidditch team
even if he’d been offered to fly for England.

The twins, you couldn’t find three brothers more different. The energy that Percy threw into his studies, Fred and George just laughed at. Thougharguable brilliant, school bored them and they put little effect into their classes. They laughed when they told him how many of their OWLS they believed they might pass, which were few. They cared more about inventing and striking out on their own. Oliver would be quite surprised if they stayed to take their NEWTS because they detested school, resented the concept of mandatory education and their overbearing mother. The first opportunity they could split, he had little doubt that they would.

Percy worried most about Ron, rightly so for the boy had no leaning to study and took any excuse to prevent Potter from it. He clearly resented Harry’s allowance to fly as Gryffindor’s seeker despite the rules that prevented First Years from bringing brooms to school. Percy had turned a blind eye to Ron’s machinations that forced Harry to rely too heavily on Hermione’s assistance to pass classes. Even to the point, Ron had the poor Muggleborn witch all but doing their homework for him. How was he supposed to learn? He blamed himself, as Harry’s Captain he should have spoke up and insisted he study properly instead of turning a blind eye to it as well.

Ginny being the only girl in the Weasley family at all, Percy was definitely not close to her. He tried, especially after almost losing her in the Chamber of Secrets but they would never be close. She was still as shy and as quiet as ever when they graduated the next year. Despite sharing the same House at Hogwarts, he couldn’t name one person she was close to. Honestly, he worried about that…

Oliver shook his head; since Percy was going in late and had a terrible night, as usual, he resolved to let him sleep as long as possible. For some reason if he woke Percy, held him as he cried until his beloved finally drifted into an exhausted sleep, he’d noticed as long as he held him, Percy didn’t have nightmares.

Percy finally woke, smelling the familiar scent of grass, soap and mint shampoo, he felt at home perhaps for the first time in his life. He snuggled closer to Oliver; “It’s been a comfort to have you here with me.”

Oliver rubbed his back chastely and kissed his forehead, “I’m sorry you suffered some much but I’m here now.”

Percy swallowed, “You won’t leave me? Please I want you to stay, I want us to live together like we promised.”

“We will, we just need time.”
Time… that broke Percy’s heart. Time, they’d already lost so much. He wanted Oliver to say he wanted to fight for what they had, he wanted to get back their old shy but easy intimacy but aside from comforting him because of his nightmares, Oliver was always giving him space. He didn’t want space! He wanted Oliver; he wanted to feel like despite having their child cruelly ripped from his womb that his boyfriend still wanted him.

Oliver whispered a tempus charm, noting it was after nine and Healer Tonks was due at ten, he nudged Percy. “We need to dress and eat. The healer will be here soon.”

Feeling like that was dismissal, Percy bit his lip and reluctantly left the warmth and comfort of Oliver’s arms to shower. He silently berated himself for his neediness. He’d never been like this before and he was terrified that if he pushed that he would lose Oliver forever. That thought nearly brought him to his knees, he could hardly breathe. If he lost Oliver again, he was fearful it might kill him. He doubted he could admit that out loud for fear it would make his ex-boyfriend pity him. The last thing he wanted was his pity…

Oliver would have to be blind not to see Percy’s pain; he hated himself for causing it but he didn’t know how to help him, he too was hurting. He loved Percy, so completely that losing him made him throw everything he had into Quidditch, because he felt he had nothing left. He worked his team almost to the point of collapse; he regretted it now but being cut off from his friend and feeling keenly the accusations of something so abhorrent as rape had cut him deeply. He knew now that Percy would never have said anything that cruel or untrue but he couldn’t just wish away over a year and a half’s worth of pain. He had been wracked with jealousy seeing his Percy being coming so close with Penelope Clearwater and wondering how she could possibly be right for him. Percy was so utterly a keeper in bed, that even the thought of being with a girl had his best friend wrinkle his nose and call it nauseating.

Deciding against a shower, Oliver cast Refreshing charms on himself, dressing in somewhat clean clothes before heading into Percy’s small kitchen to heat up some breakfast casserole his grandmother Cedrella had sent over with a Weasley house elf the day after his meeting in Hogshead with six members of the Weasley family.

He also made coffee remembering how partial to it Percy had always been.

The Percy that finally emerged was subdued and quiet, accepting silently the plate with some breakfast casserole on it and a cup of steaming coffee. Sitting near the fire shivering for some reason as he attempted to eat.

At ten o’clock on the dot, there was a knock on the door.
When a silent Percy made no move to answer Oliver choose to greet their visitor.

Ted Tonks took one look at Percy and blinked, “Sweet Merlin.” He hurried to his side, casting diagnostic charms and winced, “I thought so.”

Oliver was thoroughly confused, “What’s wrong?” his worry and concern warring with his fear.

“This whole experience is crippling him.” Ted said warily, “Though I understand why Severus did what he did, he didn’t have the finesse or my training. Percy had no way to handle such memories of his gross violation.”

“I see.” Oliver said dumbly.

“No, you don’t.” Ted said with finality. “You don’t know how to handle it. This is something neither of you should have to deal with. A child you didn’t even know you were expecting was stolen from you but more from Percy. I suspect he’s always wanted a close family and hoped to have one with you.”

Oliver nodded; they had discussed that before Dumbledore meddled.

“I fear he believe you don’t want him anymore.”

Percy shivered more violently.

“His main issue, I believe is that he clearly never formed an attachment when he was younger to a parent. So, in his naïve way, he bonded emotionally and physically to you, I’m not discounting your love at all, don’t mistake that. To him you’re back but you aren’t, and he is clearly suffering.” Ted said softly.

“I don’t know how to help him. My family has always been close but his is so isolated from each other. I love him I do but the story Dumbledore told all though I know it was false, it still pains me that I dared believe it. I don’t know how to explain…”
“What did he tell you?”

Oliver swallowed, “That soon after Ginny’s near death in the Chamber of Secrets, Percy went to see him and told him that I pressured him into a physical relationship. Dumbledore heavily implied that in his humble opinion, I’d raped Percy.” His hands clenched into fists, “I would sooner have broken my broom and swore never to fly again, then to have done something so heinous. To hear that my sweet, shy Percy who only wanted to be loved would tell such a lie to the Headmaster, broke my heart. Dumbledore told me under no uncertain terms was I to have any contact with Percy. That Percy had been so terrified that he had to remove any and all memory of our so-called relationship. That if I even so much as spoke to Percy, he would send Percy’s memories to the Aurors and see that I was arrested.”

Oliver swallowed, feeling so unbearably shaken at admitting to this to this near stranger, "He told me he was sure I hadn’t meant to be bad and that he was going to against his better judgment give me a second chance. That to prove myself worthy I was to give Percy a wide berth and neither speak, write or look at him. Every word he spoke was like a dagger to my heart and a nail in my coffin of my future and present happiness. We had been so much a part of each other that I was lost, I threw myself into Quidditch but I had no one to impress or to be proud of me but flying was the only solace I had.”

“I am sorry that you’ve suffered so, I can only hope that someday you see Dumbledore punished for what he’s done to the both of you. You are letting your despair and anger at Dumbledore affect your ability to comfort Percy. He puts on a mask at work but a skilled observer can see his suffering. If left like this, he will be nothing more then a shell in a short time. I may have been asked too late.”

Oliver broke down, tears streaming down his cheeks. “I don’t know what to do. I know he needs me, but I’m afraid if we try to pick up where we left off, it will prove to be too much for him.”

“So in short you’ve given him no proof that you still love him.”

A silent Percy began rocking slowly, making no sound as he began to cry. His arms wrapped around himself as if trying to embrace something that wasn’t there.

Seeing Percy so quiet and weepingm hurt Oliver but he had no idea what he was supposed to do. “I’m so lost. I want to help but I don’t know how. I don’t blame him; it’s not his fault. When he sleeps he must have nightmares, he wakes me up crying in his sleep for our child. He always talked in his sleep but he begs, pleads and cries for our child. All I can do for him is wake him and hold him until he cries himself to sleep. He seems to sleep peacefully if I hold him but if I attempt to return to the couch, he soon is crying in his sleep again.”

Ted sighed, “I have more experience with abused persons, not that I’m discounting that Percy was
abused but clearly not by you. His abuse was abuse of power, his mind clearly assaulted as well as the forced abortion that was given in a moment of rage, as I understand it. Not that I can fathom what would cause such hostility. Percy needs you, he needs to be assured that you still love him.”

“I do.” Oliver protested weakly.

“Then why haven’t you SHOWED IT?” Ted asked.

Oliver swallowed, “Because I’m afraid he’ll push me away.” He admitted lamely.

Ted glared at him, “Does he look like he can?”

Oliver shook his head.

“He needs you to hold him. He needs you to assure him that you still love him, that you still want to make your adolescent dreams of being together real.” Ted had to be cruel to be kind, something he detested. Gryffindors made the WORST patients because of their stubbornness and other ridiculous qualities. Hufflepuffs made the best Mind Healers because they were open, honest, good listeners, hard workers and eager to help. Wooing a Slytherin took all of that as well as phenomenal patience. Slytherins for all their faults were probably the most love-starved of all, with the exception of young Percy who was so close in age to his beloved Dora.

Oliver knelt beside Ted and Percy, his face still streaked with tears he hadn’t bothered to wipe away. He held out shaking arms for Percy.

Relieved that this young man was waking up, Ted placed the quiet, barely shaking, hardly breathing form of young Percy in Oliver’s arms.

Oliver rocked him, pressing a kiss to his temple, “I’m sorry. I didn’t know how to help. I’ve been pushing you away, haven’t I? Forgive me please. I still love you, I always have. Deep down, I know you know this. Don’t shut me outm Percy. Let me help you. You don’t have to mourn alone.”

Those simple quiet words that took nearly a week to speak somehow managed to pierce through the walls that were slowly shutting Percy off from the world. He was there but not there since he’d found out what had been done to him. He had felt so alone, Severus had admitted to a slightly similar event but he was sure that no one could truly understand him. He had wanted a family so badly, to
allow his to be taken without a fight tore at his soul. He cried for his lost baby that hadn’t had the chance to grow up to have a name, he cried because he hadn’t had the opportunity to love it or to share the news that they would be parents with the person he loved. He clung to Oliver, “I want my baby!” he repeated the weak plea over and over.

Oliver rocked him, “I’m sorry. I know. I wish I could have protected you. I wish I could give our son back to you.” He knew it was a boy, boys were common in Percy’s family and he knew there weren’t many girls born to his line either.

Ted waited until they both calmed down some, “I have some homework for you before our next appointment.”

At the word ‘homework’ two pairs of red-rimmed eyes looked up at him in matched confusion.

“You are to sit and talk, to gain closure I want you to pick a name for your son. Explain to both your families that you need to procure a gravestone or another similar marker, have the name engraved upon it and place it either with the Weasleys or the Woods. You need a place to go to mourn the baby. Don’t bother questioning me, you know I’m right. As for ceremony make it as simple as you want. You need your family at a time like this. When I return on Tuesday I expect to hear about it.” His Annie’s Mind Healer had proscribed a similar treatment for their two miscarriages; she had been far enough along to know gender when she lost them. The first had been a son, Edward Pollux and then a second daughter Alkyone Eirene. Although allowing her to have a permanent contraceptive charm placed on her womb after losing Alkyone or Allie as he called in his heart was painful, losing Annie would be worse. He wished that he could have his family; Annie, Dora, Teddy and Allie but he was content to have Annie and Dora, he just hoped that Dora would have an easier time giving birth then her mother.

Percy’s heart ached, a name… a name for a child he didn’t even get to hold or even see.

Oliver knew that Healer Tonks’ ‘homework’ was more for Percy’s benefit but he understood he needed it to. Naming their son and putting him to rest was the only way they could recover from this blow. He nodded, “We’ll do it.”

“And another thing, far be it from me to tell anyone how to handle their sex life but Oliver, I forbid you to sleep on the couch. You will share his bed if only to help him relax and avoid nightmares, those dreams are eating away at his sanity and he can’t afford to let them torture him because the loss of his child is not and never will be his fault.” Ted said firmly.

Oliver nodded, knowing Healer Tonks had a point. Percy needed him; he’d failed him so much
already. He couldn’t continue to make or let Percy suffer. “I promise not to make him sleep alone.”

“I also want you to request mild calming draughts from Professor Prince-Malfoy. I believe you would both do well to take them. No Dreamless sleep potions though, you could become too dependent upon them like a young patient of mine and overuse them until they begin losing their effectiveness. I believe that relying on such potions is a sort of crutch. You have to fight to rise above this, losing a child is hard on anyone, but even more so on someone of your tender years.” Ted said kindly, “I don’t wish to be harsh but you have to work together. You’ll always ache for your son and wish you could have raised him together but you can’t change the past. Your child would want to see you two loving each other and giving him siblings. I’m sure he would never wish you pain. Someday you’ll be reunited with him, and I’m sure you want him to be proud of you.” Those were words he and Annie had been told many times following her miscarriages.

Oliver hugged Percy, nodding fiercely.

Percy leaned into Oliver’s embrace, “I… do want him to be proud of us…”

“Very well. I do think you would do yourself a lot of good if you didn’t go into work today. I don’t believe forcing yourself to act as if all is well would be very wise. I recommend a quiet day, in the company of the man I can tell loves you. You have much to discuss.” Ted showed himself out the apartment.

Oliver didn’t let go; he felt a rush of love and compassion for his beloved Percy that made him hold him close. “So, what do you think about his homework?”

Percy blushed, “I think it’s exactly what we need. How can I hope to let our child go so we can have a life together if we don’t give them a name?”

Oliver smiled, “Well, due to our Elvin ancestry it is the Wood preference to give each child a name that has elf in it. I’ve always been partial to the name Alvin it means ‘elf friend’.

Percy said quietly, “Weasleys usually name their sons after names from Arthurian legends. When we were in school, I often thought of the name Drystan. He was an advisor to Arthur and it means herald.” He didn’t mention that the name also meant ‘full of sorrow’… that was how he felt though; full of sorrow…

Oliver rolled the name on his tongue, “Alvin Drystan. Alvin Drystan, I like the sound of it. Do you
want him to be a Wood or a Weasley?”

Percy swallowed, “I used to want to be Percival Bryan Wood.”

Oliver laughed kissing him softly, “Well, I have no objection to that; if that is still what you want.”

Percy bit his bottom lip to hold back a soft moan, “Yes.”

“Very well, our son’s name is Alvin Drystan Wood. I say we thumb our noses at the old codger and publicly announce our intentions to be Bonded.”

Percy laughed softly, that was more like the exuberant teen he fell in love with. He kissed him back, “You’ll have to ask me properly.”

“I’ve already got permission from your family, we just have to inform mine but I did promise to ask you properly once. I planned to ask you at graduation but that didn’t happen.” He had in his head the perfect ring but Dumbledore had split them before he’d had a chance to search for or to order it. After he’d been cut out of Percy’s life, he couldn’t bear to think about it. “First we’ll say goodbye to our son and then we’ll get back to planning our life together.”

Percy buried his face in Oliver’s neck and sniffed, what had he ever done to deserve a guy like this?

Oliver just hugged him, “Hush now. You don’t have to cry. I’m right here Percy, and I promise I’m not going anywhere. You’re stuck with me for good.”

They sat there for a long time just holding each other and thanking any and every deity out there for this second chance.

XoooooX

Dora was glad that due to her Metamorphmagus abilities she had two animagus forms and one was that of a peregrine falcon, she’d been on stake out in the trees seeing if Albus left. A former lover worked for the office that monitored floos and she’d paid him a handsome tip to let her know if the Headmaster’s floo was used for unusual trips or calls. She heard footsteps and looked up.
Dumbledore was wrapped up in a dark cloak and was walking faster than a leisurely clip would allow.

She flew after him as he left the castle heading towards Hogsmeade.

Dumbledore seemed to be whistling as he entered Hogshead, breezing past the man behind the bar who resembled him some.

The man glared at Dumbledore and promptly turned his back.

Careful to avoid notice Dora followed Dumbledore.

The odious man entered a dingy office and made his way to the dusty floo grabbing a handful of floo powder. "Deerfield." He muttered before disappearing in a flash of green flame.

Dora shrugged, Deerfield was home to Elphias Doge so nothing new there. She flew out the window, stood in the shadows as she changed from her animagus form to that of plain young woman of indeterminable age with reddish hair and pale brown eyes.

It was near closing, about ten to three when Dumbledore appeared.

Dora shadowed him until his return to the castle. Deciding her night was a waste for she had learned nothing she didn’t already know, Dora Apparated back to her parents’ house to rest before going back on duty.

Chapter End Notes

Chapter 18- Diagon Alley, meeting the family and discoveries in Godric's Hollow

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Chapter 18-

It was the day before Severus, Draco and Harry were to return to Hogwarts with Remus and Lucius. Harry woke up early to post his letter to the twins, as he made his way to the townhouse's owlry he thought about the contents.

'Dear Gred and Forge,

Thank you so much for the gifts, especially the chocolate. I'm sure I can find an appropriate use for the pranks you sent.

Yes I forgive you for thinking I cheating to enter the Tournament. I would have told you if I had.

I am too grateful for your giving me my father's map to not stay friends with you. I am pleased you see me as a brother, since I have none I accept the relationship gratefully.

Don't tell Ron but Draco and I have become friends. He is really nice once you get past his walls, he's helped me study and stay caught up with my classes.

I've learned so much from him, I can't say he's changed really but I do understand him better.

I don't think Professor Snape, I mean Prince-Malfoy will let him act like he used to. His father Lucius is really nice to me and I'm almost sure his behaviour as I've seen before is all an act. He got me into Remus' custody; I don't have to go back to the Dursleys anymore.

Can't wait to see you. I hope you get this before I arrive tomorrow. I'm sorry I should have written back sooner.

Harry;

Harry found Hedwig, stroked her feathers offering her an owl treat before tying the letting to her leg. "Take this straight Fred or George. I'd like it to arrive quickly but don't make yourself ill."

She hooted at him indignantly, but pecking his finger affectionately before flying away.

Harry watched until she was out of sight before heading down to breakfast.

XoooooX

Draco spoke up over breakfast, "We need to take Harry shopping. We let the house elves fight over
those ludicrous excuses for clothes those Muggles gave him." He smirked, "As much as I enjoy seeing him in mine."

Harry squeaked blushing at Draco's expression.

Draco chuckled continuing, "Like I was saying, as much as I enjoy seeing him wear mine, he can't continue to wear my clothes. I do have an extensive wardrobe and he can wear my clothes from First Year quite well but he really should have a wardrobe appropriate to the heir to the Potter and Black Houses." He was going to HATE returning to Hogwarts; Harry would be in Gryffindor Tower in the Lions' den and far from him. He had gotten used to falling asleep studying or cuddling with him. He didn't trust those backstabbing cowards in Gryffindor.

New clothes? Other then his Hogwarts uniforms he bought for himself he'd never had new or nice clothes only Dudley's crummy hand-me-downs. Harry wasn't even sure he sure he wanted new clothes, he...liked wearing Draco's clothes. They made him happy, feel safe, so it felt like Draco was always touching him or holding him. He felt content, now he'd lose that? He whispered, "Please? I don't want new clothes and these are so nice. Nicer then I've ever had," he looked up at Draco, wanting him to understand.

Draco smirked, leaning over to press his lips lightly and chastely to Harry's. His Veela might not have been awakened yet but he was very pleased Harry wanted to wear his clothes.

Harry's eyes widened when he felt the touch of Draco's lips on his own, he choked out a moan. He didn't want to go back to school; he wanted to stay with Draco.

Remus was a bit awed by how fast the relationship between the two teenage boys had changed. Harry spent every moment he could with Draco; Severus' adopted son was so gentle and patient with him. Harry had fallen in love with learning and clearly seemed to be getting quite attached to Draco. He wouldn't be a good guardian if he weren't worried how Harry would take being separated from his new best friend. Clearly the seeds for being mates when they were older were being sown. Harry didn't want to make a big deal about it but Draco had told him about Ron and Hermione's letters and how hurt Harry had been only Draco called them Granger and Weasel. After all they'd been through they'd turn their back on Harry and believe the worst? He'd thought they were good kids, so he was furious with them.

Draco went to break the kiss and moved away.

Harry grabbed onto his Slytherin friend's robes and whispered, "You won't stop being my friend because I'm going back to Gryffindor will you?"

Draco smirked, "You're not getting rid of me that easily. You're stuck with me, why don't you join me in the dungeon some nights? I know Blaise will keep it a secret if I pay him what I owe for betting on the wrong person being the Hogwarts champion. I also owe him a couple of Wizarding Chess matches, the least I could do is have a few dreadful matches and let him win. As for Crabbe and Goyle," Draco shrugged, "if I tell them you're cool, then you're alright in their opinion. Nott's I suppose a decent kid, shy and quiet. His dad's abusive; I wish you'd help him out Dad. You know Old Nott isn't stable; he went to school with the Dark Lord."

"Wait! I'm your father not a hero. I can't save everyone." Lucius protested.

Severus rolled his eyes, "I'm surprised you didn't notice Theodore was being abused."

Lucius looked away, "I didn't notice Harry either. I do feel sorry for any child that's abused."
Draco's eyes narrowed, "I should have mentioned it sooner but I was distracted earlier. Theo's in some real trouble, I was going to wait to mention it at Christmas because at Hogwarts he's safe. Nott hasn't been satisfied with just beating Theo or using the Crucíatus on him."

Severus gasped and stiffened, "I knew Nott was bordering on madness but,"

Harry was confused, what were they talking about?

Lucius grimaced, "I'll do my best to get him out. You can rationalize physical abuse, you were bad, and you deserved to be punished, just about anything to not consider that what they are doing it wrong."

Severus swallowed; he'd used the same words on Lucius about how his father treated him.

Lucius scowled, "I was never as happy as when I received your letter that your parents were dead."

Severus glanced up at Remus and then at Lucius, "I was afraid to tell you about what things were like at home. Tobias found out about my baby, he decided I really was a freak not just because I could do magic but because I only looked like a boy."

"I was suspicious but I graduated that year and sneaking away to Hogsmeade or inviting you for a visit was difficult. I wish I had known about the baby or how terrible your father was after that." Lucius said squeezing his hand, "I wanted to protect you."

"I knew that, I just didn't want you in trouble for hurting my parents."

Remus was struck dumb, it almost clear that one of his former students was being beaten and possibly sexually abused by their Death Eater father. He couldn't believe that Severus was admitting to them that he'd been treated just as badly, as if seeing what Severus had looked like after being trapped in a tiny closet for four days hadn't been traumatic enough.

Harry asked quietly, "So, can I just have Draco's old clothes? No one will know they aren't new right?"

Draco felt his cock react, Harry, his future mate didn't want anything new but he wanted to wear his old clothes?

Harry wrapped his arms around himself, "They…make me feel safe and remind me we don't hate each other."

"Well if you won't let us buy you new clothes can I buy you a pet? A familiar?"

Harry blushed more, "I already have Hedwig…"

Draco laughed, "I was thinking something more appropriate for you then an owl. No rats, toads or cats for you."

Harry whispered, "Then what?"

"Well my little Parseltongue speaking Chuvash-to-be I was thinking about finding you a nice snake." Draco teased kissing his nose.

Harry blushed, stammering, "A snake? Really?" contrary to his housemates' opinion, he thought snakes were cool, especially after his conversation with the boa constrictor at the zoo that wanted to travel to Brazil.
Draco chuckled, "Yes, your own snake."

Harry hugged him, "You're the greatest! Can we go now? Please! Please! Please?"

Draco ruffled his hair and kissed his temple, "If my fathers and your guardian will take us."

Lucius chuckled, "I have no objections."

"I need to pick up some potions ingredients anyway." Severus smiled; somehow he was sure Lily would approve of Harry's friendship and future with Draco. His abusive childhood would have infuriated her.

Remus shrugged, "I have no objection."

Draco grinned, "It's settled then. You're getting a snake."

Harry hugged Draco hard, "Thank you, thank you, thank you."

Draco kissed his hair, "It's a small thing."

Harry's eyes filled with tears, shaking his head, "My first birthday present was Hedwig, in fact it was the first present I remember."

Draco knew Harry's childhood had been abusive but his first gift had been an owl from the oaf? He winced; Harry never liked his disrespect of Hagrid or his attempt to get him in trouble after disrespecting the Hippogriff last year. He pretty much brought that on himself. He would have to learn to tolerate that oaf for Harry's sake, if not begrudgingly give him the respect the so-called professor deserved.

Harry saw the wince and looked Draco over for a hurt, "What's wrong?"

Draco kissed his nose, "Nothing, just thinking I should have treated Hagrid like a professor even if he never graduated."

After breakfast they flooed into Diagon Alley.

Remus and Lucius had agreed to take the boys into the menagerie while Severus went to visit the apothecary for potion ingredients.

Severus was working on a potion to help Harry sleep that wasn't based on the Dreamless Sleep potion that was losing effectiveness due to overuse.

Draco held Harry's hand tugging him into the store, "Come on!"

Harry followed shyly.

There was some whispering but due to the articles from varying publications following Lucius' press conference there weren't malicious whispers except from hard nose Death Eater haters.

Inside the Menagerie the boys were soon searching through the collections of snakes.

Harry had run forward to see the cages of snakes unconsciously dragging Draco along in his excitement.

Smiling to himself Draco let Harry drag him along; he enjoyed seeing the shy quiet boy so animated.
Lucius remembered Severus being just as thrilled over copies of rare or new books by potioneers that he would give him.

Remus couldn't remember that James was as exuberant as Harry not even over Quidditch matches, new brooms or dates with Lily.

Harry was greeted with hisses from a variety of snakes; some had been living in their cages at the Menagerie for longer then others. Some magical, some not.

The snake that caught his eyes was a pale white with faint yellow almost gold markings and silver eyes that reminded him briefly of Draco.

"What's your name?" Harry hissed.

"Shishreyu." Was the replying hiss.

Harry stared at the high musical hiss, "Are you a girl?"

She laughed, "I am a dwarf ghost snake, I am capable of becoming invisible if I wish. I've annoyed the men here so they think that I can escape. My larger cousins can get four metres long but I won't get longer then my one and a half metres."

Harry hissed giggling, "I like you. How do you know how long you are?" He held out his hand instinctively.

"I was bred by a Chuvash, he told me." Shishreyu's tongue darted out as if to taste his hand, "You smell honest and pure of heart."

"You licked me." Harry jumped; it tickled.

"No, I smelled you." Shishreyu corrected gently.

Harry smiled up at Draco, "I want Shishreyu." Her name came out as a gentle hiss.

"What?" Draco asked not understanding Parseltongue.

Harry blushed, repeating himself but this time he said her name in English.

"Shishreyu?" Draco asked clarifying the unfamiliar mix of sounds.

Harry nodded, "She is really nice, she said she wouldn't get any bigger."

Shishreyu turned to speak at another snake that was clearly upset.

Harry listened, "Oh no, they're friends." He exclaimed in English.

Draco was surprised at Harry's gasp, "Who are friends?"

Shishreyu turned back to Harry, "We came from the same breeder and hatched at the same time. No one wants him because he is rare and expensive due to his chimera status. Our Breeder called him Paradox; he's a chimera because he is a metre long dwarf Rainbow snake who has both the dominant stripes and the recessive diamond pattern. I never understood how that happened. Everyone wants him but no one can afford him."

Harry repeated the story to Draco who turned to Lucius, "I'm buying Harry Shishreyu. There is a rare snake here named Paradox who is her friend, the Rainbow snake. If I don't have enough for
both will you pay for him?"

Lucius knew that Draco was mostly asking for Harry's sake, Harry must really want his snake to be happy. Harry would hate to make any creature unhappy, even a snake. He sighed nodding.

Draco squeezed Harry's hand; "I'll pay for them and then we can take them home."

Harry bounced in excitement. "Thank you! Thank you!"

Draco laughed; Harry was so cute sometimes, as he pulled a velvet bag out of his robes after moving towards the clerk at the counter, "I'll pay for the dwarf Ghost snake and for the chimera Rainbow snake. What you're still owed my father will cover."

The clerk unlocked Shishreyu's cage.

Harry darted forward, holding his arm out.

Shishreyu slithered up Harry's thin arm and coiled herself loosely around her master's shoulders. Hissing, "You're too thin, you should eat more rats."

Harry choked on a laugh, "I know I'm too thin, I'll definitely eat more but I'll leave the rats to you and Hedwig."

"Hedwig?" Shishreyu asked with a hiss.

Harry smiled, "My owl but I think she is more likely to end up your meal rather than the other way around." He knew some owls ate snakes, "I'd prefer you two get along or at least learn to tolerate one another."

Draco nudge Harry, "What was that choking hiss sound about?"

"Shishreyu said I was too thin and that I should eat more rats."

The clerk looked ill.

Lucius had enjoyed catching his own meal once or twice after coming into his Veela inheritance. He hadn't been particularly fond of rats, birds were a more tolerable taste but it was too close to cannibalism. He had preferred other animals instead.

Remus chuckled at the few times he had been so hungry that he'd had to shift, after he'd reluctantly discovered his ability to shift at will when the moon wasn't full and hunt. Not his proudest moments but he'd eaten rats as well as other prey, they weren't so bad but he still preferred chocolate.

Draco was a bit disgusted at the idea of Harry eating rats but didn't say anything about that. "I'm not as acquainted with Paradox as you are with Shishreyu. How to I introduce myself?"

Harry conferred with Shishreyu and nodded before replying. "If the clerk will open his cage, hold your hand just outside the door so he can smell you. It will feel like he'll be licking your hand." Harry addressed Paradox in Parseltongue, "This is Draco Malfoy. He isn't a bad person. He's not Chuvash and he can't talk you yet. I'm going to try to teach him."

Paradox slithered to the front of his cage, "He's really going to take me?"

Harry nodded, "He is."

Draco moved towards the open cage and held out his hand.
Paradox smelled Draco and pulled away, "He isn't human."

Harry hissed back, "He's a Veela but he hadn't come into his inheritance yet. He's really nice, and he loves snakes. Probably because he's a Slytherin."

Paradox stared at Draco, "I'll go with him, but I'm not accepting him as my master yet."

Harry nodded, "I can understand that, do you want to travel like Shishreyu? I think you've probably had enough of cages."

"I hate being caged." Paradox hissed vehemently.

"I can understand the feeling."

Draco had flinched back at the violent hiss.

Harry reached into the cage without fear.

Paradox slithered calmly up his arm.

Harry rest his hand on Draco's arm, "He's not dangerous, at the moment anyway. He was just saying he hates cages."

Draco could understand why someone would hate being locked up like that. "I promise he won't be caged."

Harry passed the promise along to Paradox.

Paradox hissed, "I still don't accept him as my master but I will consent to him carrying me as you do Shishreyu."

Harry nodded, speaking English to Draco, "He wants to leave and wants to curl up on your shoulders like Shishreyu."

Draco agreed, without a cage and since snakes were cold-blooded he didn't have a better option.

Harry passed along Draco's agreement.

Paradox slithered up the young Veela's arm and curled up around his shoulders. "We can go now."

He hissed imperiously.

Lucius chuckled having completed the transaction for Draco's snake, "Now that you have your own snake Draco you should probably see if Harry can teach you how to speak Parseltongue. That way you can communicate with Paradox directly, it will facilitate a bond with him if you wish to have a proper master and familiar relationship."

Draco smirked, "Oh I intend to learn if Harry will teach me. You know, flirting in Parseltongue would be the ultimate in Slytherin behaviour."

Harry blushed, shyly translating for the snakes in their company when asked why he changed colour.

Remus chuckled at his charge's blush; it was interesting to see how close the former rivals had gotten so short a time.

Lucius shook his head at his son, "We should go check on Severus. He is probably still haggling with the apothecary at Jigger's."
They exited the Menagerie as a group and made their way to Jigger's.

"That isn't worth more then ten Gallons! I refuse to pay more. I don't care how rare you claim it is or how much you claim it cost you to acquire it. You should know better then to try to cheat a First Class Potions Master. Do you know who you're dealing with?"

"Of course I do! You're Professor Snape, Head of Slytherin House, Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry's resident Potions Master." The apothecary, who was probably Mr. Jigger retorted.

Lucius drawled lazily after overhearing the discussion, "He is actually, Professor Prince-Malfoy, consort and Bondmate to myself, I hold a place on the Hogwarts Board of Governors, a Seat in the Wizengamot and I am on the Committees regarding International Relations and Finance. Severus is also the Head of the Prince line."

The apothecary staggered, "My apologies for being ill-informed but that doesn't change my…price."

Severus glared, "I could take my business elsewhere. I have been a loyal and hopefully valued customer for over twenty years Mr. Jigger. I would have expected you to honour that loyalty by not cheating me. I will not pay more then ten Galleons for the item in question."

"You bankrupt me your Lordship. It cost me twenty!"

Lucius raised an eyebrow, "Was it imported legally?"

Mr. Jigger flushed, "You insult me, of course it was your Lordship."

"I would hate to have to ask the Aurors to look at your books because you were attempting to cheat my Bondmate." Lucius said with a dangerous smile.

Harry shivered, Severus was a bit scary but that smile was frightening. Would Mr. Lucius actually summon Aurors?

"It wouldn't be too difficult to arrange since I am on good terms with the Ministry." Lucius sneered.

Mr. Jigger seemed nervous, "I'll…I can sell it for twelve Galleons to you Professor. I can't afford to go any lower."

Severus wasn't sure if he was upset with Lucius or grateful for his assistance, "Twelve Galleons is your permanent price? I will be needing more of this ingredient as I am researching the creation of a new potion."

The apothecary shifted nervously, "I…suppose we can agree to a fair price such as that for a similar amount."

"Very well." Severus snapped, "add up my intended purchases and we can end this business."

Severus paid the requested amount without further protest as if he was finally content though begrudgingly so at the prices.

"Where should we go now?"

Harry looked around, "I am running low on some things."

Severus held out a bag stiffly, "I already picked them up for you." He held out a separate receipt to Remus, "I expect you will reimburse me. I wasn't sure Harry would remember before we returned to school."
Remus nodded, "I will see to it that the proper funds are sent to your personal vault."

Harry was surprised.

Remus chuckled, "You see Harry, Severus is merely picking them up for you. He happened to remember you were running low. He wanted to be sure you were prepared for his class. If you had remembered you would have got them yourself. So repaying him would be the proper thing correct?"

Harry nodded, understanding.

Severus held out his hand to the snake on Harry’s shoulder, and in stammering Parseltongue addressed it. "My name is Severus Prince-Malfoy."

Shishreyu smelled him, "A polite man you are. You don’t speak my tongue like a snake or a Chuvash."

Severus replied, "No, unfortunately I wasn’t born knowing your tongue. I was obliged to learn when I found ancient potions texts written in Parseltongue."

Paradox was intrigued, "Wizards found a way to write our language?"

Severus hissed a reply, "Yes. I will never be as adapt as a Chuvash or even yourselves but I can speak."

Paradox seemed to consider this "Is the boy smart enough to learn as you have?"

Severus felt a rush of pride for Draco, who though not a son of his body was the son of his blood and his heart, "Yes, he is wise. If he studies he may learn as I have. Not many wizards can learn your tongue, most must be born knowing it."

"If he can learn, I may come to accept him as my master." Paradox hissed back.

Severus nodded, "Between Harry and myself I am sure he will learn."

Harry grinned, "I already promised to teach him." He blushed slightly, "he said something about using Parseltongue to flirt with and how Slytherin it would be."

Severus didn’t recognize the word Harry used, "What?" he asked in English, "Draco said that Parseltongue would be what to with?"

Harry stammered, "To flirt with." He hadn’t expected to say a word in Parseltongue that his mother’s best friend didn’t know after finding out by accident that Severus could speak it.

"So," Severus repeated the Parseltongue equivalent of ‘Flirt’, "means flirt?"

Harry thought about it, "I believe the proper translation would be ‘to tease someone you’re interested in mating.’" He chewed his lip, unable to meet anyone’s eyes, including the now-scared apothecary. He couldn’t help his Chuvash blood that allowed him to speak to snakes.

Draco was upset that Harry was upset, "What are you looking at?” he snapped, "Didn’t you know that Merlin could speak Parseltongue?"

Mr. Jigger stammered, "No I didn’t. It’s just you know…"

Remus finished his sentence, trying to be kind, "Unnerving because He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named"
was known to speak it?"

Mr. Jigger nodded foolishly.

"I can see how that would make it…unnerving." Remus continued, "Harry can't help it, it's a mark of a great wizard. It certainly isn't his fault that quite a number of great wizards went bad is it?"

To minimize Harry's revealing of his ability to speak Parseltongue, they quickly left to return to Lucius’ London townhouse.

XoooooX

Oliver had some money saved since he wasn't much of a partier and he still lived at home officially. He had enough to invite his family and Percy's to discuss the particulars of their 'homework' to mourn their son by allow himself and Percy to properly grieve. He hoped that his parents would be agreeable so that they would forgive his oversight in informing that not only about the death of their grandchild as well as that Percy and himself were once again a couple but he had been worried about Percy so it slipped his mind.

Percy had agreed that the meeting was important after he brought it up that morning.

They would arrive together and Oliver's parents would be arriving at eleven so they could tell them privately before the Weasleys arrived at noon.

Percy was nervous after they flooed into Diagon Alley, "Your parents aren't upset with me are they?"

Oliver shook his head; "I didn't explain why we broke up before because I didn't want to upset them with the story I was told. They would have been very upset, not that they still won't be but we both know they'll still be upset."

Percy gulped they would be upset, there was no way around that… "Will they blame me?"

Oliver looked fierce squeezing his hand, "They better not. It's not your fault."

When they reached Antonio's, Oliver announced they were part of the Wood-Weasley party and they had a private room reservation. The maitre'd escorted them to their room and Oliver ordered them both large house coffees to help settle Percy's nerves.

Percy didn't care that he worked for the Ministry and walked through Diagon Alley holding his boyfriend's hand. They hadn't slept together since before Ginny was rescued from the Chamber of Secrets but they were a couple again and that's what mattered. He was tempted to curl up on Oliver's lap but he decided it was best sit beside him and rest his head on the Quidditch star's shoulder.

Oliver wrapped his arm around Percy, "It'll be okay. We can get through this."

He'd barely finished his sentence when his parents walked in.

They both seemed quite surprised to see them together, even though they knew they were meeting Oliver.

"Oliver? What's going on?" his father all but snapped.

His mother was more excited, "Does this mean you and Percy are back together? I never understood how you could break up."
"Hello Lady Wood. Lord Wood."

"Oh please you're back with my son. You have to call me Maria."

Percy blushed, "Maria then."

Oliver's dad looked at him strangely, "I don't know whom you think you are traipsing back into my son's life. Do you know how bad,"

Oliver held up his hand, "Dad Percy never broke up with me."

His parents were incredulous and looked at him as if he'd lost his mind.

"Oberon dear before you bite the poor boy's head off, you should notice he looks peeked." Maria Wood gently chastised her Bondmate.

"Please sit. We're expecting Percy's family but first we have to tell you some rather disturbing news."

Oberon barked, "Are you pregnant?" addressing his question at Percy.

Percy heard the word pregnant and couldn't breathe.

Oliver rubbed his back, "Relax. It's alright. I'll explain."

Maria was worried now, something wasn't right. She knew her son and there was a brooding cloud of sadness around him. "Ignore your father's rudeness and just begin your story."

"Well our story starts after they decided to close Hogwarts because it was too dangerous. Ginny was taken into the Chamber, Percy thought she was lost forever but she was rescued. A few days later he was called to the Headmaster's office."

Oliver's parents were a bit surprised.

Percy had managed to calm down and was tempted to pick up the tale but Oliver shook his head.

"The Headmaster offered him tea but it had Veritaserum in it. He asked Percy what his future plans were and mentioned us. He told the headmaster we were a couple and we were going to move in together. He said some nasty things, imperioed Percy and forced him to forget about me. He even told him he was going to begin Courting Penelope Clearwater."

Maria was horrified. "It can't be."

Percy said quietly, "I can give you the memory if you need to see it."

Oberon stared at Percy, "So you didn't break my son's heart?"

Percy shook his head, "Not for all the world. He's better then I deserve."

"It was what happened during the time the Headmaster mindraped Percy that we asked you to come. Mum, he was pregnant. The Headmaster didn't even ask him if he wanted the child or if he was going to be Bonded to the sire of his child."

"Was?" Oberon asked in a steel voice.

"He was under the Imperious Curse and couldn't make decisions. He didn't even know until recently because the memories were hidden by a powerful memory charm that was removed by a skilled
Legimens. We've been trying to come to grips with the death…murder of our son." Oliver tried to calm his dad so Percy wouldn't be upset.

"Son? You know it was a boy?" Maria asked.

"Weasleys always have males and Woods usually have only male offspring. It has to have been a boy; our mind healer prescribed properly mourning our child by giving them a name and a tombstone. If you'll have him, we want to add Alvin Drystan Wood to the Wood family. Soon I plan to add Percival Brian Wood to the list of our kin. That is if you don't object Dad. His family has no objections and they're down right furious about what happened to Percy. He may have been young and hadn't known he was pregnant but he had been carrying Arthur's first Weasley grandson. Bill, Charlie, Fred and George were so upset, the twins I'm afraid have retribution in mind for the headmaster."

"So if Percy never broke up with you, why did you say he did?" Oberon glared.

Percy spoke up, "Because it was better then the story the Headmaster gave him. He let Oliver keep his memories but locked away mine. The Headmaster told Oliver that I came to him distraught because Oliver was pressuring me for sex. He implied to Ollie that he'd raped me."

Maria and Oberon were furious.

"My son is not a rapist!"

"Certainly not. He would never hurt you!"

Percy nodded. "Oliver told you we broke up because it was kinder then admitting the Headmaster accused him of rape, wiped my memories to help me recover from the trauma of supposedly forced intimacy and told him to never speak to me or else he'd turn him over to the Aurors."

Now Oberon was absolutely furious, "You're telling me that crackpot aborted your child without consent, forced you to forget my son, made you Court that loathsome know-it-all Clearwater bint and threatened to turn my Oliver in for rape if he even talked to you?"

Percy swallowed, "I'm sorry."

Maria hurried over to hug him, "You poor dear. If you want a stone with your son's name on it with his Wood ancestors I have no objection." Her expression was daring her Bondmate to raise an objection.

Oberon sighed, "Very well, order the stone. I just don't see the,"

"I have his brother's name engraved on the family mausoleum and you know it." Maria glared.

Percy was surprised.

"I didn't know that Mom." Oliver said surprised.

"I lost a baby a few months after we were Bonded. I know it's not the same but it hurt so much. I wanted my baby." Maria said her soft voice filled with old pain.

It wasn't the same thing but Percy could empathize with wanting your baby after losing it.

"Do you have any plans to try again soon?"

Oliver blushed, "Mum! We weren't even trying before. I knew it was possible, I guess we forgot the
contraceptive charm."

"I want to be a grandmother. As your mother I insist you forget the charm."

The Weasleys trooped in.

Bill brushed past his dad and grandfather, kneeling and hugging his little brother. "I'm sorry you didn't believe you could depend on us. Rest assured no one is hurting you again. You don't learn to be a curse breaker without learning some very nasty curses. I may just put some of those rare exotic protective curses on my new favourite brother. Of course if I do they'll attach themselves to anyone who wants to hurt you." He reached over to punch Oliver in the shoulder playfully, "What's the big idea getting Percy knocked up anyway? Don't you know I'm supposed to have kids first?"

Fred laughed, "Bill since when were you a wand swallower?"

Bill bolted up, wrapped an arm around Fred's neck and dug his knuckles into his head, "I am no wand swallower. I'm a straight as they come. I just haven't found the right girl yet. What about you?"

"I like to keep my options open but that Angelina is a good sort of girl." Fred said fighting free.

George rolled his eyes, "That girl's got it so bad for you that she's blind that Lee Jordan practically worships the ground she walks on."

"Lee? Lee doesn't even play Quidditch." Fred retorted.

Percy laughed, "Quidditch isn't everything, after all not all Quidditch players are only interested in Quidditch players."

"Why are we here Oliver?" Charlie asked.

"Healer Tonks recommended that we," Oliver began.

Percy snorted, "He gave us homework. He thought we should name our baby and honour them with a funeral to help mourn them. Oliver wanted it to be a family event. Because we were all deprived the right to know our son."

Percy may not have been the sire but given the history of all male lines in the Wood and Weasley lines it could not have been anything else.

Arthur touched Percy's shoulder, "What is my first grandchild's name?"

Percy said quietly, "Alvin Drystan Wood. Alvin because the Wood family has Elven Heritage and honours that by giving names that have elf in their meaning. Drystan was an advisor to King Arthur and keeps in the Arthurian name giving of the Weasleys."

Bill added, "Drystan also means full of sorrow."

Percy winced.

"I think it's a wonderful name," Arthur hugged his son, "I just wish," his mind drifted before the sentence and the thought were complete.

"I can make arrangements for the stone." Septimus said.

"You can make the arrangements to add it to the plaque on the family mausoleum." Oberon groused.
"If that's all let's eat!" Fred smirked.

XoooooX

Annoyed her attempt to follow Dumbledore had been a waste Dora decided to go to Godric's Hollow. It was an old township named for Hogwarts' founder Godric Gryffindor who founded it as well according to legend. It had some Muggle inhabitants but it was primarily comprised of Wizarding folk. She chose the plain features of a young woman of indeterminable age with reddish hair and pale brown eyes again as her researcher's appearance.

Apparating into a Public Apparation Point, Dora gazed at the front doors, their snow-dusted roofs, and their front porches. Then the little lane along which she was walking curved to the left and the heart of the village, a small square, was revealed to her. There were several shops, a post office, a pub, and a little church whose stained-glass windows were glowing jewel-bright reflecting the cold winter sunlight across the square.

Halfway across the square, however, she stopped dead. As she had passed a war memorial, it had transformed. Instead of an obelisk covered in names, there was a statue of three people: a man with untidy hair and glasses, a woman with long hair and a kind, pretty face, and a baby boy sitting in his mother's arms. They had done a good job with the statue; Dora could see that little boy in Harry at fourteen.

Heading first into the Cemetery Dora began to examine the tombstones. Many of the Wizarding world's leading families who didn't have private mausoleums were buried here; or at least the ancestors of today's Weasleys, Abbotts, Potters, Peverells and even Longbottoms. It took a while to find Dumbledores.

There was a joint lichen-spotted granite tombstone, bearing the names Percival Enoch Hayes Jarvis Dumbledore and Kendra Eliza Wulfret Dumbledore. Beside it were stones that bore the names and only birth dates of Albus Brian Wulfric Dumbledore and Aberforth Braden Wulfgang Dumbledore. On a third headstone carved in elegant script was the name Ariana Davina Camilla Dumbledore. There was also a quotation:

'Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.'

Dora crouched to brush the dirt away and gasped. She was only thirteen when she died. How awful. Dora's eyes narrowed at the date, it was less then two months after her mother Kendra's.

Why had she never heard the name Ariana Dumbledore before?

She sensed someone and turned to see an old woman.

"Who might you be missy?"

Dora attempted a smile, "Ashley Davidson." Giving the name she'd chosen for her 'research'.

The woman seemed to roll the name on her tongue, "Davidson? Doesn't sound familiar."

"It shouldn't," Dora said pleasantly, pulling out a roll of parchment, a small pot of ink and a quill, "I'm doing research for a book." She continued as she began taking notes on birth dates, names and where applicable death dates.

"A book?" the woman asked suspiciously.

"Yes, you see I was hired to do research for an in-depth book on Albus Dumbledore for a very busy
columnist." Very true if she secretly gave her research and interview notes to Rita Skeeter…

"Oh, my name is Cynthia MacMillan. Albus is my cousin, my mother and his father were siblings."

Dora raised an eyebrow, "Really? I'll have to pass your name on to my boss. I'm sure they'd love to interview you."

Cynthia rested her hand on her cousin's tombstone, "It was dreadful, Ariana's funeral. Aberforth was so angry; he actually punched Albus so hard he broke his nose. He told him that it was all his fault, that if he hadn't been so besotted with Gellert that Ariana would still be alive."

"Gellert?" Dora asked curious.

"Some connection of Bathilda Bagshot. I heard he'd been living with her before Ariana died. Gellert and Albus both had above average cleverness had met for the first time in their lives an intellectual equal. At the funeral, Albus who was normally rather levelheaded was practically catatonic while Aberforth was heartbroken. They'd lost a mother and a sister in the space of less then three months. Aberforth was still the head of the family but he seemed so lost, more so then most recent Hogwarts Graduates. Aberforth was about to start his Fifth Year in September and they'd lost their sister in July but it was Aberforth not Albus with Bathilda who helped arrange the internment of Ariana."

Cynthia grew quiet, "Having never been close, losing Ariana was the last straw. I was at Hogwarts with Aberforth and asking after Albus' health was a quick way to being cut out of his small group of acquaintances. Living in Albus' shadow and blaming Albus for their sister's death made him less social then ever. Ariana was such a sweet child, I was a year older but we were the best of friends. Ariana was quick as a whip; Aunt Kendra said Ariana and Albus stole all the smarts. I was sick with the flu, that day."

"What day?" Dora asked before she could stop herself.

Cynthia went on, not hearing her as she talked out loud, "Ariana was smart but feather-brained at time. Albus was always reading, giving little attention to his young siblings while Aberforth was always tending to his silly goats so neither had much time or attention for her. Uncle Percival was always away at the Wizengamot and Aunt Kendra was usually painting so no one would notice when Ariana slipped out of the house. That day Ariana was outside in a corner of the yard. We'd been told never to use magic outside because Muggles could see but Ariana must have let it slip her mind. I think she was making little paper birds fly and chasing them." Cynthia's expression was both pained and furious, "Four Muggle boys caught her at it, they probably made her show them how she did it. When they discovered they couldn't do it too, it must have frightened them. No one in the house heard but Uncle Percival came home to see poor Ariana attacked mercilessly with cricket bats for using magic. He scared the Muggle boys off and brought Ariana inside. Aunt Kendra had some Healing training and did her best to patch her up but she was never the same."

"How awful!" Dora exclaimed horrified.

"Ariana was never the same after that, locked in her own head she was." Cynthia said bitterly, "It was like I lost my dearest friend, she was only six! Muggle or no how could someone brutally beat a six-year-old girl! When Uncle Percival recovered from the shock he brutally attacked the four Muggle boys who'd nearly killed his baby. He'd killed three of them and the fourth was barely alive when the Aurors came. Uncle Percival never told them about Ariana and let them paint his character very black for an unprovoked attack on Muggles. Soon after that they moved away, Aunt Kendra wanted a new start."

Dora was shocked; Dumbledore's father murdered three boys? "So they moved here to Godric's
"Hollow?"

"And lived off Aunt Kendra's dowry and inheritance. Albus made a name for himself both in school and after Ariana's death. After the elimination of Grindelwald as a threat to both the Wizarding and Muggle population the Wizengamot returned Uncle Percival estate, title and Wizengamot seat." Cynthia glared, "All of which should have been given to Albus anyway."

"Do you know why he never Bonded?" Dora was curious and hoped this connection of Albus would know.

Cynthia MacMillan swallowed, "Ask Aberforth." She looked away, "Trust me, he hates Albus with a passion. I know he'll tell you all the truth you need. Be careful, I think he loved Ariana more then was healthy." She turned to leave after laying a bouquet on Ariana's grave.

"Is Ms. Bagshot still living?" Dora had to know.

"Yes," Cynthia stammered off an address, "Next door to the house Aunt Kendra and Ariana died in. I don't understand why he let the Potters hide there."

Dora's eyes widened, "It was the last place anyone would look."

But Cynthia MacMillan was already gone.

Dora made her way back toward the dark church and the out-of-sight kissing gate. She was now planning on heading towards the Potter memorial at the ruins of the house that James and Lily Potter died in.

She headed down the street leading out of the village in the opposite direction from which she had entered weaving through the citizens of the town. Dora could just make out the point where the cottages ended and the lane turned into open country again. She walked as quickly as she dared, keen on attracting as little attention as possibly.

She spotted a dark mass that stood at the very end of this row of houses.

Then Dora could see it; the Fidelius Charm must have died with James and Lily. She berated herself, of course it had. The hedge had grown wild in the sixteen years since Harry had been taken from the rubble that lay scattered amongst the waist-high grass. Most of the cottage was still standing, though entirely covered in the dark ivy and snow, but the right side of the top floor had been blown apart; that, Dora was sure, was where the curse had backfired. Hadn't she always heard that Lily and Harry had been attacked in the nursery? Dora stood at the gate, gazing up at the wreck of what must once have been a cottage just like those that flanked it.

The house had been damaged but no one had rebuilt it…

She grasped the thickly rusted gate, not wishing to open it, but simply so she'd touched some part of the house.

Her touch on the gate seemed to have done it, A sign had risen out of the ground in front of them, up thorough the tangles of nettles and weeds, like some bizarre, fast-growing flower, and in golden letters upon the wood it said:

On this spot, on this night of 31 October 1981, Lily and James Potter lost their lives. Their son, Harry, remains the only wizard ever to have survived the Killing Curse. This house, invisible to Muggles, has been left preserved in its ruined state as a monument to the Potters and as a
reminder of the violence that tore apart their family.

And all around these neatly lettered words; other witches and wizards who had come to see the place where the Boy Who Lived had escaped had added scribbles. Some had merely signed their names in Everlasting Ink; others had carved their initials into the wood, still others had left messages. The most recent of these, shining brightly over sixteen years' worth of magical graffiti, all said similar things.

Good luck, Harry, wherever you are.

If you read this, Harry, we're all behind you!

Long live Harry Potter.

Dora's voice caught, such kind words. It was so sad that Harry had never seen this, he should. She'd mention it to Remus next time she saw him.

A heavily muffled figure was hobbling up the lane toward them, bundled up against the brisk dreary late November day. Dora thought, that the figure was a woman. She was moving slowly, possibly frightened of slipping on the snowy ground. Her stoop, her stoutness, her shuffling gait all gave an impression of extreme age. She watched in silence as she drew nearer. Dora was waiting to see whether she would turn into any of the cottages she was passing, but she knew instinctively that she would not. At last she came to a halt a few yards from them and simply stood there in the middle of the frozen road, facing her.

There was next to no chance that this woman was a Muggle: She was standing there gazing at a house that ought to have been completely invisible to her, if she was not a witch.

Dora thought the woman looked familiar, she resembled somewhat the picture of the author of A History of Magic. She asked softly, "Ms. Bagshot?"

The muffled figure nodded, "You are?" her voice high and thick with age.

"Ashley Davidson. I'm researching for a book on Albus Dumbledore and I heard this was once his home."

"Many years ago it was but it's known such tragedy. Join me for tea dear? It's too cold to have a conversation like this out of doors."

Dora nodded, wondering why this woman would come out here in the cold. Surely she could order everything by owl…

She stepped toward the woman and at once, Ms. Bagshot turned and hobbled off back the way she had come. Leading her past several houses, Ms. Bagshot turned in at a gate.

Dora followed her up the front path through a garden nearly as overgrown as the one they had just left.

She fumbled for a moment with a key at the front door, then opened it and stepped back to let her pass.

Now that she was beside her, Dora realized how tiny she was; bowed down with age, she came barely level with her chest. She closed the door behind them; her knuckles blue from the cold and mottled against the peeling paint then turned and peered into Dora's face. Her eyes were thick with cataracts and sunken into folds of transparent skin, and her whole face was dotted with broken veins and liver spots.
Dora wondered whether she could make her out at all; even if she could, what she might see in the plain features of a young woman of indeterminable age with reddish hair and pale brown eyes she wore as Ashley Davidson.

The odour of old age, dust, of unwashed clothes and stale food intensified as the unwound a moth-eaten black shawl, revealing a head of scant white hair through which the scalp showed clearly.

Dora wondered how long it had been since someone had looked in on the ancient old witch. She'd ask her mother to add Bathilda to the list of elderly wizards and witches that some of Andromeda's old colleagues would visit.

Bathilda used her wand, her voice and hand quivering as she lit candles but it was still very dark, not to mention extremely dirty. Thick dust crunched beneath their feet, and whatever else.

Dora stood watching Bathilda as she finished lighting the candle stubs that stood on saucers around the room, perched precariously on stacks of books and on side tables crammed with cracked and mouldy cups.

The last surface on which Dora watched a candle flicker to light was a bow-fronted chest of drawers on which there stood a large number of photographs. When the flame danced into life, its reflection wavered on their dusty glass and silver. She saw a few tiny movements from the pictures.

Bathilda was distracted as she fumbled with logs for the fire.

Dora who was admittedly pants at household magic, muttered "Tergeo." The dust vanished from the photographs. Then the sight of a photograph near the back of the collection caught his eye, and she snatched it up.

It was of a light haired, merry-faced young man who was smiling lazily up at Dora out of the silver frame.

Then besides it in a similar silver frame, he seemed to share an embrace with a clearly teenage Albus Dumbledore. It was the expression on Dumbledore's face that gave her pause, Cynthia MacMillan's words; 'so besotted with that Gellert' rang in her ears. Albus was shorter and he was looking up at the younger but taller young man. The look on his face was one of wonder and worship, his slim lithe body pressed tight at the taller boy's side. The taller boy's hair seemed lighter, perhaps blond but it was hard to tell with a black and white photograph. The look he had looking at Albus was one of smug pride and ownership but his feelings were less refined and courtly. Excited, she asked, "Ms. Bagshot, is this Gellert and Albus?"

The old woman nodded, "My great nephew, he'd gotten into a spot of trouble and his parents asked me to let him stay for the summer. They warned me he'd been in trouble but he was always so nice. He did the dishes and the dusting; I was always in and out of the house on Ministry business. Poor Albus had lost his mother just the day before he was just supposed to go on a trip with his good friend Elphias Doge. They called it a 'Grand Tour'; they were quite popular in those days for young men just out of school. So a very unhappy Albus was stuck in Godric's Hollow for the summer. He hadn't figured out what to do with poor Ariana, Aberforth was just as determined not to return to Hogwarts as Albus was determined that he should not fail his mother's wishes and complete his education."

Poor Ms. Bagshot started to cough.

"Rest awhile, let me see if I can clear the air a little." Dora summoned carefully all the dirty dishes, "Where might I find that tea you mentioned?"
"The kitchen two doors down the hallway, it's in the cupboard above the stove."

Dora could hardly breathe without feeling ill; the smell of mould, rotten food and all around filth assaulted her. She temporarily cursed away her sense of smell; Helga Hufflepuff was keen at cooking and cleaning charms. Household charms were not something Dora was all that proficient at but she did her best. Granted she wasn't her mother and the dishes didn't particularly sparkle but they and the kitchen were cleaner, much cleaner then when she started. She filled a teapot with water and used a heating charm after Apparating home for a minute to raid her mother's kitchen for tea and biscuits. Dora didn't trust anything in this place to be safely edible given the state of things.

Bathilda was dozing off in the room Dora had left her in; she shook the elderly woman and then silently charmed her hand clean. As she gingerly sat in a chair after clearing it out with her wand and using a charm to clean it first. Pouring a cup of tea and placing a few biscuits on a second plate.
"Here. I got some biscuits from my mother. She makes the best I've ever had."

"Why thank you dear." Bathilda murmured.

"You simply must tell me about your nephew Gellert and Albus. They look so happy, I don't think I've ever seen Dumbledore glow like that."

"They thought I didn't know but it was so romantic, I was so busy running interference between the Ministry and the goblins as usual. I knew that Gellert was only sixteen and Albus eighteen but they were both so smart I thought they'd get along. You could have knocked me over with a quill you see, Albus nearly stumbled when he saw my Gellert. They were nigh inseparable. It was really sad that Aberforth took his brother's relationship so badly. He was jealous that Albus had love; he was always trying to start fights and get Gellert thrown out. Albus was so besotted with my nephew I was sure they'd be engaged before the end of summer." Bathilda's voice shook with age and sorrow.

"Then Ariana died. Did you know about her?" Dora had to know.

"Yes. I knew she was old enough to go to Hogwarts but hadn't the magical control to go. Most days she seemed happy and quiet, content to stare out the window. She was stubborn; anger seemed to destroy what little control she had over her magic. Her mother's death was an accident, I'm sure of it. Kendra must have wanted Ariana to do something Ariana didn't want to.

"So Albus' relationship with his brother is coloured by jealous that he loved and lost, as well as anger that Ariana died? Their cousin told me that Aberforth blamed Albus for their sister's death, he even punched him at the internment." Dora asked conspiratorially.

"Oh dear that was dreadful, Aberforth ran down to my place, screaming he needed help. He brought me back; there was evidence of a three-way duel. Ariana was dead no doubt about it. Albus was so in shock that he wrapped his arms around himself rocking, he didn't speak for days. He just let his brother berate him, love is a beautiful thing." Bathilda croaked.

"Yes it is."

"They told me Gellert became a powerful Dark Wizard, I wonder if that was because he lost Albus. If they'd stayed together it might not have happened, they were always talking about doing Good. I think the reason Albus never was bonded is because he still loves Gellert. It hurt him terribly when the Wizengamot insisted he deal with him. He mentioned they had history but I never heard a whisper that he admitted they were romantically involved."

"Wouldn't Aberforth have mentioned it? Especially is he believed Albus was responsible for Ariana's death."
"Aberforth had been arrested and imprisoned much to Albus’ mortification for using illegal charms on goats. He didn't have access to news at that time, regulations you know."

For as old as she was Bathilda had a great memory, it was surprising. Her house was a mess, her hygiene was embarrassing but she had a healthy memory regarding the past but like a good investigator Dora would be sure to double-check her sources.

Tea and biscuits gone, Dora rose, "I must go write my report Ms. Bagshot. I'm sure my boss will be very excited to interview you."

"Really?" the old woman seemed genuinely pleased. "Who?"

"I'm not at liberty to say ma'am. I can promise that you won't be disappointed."

Dora left the dirty cottage Apparating home and taking a long hot shower to wash the grime away.

So Dumbledore lost his mother and had to change his plans to go abroad. He was stuck in guardianship for a brother who detested him and an unstable sister who was responsible for the death of their mother. He met a gorgeous younger blond wizard who'd been in trouble. They obviously quickly became attached; the picture of them was evidence of that. That picture would make Skeeter's career; the Wizarding World's hero, the Muggleborns' champion, was the lover of the Dark Lord Grindelwald. Had they kept up a correspondence? Had they remained lovers? What exactly happened that day, the day Ariana died and the day Dumbledore 'duelled' Grindelwald? Could Albus still be in love with the teen that might have caused his sister's death?

That would be interesting, unless Dumbledore killed Ariana to be free of her so he could be free to live his own life. A fifteen-year-old wizard doesn't need much supervision and Albus could have emancipated him if he wanted away from him enough.

Merlin, she hoped Dumbledore didn't kill his sister. Unless Aberforth did and blamed Albus to avoid dealing with the guilt because as Cynthia said, 'he loved her more then was healthy.' Hufflepuff preserve her sanity! The Dumbledores were mad, Percival killed Muggles, Albus Dumbledore was intimately involved with a Dark Lord, Ariana killed her mother and Aberforth might have been in love with his sister. There was a possibility that a Dumbledore killed their sister. As if finding out Dumbledore murdered at least two innocent babies wasn't bad enough, apparently the apple didn't fall far from the tree.

Chapter End Notes

Dobby had been politely asked by Remus to take the job as Harry's private elf.

Dobby had been understandably nervous when summoned to a Malfoy house having not even been freed for a year. He had a contract at Hogwarts that was intended to be a trial for six months but a bit of prodding had convinced him to end it on its third month.

Dobby had happily taken Harry's trunk back to Hogwarts as soon as Harry dressed for the day. He had neatly folded the clothes Draco had given Harry taking pride that it was neat, orderly and organized.

Dobby had always been a conscientious elf, but to be Harry Potter's personal elf... was beyond his wildest dreams.

XoooooX

Draco woke Harry reluctantly and gently bullied him into the shower.

Harry missed a few people at Hogwarts, but he was scared that his friendship with Draco would disappear like dew in the sun. He wanted to stay...

Draco lifted his friend's chin, "You're my mate, don't forget that. I couldn't ignore you if I wanted to, which I don't. Our creatures wouldn't allow that. Besides, I'll have to control myself. Seeing you flaunt your body in my clothes will do wonders for my libido. You are gorgeous." Draco said kissing Harry's neck.

It took all of Harry's will power not to swoon, he was no girl but Draco Malfoy was the hottest and richest heir in Hogwarts. He maybe two years away from his inheritance, but he was already falling for his Slytherin counterpart.

Draco held him close, a secret part of him afraid that he would lose Harry now that they were returning to school.

Harry heard two laughing hisses.

"The Chuvash is being courted by the Veela."

"You can see how desperately the Chuvash loves him. Can you taste/smell the pheromones they are giving off?"
Harry blushed, hiding his face in Draco's shirt, hissing under his breath, "Shut up..."

Reluctantly, both snakes and boys headed down to breakfast.

"So," Remus began as the boys came in, "we are all still going to Hogwarts?"

Lucius nodded, "Not sure I'm okay with you joining us in bed yet, but you are welcome in our rooms."

Remus was grateful for that at least; if a Veela was able to share their destined mate it said a lot about them. It was almost impossible for two wolves to share a single mate without practically killing each other. "I should have realized sooner that if Severus cared about you so much you must have some decent qualities."

Draco snorted, "The public persona he used to emulate would have made that difficult."

Harry giggled, "Yours wasn't much better. You called Hermione that word... and you were never nice to Ron." Not that they were being so nice themselves...

Severus glared, "I may not like Miss Granger but if you called her,"

Draco winced, "I did, I knew better and I still did so, much to my current embarrassment. I won't be using it again." No matter how bad Granger reacted to his and Harry's friendship, he would not stoop to that level again and break his promise.

"I'll hold you to that." Severus said sharply.

Draco winced, when papa used that tone he knew he was in trouble.

They ate slowly, not one of them really keen on returning.

When they were done, Lucius pulled out a portkey and held it out.

It was a tiny pewter cauldron.

Everyone grabbed on.

Harry groaned, "I hate portkeys."

There was the hook in navel sensation before they were dragged from Malfoy Manor in Wiltshire to Hogwarts in Scotland.

They arrived on Saturday just as breakfast was over, but unfortunately for Harry, most people were clearly sticking around and chatting.

Lucius had chosen the time to make Harry's return as memorable as possible.

Draco caught Harry, who was immediately dizzy and nearly fell when they landed. He pulled Harry to his chest.

Harry took a few deep breaths and let Draco hold him, ignoring the stares and shocked whispers of the Hogwarts residents.

"Is that?"

"Harry?"
"He's back!"

Immediately, Fred and George leapt off the bench at Gryffindor table to hurry to hug him.

Harry glanced up to see the twins, vaguely noticing Hermione's displeasure at Draco, who was holding him and the look of pure hatred that Ron shot them both. Harry did his best to ignore them and wiggled a bit to let Draco know he had to let go.

Draco let go; their snakes though invisible, wouldn't like being jostled so much.

The twins hugged Harry and ruffled his hair, "Merlin, it's good to see you. We were worried."

Harry reached back for Draco's hand, "I'm okay now. I wasn't very well. I don't know what would have happened if Draco and Sev… I mean Professor Prince-Malfoy hadn't noticed I was ill."

George looked at Fred and nodded, they both noticed the slip and that Harry was leaning against Draco in an intimate way. It reminded them of Percy; their older brother whom they hadn't been very kind to in the past who had suffered a gross violation and terrific loss. Without Oliver, their good friend they doubted Percy would ever recover. Something that had scarred Harry but brought them both together… just how bad had life at the Dursleys been for Harry? They had every intention of finding out.

"It's good to have you back."

"You coming back to the tower?" George was sure that Harry relied on Draco a lot, he wasn't sure if Harry could bear to be separated from him.

Harry swallowed, "I'm not sure how welcome I will be in the Fourth Year Dormitory. If I'm not welcome, I'm sure I can ask Professor Prince-Malfoy if I can sleep on a couch in his apartment."

"No." Draco said flatly but lacing his fingers in Harry's, "If you aren't welcome in the Tower, you'll stay in the Dungeon with us. I'm the Prince of Slytherin. If I say you're welcome, then Blaise, Theo, Greg and Vince have no choice but to agree."

"Or he could stay with us." Fred offered, "I know George would be okay with it and I can't see Lee Jordan having a problem."

Harry smiled, "I'll think about it."

"So the prodigal returns." Came the flat unfeeling voice of Harry's former friend Hermione Granger. "Are you going to admit that you tampered with the cup?"

Harry shook his head, "No, because I didn't do that. I satisfied the Wizengamot's Judicial Council, you know I'm not a strong enough wizard to fool them."

"You're a good liar Harry, you can fool anyone."

Harry struggled to hold back his tears, "I did not go anywhere near that stupid goblet. I'm already stuck being the Bloody Boy Who Lived. I never asked to have my parents MURDERED by some homicidal insane manic. I want my Mum and Dad! Why did some pathetic excuse for a seer have to prophesy that I would be the one to defeat the Dark Lord? He glared at Dumbledore, "You're the only one he ever feared. You should have stopped him. You shouldn't have allowed him to get so powerful. You should have taken responsibility, not handing it off to a baby who didn't even know he was a Wizard until he was eleven. If you wanted me to be some great warrior, then why have me raised by Muggles who hate Magic? It sort of defeats the purpose of my being magically strong"
"Now Harry," Dumbledore said in a sickly sweet placating tone, "No need to raise such a fuss. We both know how much you crave attention but frightening your schoolmates is going too far."

"You're just afraid that your guests will find out Britain isn't as safe as they were told! Did you tell them about Professor Quirrell? Of course not. The opening of the Chamber of Secrets? No. That an escaped Prisoner broke into the castle? You wouldn't offer such incendiary information on the cusp of such a coup as to have the Triwizard Tournament re-established during your reign as the Headmaster of Hogwarts." Harry said bitterly.

"Harry." Dumbledore's voice took on a faintly dangerous edge.

"I didn't enter that Tournament. I want nothing to do with it. I don't even want to be here. Why would I want to be around people who should know me better yet believe I'm a liar and a cheat? I stand with the only people I trust in Hogwarts: Severus, Lucius, Remus and Draco. As for the twins they are the only Hogwarts Weasleys I will accept as friends. Ron was my best friend; he should have known me better. I told him from the first day of term, I didn't want to enter, I would not enter and he turned his back on me. So in front of Hogwarts I turn my back on him. As for Hermione, I don't need her help with studying, but if she insists on believing I didn't listen to her about the tournament being dangerous; then the Golden Trio is Broken."

There was a collective gasp in the Great Hall amid staff and student alike.

"I will be happy to leave the Tower if my presence is an embarrassment. I have little desire to live there at present." Harry said quietly.

"Yes, by all means go live with the snakes. You obviously prefer their company. You are just as plotting and conniving as a stinking Slytherin." Ron snarled.

Harry paled, "I never told you that I was almost placed there. Right now, I wish I had been. Then I wouldn't know the pain of being betrayed by someone I trusted. I wouldn't have gone into the Chamber of Secrets for just anyone's sister. I don't wish I hadn't saved her, but I wish she'd been someone else's sister right now."

Instantly, Ron punched Harry.

Only Draco's balance kept him from falling.

"Detention, Mr. Weasley. I shall be writing to your parents. I am sure your father will be displeased with you." Severus said annoyed.

Shishreyu's angry hiss echoed through out the Great Hall, "How dare you strike my master!" She had been invisible until that moment, her ire causing her to reveal herself.

Girls from Ravenclaw, Gryffindor and Hufflepuff gasped in shock at a snake curled up on Harry Potter's shoulders.

Hermione looked faint.

Slytherins were surprised, not only by the snake on Harry Potter's shoulders, but by his announcement that he might have been one of them.

The other boys were stunned.
"Harry, I think leaving the Great Hall would be a good idea."

"Severus," Dumbledore said grimly, "After all I've done for you, I can't understand how you could turn your back on me."

"The moment I realized you'd turned your back on Lily's son, my allegiance to you was done."
Severus said sharply. "I owe you no more duty, then to continue in my position as Hogwarts' Potion Master and Head of Slytherin. My loyalty is to my Bondmate, our son and Harry."

"I thought you quite disliked Remus." Dumbledore continued. "You were the reason why he was let go last year."

"Let's just say I decided to grow up. I can't hold the mistakes of his childish friends against him. With Sirius Black the III still on the loose and Petunia Dursley's care quite insufficient, he was in need of a new guardian and I felt he was a good choice. It gave me a chance to redeem myself for my mistakes last year. We have become quite good friends like you hoped. We are now on the same side, Harry's side."

Dumbledore was fighting to control his composure, quite embarrassed that they had guests. "Perhaps, we should continue this discussion in my office."

Harry shook his head; "I won't set foot in there. I don't trust you at all."

"My dear boy, I am the Headmaster and it doesn't do to speak to me this way. I believe the company of such persons has taught you dreadful manners." Dumbledore said shaking his head as if saddened. "I fear your parents would be aghast at your manners. I looked on them like children."

"Don't you dare speak of Lily to him." Severus said dangerously, his voice thick with anger. "Your own children? You sacrificed them all for your beloved Greater Good. You had the chance to save them, I begged you to do it. Foolishly confident that you would, I sold my honour to a second master. Now that I am older, I see that you never would have. Come Harry, I believe this interview has tired you."

Draco examined Harry's cheek and found only a slight bruise, "Do you have a bruise salve? If I were older, I would just heal him myself." Until he came into his inheritance, he wouldn't have access to his natural healing abilities.

Severus shook his head, "I know some healing spells." He didn't have any bruise salve orders and sadly, he didn't have any on hand.

Draco gestured for Blaise, Theo, Greg and Vince to join him.

They exited the Great Hall together.

With Fred and George nervously following the Slytherins, their adopted brother and former professor of Defence Against the Dark Arts.

Blaise crossed his arms, after they all entered their Head of House's apartments asked, "So, is it true? Did prissy Potter not cheat?"

Draco winced and then scowled, "Of course he didn't. I would know if he did. He was terrified when his name came out of the Cup. Not the terror of being caught cheating but the terror of being beaten. My original assessment of his character has been found wanting. He is an honorary snake and you are to treat him as my betrothed."
"What about Pansy?" Vince asked nervously.

"I have never liked her, not even her attentions. I allowed them to appease my mother. Who I have little attachment to, rather I look up to the Head of Slytherin with the respect one owes one's bearer though he did not bear me. I wish to Salazar that he had." Draco replied, "If you want her, I have no objections." He'd been suspicious that Vince had an attraction for the pug-nosed girl who fancied herself the most attractive girl in their year, much less Slytherin. He saw no such thing, only courtesy kept him from speaking such things aloud. He pulled a bag out of his robes, "The debt I owe the House for betting ill. I believe I also owe you a few chess matches, Blaise." In his eagerness to take on the role of Prince of Slytherin, he had often neglected Blaise who had been like a brother to him.

"I thought you might be back. I can retrieve my chess set unless the Professor has one." Blaise said, a bit surprised that Draco was so prompt to address his debts.

"I fear I have treated you ill, I owed you more then the occasional chess match when I was bored." Draco said appearing appropriately and honestly apologetic. "I have been treating my bestest friend like he was a member of Hufflepuff rather then a brother in Slytherin House."

Blaise stared at him, what had happened to Draco while he was gone? Draco hadn't called him his bestest friend since they were eight.

Severus laughed to himself as he glanced at the boys, "I would say you could stay here but I fear there is little room. If the Weasley twins wish to keep an eye on Harry, I see no reason they can't go to Slytherin Dungeons. If there isn't room in the common room, I am sure that he would be welcome in the Fourth Year Boys dormitory."

Remus choked on a chuckle listening to Draco's rather grand way of apologizing. He had more polish then Sirius' crudeness, though born to the same station; the firstborn of the Head of a Pureblood family…

XoooooX

Draco led Harry, Fred and George into the 'Snake Pit' as Fred jokingly called it with his fellow Snake dormmates flanking them.

The dungeon was already murmuring about Harry Potter, Gryffindor's Golden Boy's denouncement of the Headmaster as well as the disillusion of the 'Golden Trio'. The Prince of Slytherin's new friendship with Harry Potter was of much debate…

"Silence." Blaise announced, "The Prince would like to speak."

Draco glared at each snake present in turn, "These three are to be treated as my guests until I say otherwise. Harry Potter is the acknowledged consort to the Prince of Slytherin. You are to regard the Gryffindor Beaters as his guards, we've all seen them in action on the Pitch and I'm sure you wouldn't want to end up their enemy. I am elevating Blaise Zabini as my second. Greg and Vince will remain my bodyguards. I expect you to treat them as they deserve. Harry Potter is the Heir to the Houses of Potter and Black. The Weasley twins are grandsons to Lord Weasley. I declare they are not to be treated as bloodtraitors. However, their brother is not afforded the same status. He is a traitor in his own right and has impugned the honour of my consort. I declare both Granger and Ronald Weasley enemies of Slytherin House. As long as no permanent harm is done, I will turn a
blind eye to any punishment a Snake doles out on the auspices that it must done without being caught by any staff. I forbid any Snake from visiting the Headmaster, any conference with him is an affront to the Honour and Glory of Salazar Slytherin. Trust me; both our Head of House and myself will take great pleasure in disciplining you. A report will also be sent to your parents who I know have no love for Dumbledore. Ah Mafalda dear,

The daughter of a Squib cousin of Molly Weasley nee Prewett looked up, in awe at being addressed much less that the Prince knew her name. "Yes, your princeship?" she stammered.

"Let me introduce you to cousins who wouldn't be ashamed of you." He pointed to the twins, "I fear there have been some terrible manners on behalf of their mother, your cousin. You are descended from a Proud Ancient line, the Prewetts. She is a Halfblood and will be treated as such. I have just named two of perhaps the most devious boys outside of Slytherin as her cousins. Bully her and face their wrath. Now Mafalda dear, on the other hand is your traitor cousin Ronald. I am sure that you have a few scores to settle with him and perhaps, your cousins would like to discuss how to properly punish him for not understanding how important family is."

Mafalda blushed, to be singled out for attention by the Prince of Slytherin and deemed Acceptable to the House was a boon she would not soon forget. She stumbled to make a curtsy.

Fred walked over to her, "Mafalda? I'm Fred."

"I'm George. Nice to meet you."

"If we realized we were related, then we would have treated you better." They had failed to recognize her at all; she must be the daughter of that accountant that they didn't speak of.

"Hope you see past our short comings."

"When you are done catching up with her, someone direct them to my dorm. I will be very displeased if I discover they have been slighted. Remember, our Head of House is my papa and my dad is on the Board of Governors. They would be dissatisfied if they found out that you have violated the decrees of the Prince of Slytherin."

Harry struggled to keep from laughing; Draco could be so pompous at times. But he could see that this time it had merit. Mafalda Prewett, someone he never heard of before but Draco deemed a Halfblood must have been very unhappy. She had been hiding in a dark corner as far from the fires as possible. He after all claimed that three Lions had the right to be in the Slytherin Dungeons.

"Chess match, then?" Blaise stammered a bit awed by Draco's blatant display of his authority. Draco outranked the House Quidditch Captain and all the Slytherin Prefects in the Snake Hierarchy after all. He was now the acknowledged second? He outranked them too? Slytherin's wand, how was he supposed to concentrate on a chess match now?

Draco sat in a comfortable armchair, pulling Harry into his lap and summoning a Malfoy elf for snacks.

Blaise pointed to the fireplace and nodded at Theo.

Theo cast a fire in the fireplace and curled up with his book on raising Abraxans on his bed.

Blaise dug out his beloved chess set, a set of silver with emerald eyes on one side and gold with rubies on the other. He took a seat opposite Draco. "So… silver or gold?"

Draco breathed in Harry's scent; he loved seeing his future mate in his clothes. He covered Harry's
hands with his own. "Gold, which means you begin."

Blaise blinked, "Oh. If that's what you wish,"

"It is my desire that you begin."

Harry felt warm and content in Draco's arms, despite having the rest of the Fourth Year Slytherin boys present.

Draco did want to give Blaise a good match, but having Harry curled up in his lap was more than a little distracting.

Blaise raised an eyebrow, "Poor move, Drake."

Harry glanced up at the nickname.

Draco chuckled, "You try focusing with a bundle of cute boy in your lap."

Blaise blushed, muttering under his breath in Parseltongue, "I'd rather be the cute boy in someone's lap."

Paradox, Shishreyu and Harry stared, hissing together, "You speak it?"

Blaise swallowed, hissing back, "You understood that?"

Harry and the snakes looked at one another and giggled, "Yes."

Draco hadn't caught the hiss from his old friend and was surprised to hear a chorus of hissing.

"What's going on?"

Harry glanced at Blaise, "Can I tell him?"

Blaise swallowed, "I didn't mean I'd want to switch places with you. I'm attracted to guys, he's gorgeous but he's not for me."

Harry giggled in Parseltongue, "He is very beautiful. I can't blame you for thinking so."

"Will you stop hissing enough to talk to me?" Draco was starting to be annoyed.

Harry kissed his cheek whispering, "Blaise speaks Parseltongue. We were surprised."

Draco blinked, "Oh, I see."

Harry asked in Parseltongue, "So, do you have Chuvash blood too?"

Blaise was surprised, "Yes. Both my parents were Chuvash. Are you?"

Harry nodded, "I'm distantly related to the King of the Chuvash. He claims me a great-great-great something nephew."

"King of the Chuvash?" Blaise hissed in surprise, "You've met him?"

"I met the Veela Queen and her seer while I was away from school as well." He remembered her admonition not to mention her and went silent.

"The Veela Queen? She doesn't meet non-Veela... or so I've heard." Blaise hissed back.
"Apparently, her seer had a vision I would be in danger and that I was Chuvash."

"Blaise? Match?"

Blaise glanced at his old friend, "Sorry, just getting to know your consort."

"No stealing him away now." Draco said holding Harry closer.

Harry laughed, "I'd have more to fear of him stealing you from me, then him to steal me from you but neither of us are his type."

Blaise glared at Harry playfully.

Vince looked vaguely ill; "I share a room with two guys interested in guys?"

"Shut up, Vince!" Blaise thundered, "You're not our type. We have no interest in overindulgent indolents like you. We like good-looking rich, well-born guys who actually have talent at Quidditch not just beating others up. We like brilliant individuals."

The Weasley twins chose to walk in at that moment.

Blaise glanced up, "If I had to claim a type, I'd probably choose…" he glanced at both twins, "whichever one is George. Fred is too interested in girls for me."

George blushed, "Me?"

Blaise shrugged, "Vince was feeling insecure because there were three guys in here who were interested in boys rather than girls. You'd think he'd be thrilled because that means all the more girls for him. At least Greg figured that out, with Draco not interested in courting Pansy, she's all his if she'll have him."

"At least, Theo isn't interested in boys." Vince muttered.

Theo turned red.

Blaise did his best not to react, he was sure Theo had a crush on him and there was nothing he could do about it. "Who knows? Maybe he just isn't attracted to anyone yet. Hard to know until you get your first crush or you start noticing what you're attracted to."

"So, you're not attracted to any Snakes?" Theo asked quietly.

Blaise shook his head, "No, I'm sorry but I'm not."

Well, there went Draco’s assumption that Blaise had a crush on him, perhaps he had a bigger ego then he thought…

"That's too bad. There are going to be a lot of broken hearts in Slytherin come Yule Ball." Theo said sadly.

"Speaking of Yule Ball, any chance I can convince you to come with me George?" Blaise could tell a difference in their scents; George smelled like earth and the greenhouses while Fred smelled like a potions ingredient cupboard.

George swallowed, "We'll see. You're not exactly my type Blaise."

"I can fly."
George stammered, "Flying isn't a necessity."

"Well, we can always go as friends." Blaise teased.

"Who will you go with Fred?" Draco asked.

"Angelina." Fred smirked. "Don't need to ask who Harry is going with."

"Believe me, he's going with me. Neither of us have anyone else we would agree to attend with."

Harry blushed; Draco was telling them they were going to the ball together? Draco hadn't even asked… oh well, he would have agreed anyway.

Vince muttered, "I want to go with Pansy."

"I think that's a wonderful idea. Then, she'll know her date well." Draco agreed.

Vince glared at Theo, "Whom are you going with?"

Theo swallowed, "No one. Father wants me to ask Millicent but she scares me."

"Mafalda doesn't have any who wants to go with her." Fred grinned, "Why don't you invite her? She is a rather decent sort. I think she'd be flattered. For being Ginny's age they are nothing alike; Ginny is quiet and shy for different reasons. Mal is quick-witted, devious and bloody brilliant. She had some neat ideas to prank Hermione; we're going to meet up another time to iron out the details. We've got some Polyjuice potion and getting some of Ginny's hair is easy. We can send Mal in and she can do some reconnaissance."

"Mal?" Draco asked curious.

"Mafalda is a strange name; we kept tripping over it, so she's Mal." Fred grinned. "Wish we had her for a sister rather than Ginny but at least we get her for a cousin.

"Hmm." Draco nodded, "Glad to see you getting along. Lesson number one to understanding Slytherins, Family is the most important. Lesson two: Connections are everything. Lesson three: Favours create debt. Debt creates alliances."

Blaise nodded, eliminated another one of Draco's pieces, "Something we all learn in place of mother's milk I suppose."

"Arrogance is bred into you snakes as well." Fred snickered.

"It's not arrogance if you are born a higher class then most people." Draco said boredly. "Had you grown up at Weasley Hall rather than your shack, then you would be treated differently. Your father had a higher standing when he was a student, as I understand. So did your mother. Your father was the firstborn of a Wizengamot Lord and your mother was an heiress."

"True." George acknowledged that compared to their grandfather's home, The Burrow was a shack. It was rather crowded and oddly built… Ron would have wanted to punch Draco's face in for calling their home a shack. Most of his brothers would agree and moved out immediately after obtaining employment.

"Friends?" Draco asked a bit surprised that George wasn't upset and the insult of his house.

George glanced at Blaise and then at Harry, "I suppose. Just don't talk about The Burrow where Ron and Ginny can hear."
Fred shrugged, "Don't much care if he does. They are a useless lot. Ron wouldn't amount to anything. Mum would have to pay to get him a job. We're starting our own business and we wouldn't hire the useless lout."

"Can't promise I'd remember to hold my tongue. Insulting that Weasley is too easy and fun." Draco's quicksilver eyes shone with barely controlled fury, "I have a score to settle with him. Verbally and physically assaulting a professed friend is unforgivable. I might suspect a snake of an activity such as an outsider would call cheating. In Slytherin we call it 'creative problem solving' and 'changing the rules for personal benefit'. To use that word is an embarrassment; anyone who knows Harry knows that he might have to power to confound an Ancient Artefact but not the knowledge. I might have considered you capable of doing that but it would be too blatant, you would rather try something simple like an aging potion."

Fred shrugged, "If we'd considered it a possibility and thought we could do it without setting off alarms, we might have tried it. An aging potion was so simple, we thought it might have been overlooked."

"Yeah, imagine our annoyance when that old goat actually considered it." George grumbled; he shivered remembering the beard. He didn't relish growing up and having a beard like the Headmaster…

"It is rather unsettling to be outmanuvered by that individual, no wonder dad can't stand him. It must be rather irritating to having a Malfoy being a part of the so-called 'Light side' and not having a part in his so-called conversion." Draco said as he scanned the board. "Oh, I'm checked. Wait, its checkmate. My apologizes Blaise; my mind wasn't on the game. Another match? I owe you a handful of matches."

"With Harry around, you couldn't strategize your way out of a ball of parchment. George? You any good?" Blaise said in a flirtatious tone.

George blinked, he wasn't sure he was comfortable with someone Harry's age flirting with him so openly.

Fred glanced at Greg, rolling his eyes, "Is Zabini always like this?"

Greg shrugged, "Wouldn't know. I've never seen him act like this."

Harry climbed out of Draco's lap only to get tugged toward the bed and flushed furiously.

Vince groaned.

Draco glared, "I'm not going to do anything dishonourable. If I did anything of a disreputable nature, I would have his guardian on my heels like a Cerberus watchdog. Trust me, the last thing I want is Professor Lupin angry at me."

Vince muttered an apology and turned to dig into his care package of sweets.

Harry whispered, "Are Crabbe and Goyle as terrible at studies as they appear? Or are they like Fred and George, unmotivated?"

Draco glanced at Greg, "Greg's problem is he's dyslexic and his father refuses to accept it but I suspect that's Lord Goyle's problem as well. I do my best to help but if what he tries to read is all twisted up when he reads, he can't learn well."

Harry nodded, "There was a kid in Grammar School who was like that. He struggled until the
teachers realized it. His parents wouldn't help either but his teachers would test him after school orally. He would do presentations rather then write essays and if he had to write one, a student would be given extra credit if they typed it for him."

Draco swallowed, "Muggles did that for a kid like Greg?" he was surprised, he called out, "Greg? Come here."

Greg made his way over, "Yes Draco?"

"Harry had a great idea about how to get better marks."

Greg frowned; "You told him?" he was rather embarrassed about his 'problem'.

"He asked if you were stupid like the idiot weasel or unmotivated like the twins. What would you have preferred I told him?" Draco told him annoyed.

Greg shifted nervously, "I understand. So what was his idea?"

Harry realized that Greg's problem really affected him. "Well... um... I knew this boy when I went to Muggle School before Hogwarts. He had the same problem and well, his parents wouldn't help him either. They were content to treat him like he was stupid."

Greg conjured a chair, deciding it might be worth listening if Draco thought so. He was the leader of Slytherin for a reason. "So, what did they do?"

"He knew how to read but the letters would get jumbled, you know? Like someone knocked over your elementary potions ingredients kit?" Harry asked.

Greg nodded, "That's what words in the textbook look like. Like a book was hit with a confundus jinx."

Harry grinned, "He wasn't stupid, he'd learn to compensate by remembering everything he heard."

Greg laughed, "Wow, pretty smart for a Muggle."

"He ended up moving to the top four or five students rather then last in marks. He had to have the chapter read to him. All his exams had to be oral. Isn't that why you can do any spell McGonagall or Flitwick show us or a potion if you're partnered with someone who reads the book for you?" Harry asked.

Greg smiled, "Wonder why you're the only person to figure that out. You're a Lion."

"I'm also pretty intelligent. Just ask your Head of House. I'm a decent brewer when I don't have him hovering around my cauldron and glaring all the time." Harry blushed.

Greg asked nervously, "I know you're always busy but,"

Harry grinned, "I've got an idea, Fred!"

Fred groaned.

Fred walked toward them, his hands shoved in his robes, "Yeah?"

"You took your OWLS, so you have fewer classes and there is no Quidditch." Harry said sternly.

Fred scowled. "Yeah, Mum was annoyed with us for doing so poorly. I managed an Outstanding at
Care of Magical Creatures and Potions though. Even got an Exceeds Expectations for Transfiguration and Charms."

"Cool. Then you can help Greg. Remember he'll owe you." Harry said smirking remembering what Draco said about Slytherins and their view of 'favours."

"Hm… I'll be needing someone to work for low wages at the shop when we get it." Fred scowled, "Though we're in serious jeopardy now."

Draco noticed how quickly Fred's mood turned, "What happened?"

"Lost our life's savings betting with Bagman." Fred said after glancing at George who was intent on his Wizarding Chess match and couldn't hear him.

"Betting with Bagman? At the World Cup?"

Fred nodded grimly, "We won. We said Ireland would win but Krum would catch the Snitch. The scoundrel paid us in Leprechaun gold."

Draco was incensed, "Leprechaun gold? That's poor business. Gambling has a proud history of being part of the Magical Gaming for eons. Since the beginning of Quidditch! I'll complain to Dad. How much did you bet?"

"Thirty-seven Galleons, fifteen Sickles and three Knuts, it was all we had. Oh wait, he credited us five Galleons for one of our trick wands. Said he'd never seen anything so convincing." Fred grumbled, "So it was a total of forty-two Galleons, fifteen Sickles and three Knuts. You remember that's exactly what happened: Ireland won but Krum caught the Snitch ending the game."

Draco nodded, "What were your odds?"

"Ten to one. So he paid us around 450 Galleons or thereabouts." Fred scowled, "Don't remember exactly, we took him at his word and went to celebrate Ireland's win but of course, our money was gone by morning. He's been dodging us ever since. We've tried to talk to him whenever he's at Hogwarts but he's always making sure we can't get him alone."

"Pays bets back in leprechaun gold. I overheard Dad mentioning something about the Goblins wanting to do an audit on him. He's also missing a member of his department."

"Oh yes, Jorkins?" Fred said quickly, "I remember Percy mentioning her over the summer. Crouch was worried. I didn't think the old stick in the mud could care about anyone. Hasn't she been found yet? Surely they're looking for her seriously, she's been missing since July or thereabouts. It's November…"

"I've got an idea, why don't you tutor Greg? He can pay you a bit and I'll see about getting Dad to see if he can get Bagman to pay you properly. Perhaps, you can convince Dad to invest in your Joke Shop? I know Harry has money to burn and you already have an employee in Greg. He's smart as a whip at following verbal instructions and a highly imaginative brewer. He once got complimented by papa." Draco smirked.

Fred held out his hand, "I'll tutor you if you work for us. I do need someone to sell our Products in Slytherin. I'm taking on Mafalda as well; she's got few options in the Wizarding World with her background. Most people won't look past her Muggle and Squib origins and realize she's a Prewett and a Black."

"Two employees and you haven't even opened up shop yet." Draco teased, "That's something."
"Oh," Harry said startled, "You need to talk to Remus. I forgot to tell you. He's your god."

"WHAT!" Fred yelped, "Professor Lupin?"

Harry smirked, "He's a Marauder, you know the ones that taught you sooo much?"

"Really?" Fred asked shocked, "Which one?"

"Which one what?" George asked mostly intent on his chess match but Fred's confusion and shock was hard to ignore- it was a twin thing.

"He's Moony." Harry laughed.

"Moony? So…"

"My dad was Prongs, Sirius was Padfoot, Remus was Moony and that useless scum Peter Pettigrew was Wormtail." Harry scowled.

"Weird names." Fred mused, "Why were they called that?"

"Nicknames. Sirius is innocent by the way; he didn't betray my parents and he didn't want me dead. He was after Scabbers that lousy good for nothing rat." Harry snapped, he wasn't mentioning they were animagus yet.

"What kind of a nickname is Wormtail, the others are cool." George asked not looking up from the board.

"The kind of nickname you give to a weaselly person who sells their loyalty to the highest bidder and betrays friends who would die for him." Harry glared at the floor. "He rather resembles a balding fat rat with watery beady eyes. You wouldn't trust him near your inventions for fear he'd sell them to Zonko's."

"I see. So he's like Ron?" Fred would have snickered but Harry's face made him reconsider that.

Harry swallowed, "I suppose… only Ron's taller and thin as a rail…"

Fred turned to Greg and asked him to go get the textbook for the class he was struggling the most with as long as it wasn't History of Magic because he had purposely failed it but if he asked nicely George might help him. George refused to fail but didn't get high enough marks to take all N.E.W.T. level classes.

Greg scurried off to get his barely opened Transfiguration and Charms texts, holding him out stiffly. He swallowed and recited his homework, "Because of my reading issue I write terrible essays."

Fred summoned his wand case and opened it, "20 Sickles." He said holding out two quills.

Greg blinked, "What? I have,"

"Not quills like these. They are Dictation and spell-checking quills, the red turkey quill is the spell check and the great horned owl quill is dictation."

Greg's eyes shone, "Did you invent them?"
Fred smirked, "Yes. Also available is Smart Answer but I don't think it would be beneficial yet."

Greg handed Fred his textbooks and went to dig out his sweets money. "Thanks. These should be really helpful."

"I'll be glad to recopy your essays, as long as your dictation quill is still sharp. They need to be replaced every few months. I think they last... wait, let me check. George? How long do the quills last?"

"Smart answer lasts three and a half months. You use it less often. Dictation quills much be replaced every six weeks. Spell-check quills last about five of McGonagall's writing assignments. That was the last batch. I did some refining. You running more tests on them?" George said absently as his bishop 'killed' Blaise's rook.

"Selling a dictation and spell-check to Goyle, I'm going to see if they help him get better marks. He needs a tutor. You're the one who got Outstanding at Herbology. Want to help?"

"What's his issue?"

"Textbooks."

"Oh. Like Charlie?"

"Yeah. If it weren't for Bill and Percy, he'd have flunked out I think. Smart but had issues with reading well." Fred called back.

"Sure. History too?"

"If it's not too much trouble." Greg was a bit embarrassed that his Gryffindor counterparts were willing to help him with his studies. Greg had been a reserve Beater last year and after Derrick and Boyle graduated, he was unofficially promoted.

"Don't think we'll go easier on you on the Pitch just because we're tutoring you." George winced as Blaise's queen punched his knight.

Fred moved over to sit on Greg's trunk and quietly read out loud his homework and helped the Fourth Year snake brainstorm his essays for McGonagall and Flitwick.

Draco let Harry snuggle.

Blaise was surprised to find that George Weasley of all people was very keen at Chess. He had found someone who was also interested in boys; it would be too weird discussing them with Draco despite their friendship. Odd as it might be he was considering the benefits of a friendship with the Weasley twins.

Chapter End Notes

Troll?
Chapter 20A- Pansy's reaction and Breakfast

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Chapter 20

Harry had fell asleep on Draco’s bed, fighting to hide a blush. Draco had undressed them both and curled up with him. It was seven in the morning when Draco woke to pounding and shouting on the door.

“Draco! Open up this instant. I know you’re in there. You can’t hide in there forever.”

Draco groaned; Pansy, that useless dog-faced witch. He threw on a robe and strut to the door, where he threw it open hissing. “You’re too loud for this early in the morning woman. There are six boys and two snakes in here trying to sleep.”

“Is that little Gryffindor whore in there? I can’t believe you brought Lions into our sanctuary; Weasleys and prissy Potter. What do you see in that idiotic clod? He is always looking down his nose at us and he is always getting you in trouble. I can’t believe Professor Snape is singing his praises now. Manipulative brat. He CHEATED to get in that tournament and then changed his mind. I can’t believe you’ve fallen for his lies;”

“For a Headmaster-hating wench you echo his sentiments exactly.” Draco said with a snarl. “For the record, that ‘whore’ is my mate. The acknowledged consort of the Prince of Slytherin.”

“I thought that was a lie.” Pansy gasped, “I’m supposed to be your consort. We’ve been practically betrothed since the cradle.”

“Betrothed according to my mother perhaps, but not according to my dad or my papa.”

“Papa? Dad? What are you talking about?” Pansy was surprised.

“Didn’t you hear? The woman who bore me was thrown out of the Manor. Their Bonding was annulled and Dad was immediately bond to his mate.”
“Don’t tell falsehoods, of course your father is still Bonded to Narcissa.” Pansy said shaking her head as convinced Draco had lost it.

“Really? It was announced in all the papers. Professor Prince-Malfoy, Head of Slytherin House and Hogwarts’ Potions Master, formerly Professor Snape was recently Bonded to his long-time love Lord Lucius Malfoy, member for Wizengamot. Professor Prince-Malfoy blood-adopted me. I think I know who my parents are. As for your information Ms. Parkinson, Harry was raised by Muggles who locked him in cupboards and starved him. They treated him worst then we treat our house elves. I mean people like my mother who takes great pleasure in using the Cruciatus on House elves.”

“Your mother is a wonderful woman; strong, smart and someone I would love to have as a mother.” Pansy stammered.

“She is a selfish woman who sooner beat her child then nurse it. She hates the whole world; she only wanted to be Lady Malfoy. She hates Dad; she spent all of her time being Dark. She didn’t even worry about planning my education only making sure my wardrobe wasn’t embarrassing.”

“At least you learned how to dress properly, unlike stuck-up Potter who dresses like he’s got no idea of proper etiquette or fashion. He doesn’t even understand the concept of making friends with people of the right class. He might be Muggle-raised but that boy is an embarrassment to heirs everywhere.”

“Leave. You have to the count of ten in Gaelic to leave before I have you blacklisted in our house.”

“You restored respectability to the daughter of a squib and a Muggle? And declared two blood traitors as pureblood heirs? Have you lost your mind?”

“Sonorus.” Draco’s quicksilver eyes flashed with barely contained fury. “Slytherin, this is your Prince. The Parkinson heiress Pansy has been demoted; she is banned from my presence, not to come with in six feet. She is the lowest ranked snake, for now first years outrank her.”

“Draco!”

“Vince? Remove this insufferably rude person from our doorstep. I want her escorted to the entrance to the girls’ dormitory.” Draco said glaring at Pansy.
“You’re going to turn your back on me? I’ll make you regret this. I’ll inform your mother of your rudeness. She’ll have you punished.”

Draco snapped, “I have no mother. I have two fathers; I have nothing magical or blood tying me to Narcissa Black. I am happy she is no longer a part of my life. She is a mad as her sister Bellatrix, I only wish they’d locked both of them up together.”

Vince rubbed the sleep from his eyes and grabbed Pansy’s arm, “You should go. Now.” Before Draco lost his temper and cursed her or something…

“I’ll leave when I’m ready.” Pansy retorted, wrenching her arm painfully from Vince’s grasp.

“I SAID LEAVE MY PRESENCE WENCH!” magic exploded from Draco and Pansy was hurled out of the Boys’ Dormitory and collapsed face first on the stone flagged floor of the Slytherin Common Room. Taking a deep breath, Draco returned to his warm bed, removing his robe and crawled in bed with Harry.

Harry whispered, “I’m sorry I’m causing so much trouble.”

Draco laughed, “You trouble? That person had it coming to them. She had ideas above her station. Acting like she was my consort when she had no right to choose that position for herself. She dared to mention that woman and that was the end of my patience.”

“Perhaps, I shouldn’t try to ask her out.” Greg muttered from his bed on the other side of Blaise.

Vince’s bed was closest to the door, followed by Greg, Blaise, Draco and then Theo.

“She has a temper and poor word choice.” Draco muttered.

“I’d hate to see what she would say if you did ask her.” Blaise said sleepily, his voice filled with annoyance. “She’d probably treat you as badly as the twins’ traitor brother. She’s always making fun of you anyway. She’s forgotten that Slytherins are supposed to stick by one another in public.”

“Perhaps she needs a lesson…” Draco mused.
“In that case my Prince, I suggest you grant that right to Mafalda. I know Pansy and her cronies have taken great pleasure in bullying the poor girl. At least they had the decency to do it in house.” Blaise said yawning. “Better to have a snake as your friend and ally, than as an enemy who can strike out when you least expect it.”

“True. I’d rather be Draco’s friend then enemy. I am sorry about all those fights we had.” Harry said snuggling to his boyfriend.

Blaise snorted, muttering in Parseltongue, “Half of those fights were because that weasel started them and you had to back him up. Ron was always trying to make things impossibly tense between you two.”

Harry winced, “Really? I didn’t know…”

“Honestly, you can be quite oblivious to the machinations of your so-called friends. The reason we don’t tolerate Muggleborns well is because they come with strange and dangerous ideas.”

“Ideas like what?” Harry hissed back.

“Like two wizards or two witches can’t be Bonded. Or that House Elves are slaves or abused. Granted there are those like Narcissa who took great pleasure in torturing House Elves but that is rare. They are bound to a family by choice; we don’t bind the progeny of House Elves until they are old enough to choose. They are usually willing to serve, especially those who are chosen to serve a child of the family from birth. The reason the Slytherins are better coiffed and dressed is because their personal elves often arrive before dawn to press their master or mistress’ clothes. It would be the greatest dishonour to have their charge spotted with a wrinkle. They get paid in pride; pride in a job well done, pride in seeing their charge well thought of. They don’t need ‘vacations’, they get that if their charge is in school. They rarely are needed then. As for ‘sick-leave’ Elves are allowed time to recover, especially if it is a disease that their charge could catch.” Blaise shrugged.

Harry nodded, “Thirsty.”

There was a soft pop and Dobby appeared with a steaming goblet of Butterbeer and a pressed outfit on his arm.

There were soft accompanying pops and five more elves appeared, bearing steaming drinks and
freshly pressed clothes.

Harry giggled, “What service.”

“We live to serve.” The house elves bowed.

Each boy took a drink, pleased because their elf knew them so well. Draco had coffee with a little brandy, Blaise had hot chocolate, Theo milk, Vince Butterbeer with a little firewhiskey and Greg had pumpkin juice.

“I guess we should get dressed.” Draco said pressing his lips to the nape of Harry’s neck.

Harry moaned softly. “Dray…”

Blaise chuckled, a bit jealous of their intimacy. He had hopes of having a man who worshiped him like Draco worshiped Harry, but he worried he would find himself a dominant Chuvash when he came into his inheritance. Blaise wanted to be a submissive but they were supposedly rare.

Reluctantly, the six boys dressed for the day.

Theo couldn’t help admiring Blaise’s long lean body, rippling with natural muscle.

Draco shot Theo a look; he needed to protect himself better. Vince could be rather vindictive. Greg was more accepting, since he hadn’t said anything rude but if he relied on them to improve his marks, then insulting them was unwise in the extreme. Then again, Draco was certain that he wasn’t the only one with suspicions regarding Greg’s sister Giselle and her best friend Millie Bulstrode’s relationship.

Theo coloured immediately and turned away.

The boys trooped up to breakfast, Slytherin House behind them.

Pansy was still glowering, but the first years had taken Draco’s words to heart and they walked ahead of her.
Vince walked in front of Draco and Harry; Blaise was one step behind Draco but ahead of Greg who brought up the rear. The Seventh Year Prefects and their year mates and so on followed them.

Fred and George joined them at the staircase. George filing into place behind Harry in line with Greg but Fred took his place beside Vince nodding.

The astonishment they received upon entering the Great Hall was first shocked silence and then hushed whispers.

Draco met the Durmstrang guests who were standing beside Slytherin’s table. He let go of Harry’s hand and bowed to Viktor Krum the acknowledged Prince of Durmstrang. “It would be our honour if you would join us. It is my wish for you to sit with me Viktor.”

Viktor bowed, “It would be an honour to join you. I see new companions this meal.”

Draco nodded, “My apologies for my absence. I hope my house has shown you the proper respect.”

Harry realised this was a dance, like that of two dominant males facing off to see who was more dominant.

“Your second Zabini was very attentive in your absence.” Viktor gestured in Blaise’s direction.

“Yes, I am glad to hear that.” Draco took his place at the table and gestured for Viktor to sit across.

Viktor bowed, waiting for the ladies to sit before sitting himself.

Draco noticed Viktor’s eyes drifting towards George who flushed and stared at the hands in his lap. “I would like to introduce my new companions. Harry Potter, my consort and his guardians and housemates Fred and George Weasley. Harry is the Heir to two pureblood lines. Fred and George are grandsons to another.”

Viktor bowed his head, and replied in heavily accented English, “Plezed to make ur akquintnc.”
George nodded, “An honour.”

“Has anyone mentioned that most of us can play Quidditch?” Draco asked, trying to get George and Viktor to relax.

“Really?” Viktor asked as he filled his plate with a lot of meat.

Flickering in and out of visibility Shishreyu hissed, “Chuvash that one. The tall dark one. Strange though, right and not quite right he smells.”

Harry and Blaise stared at the snake.

“What do you mean?” Harry hissed in a soft whisper.

“He seems trapped. His Chuvash did not rise completely. He can’t shed skin and become a true Chuvash.” Harry’s snake hissed back.

Viktor’s ears turned a darker shade of brown, with some red. Hissing back, “Embarrassment I am, Chuvash I expected to be. Fly I can, magic I can wield great but transform I cannot.”

George’s ears twitched, Fred gave no sign he heard. The hissing falling from Viktor’s lips faintly, made him feel odd. He felt himself harden; he understood the words in the hissing. He was just slow to translate them.

“The boy who smells like earth and greenhouses can hear us.” Paradox hissed flicking his tail in George’s direction.

Blaise turned to glance at George, “You understand Parseltongue?”

George swallowed, “I don’t know why. Fred can’t.”
Viktor’s eyes fell heavily on the boy who spoke Parseltongue so slowly and shakily that he seemed to barely be capable of speaking it at all. “Have you spoken it before?”

George tilted his head, “This is Parseltongue? I thought it was a made up language. Charlie and I used to talk to each other in secret. Besides Fred, he is the closest brother I have. Charlie knew I liked boys… I used to like Oliver until I realized he was with Percy. No one else seemed to guess. I’m glad they are back together. I just hope Charlie finds someone.”

“Was it easier for Charlie to speak then you?” Blaise asked out of curiosity.

George nodded, “This is hard to speak sometimes and I take longer to understand.”

“You remind me of myself.” Viktor hissed back, his eyes flickering all over George.

George shivered, the famous Seeker’s glances felt like caresses and he was highly embarrassed.

Blaise, Harry, Draco and Viktor couldn’t help smelling George’s arousal.

“Pleased to make your acquaintance George.” Viktor hissed. “Tell me about yourself.”

George couldn’t speak, his mouth opened a few times but he couldn’t find words to speak English or Parseltongue.

Draco took over after Harry caught him up to the conversation in Parseltongue by answering Viktor’s question in Russian. “He is the grandson of a Wizengamot Lord, fifth born son of the Lord’s firstborn. He is quite skilled at Herbology; he is an inventor and enjoys pranks. He is also the best Beater in school; he could give Volkov and Vulchanov lessons.”

Viktor grinned, “Must see you play sometime.”

Draco smirked, “Why not after breakfast? I’ll be glad to fly as a Chaser and give you my place as Seeker. We’re short on anyway with Flint off the team due to marks.”
“Gryffindor doesn’t have a Keeper, remember? Oliver graduated.” Harry whispered after Draco explained his idea in English.

“Ivanovski is a Keeper.” Viktor called out in Russian to a fellow Durmstrang student.

Blaise blushed, “Can I play? Please Draco? I’m a really, really good Chaser.”

Draco glanced at him, “Very well. I suppose I should ask Pucey to fly with us, he is the best Chaser we’ve got on the team that is. Bletchley can be Keeper. With Viktor we’re about even. I’m sure papa will let us use the pitch.”

Fred smirked, “I know Angelina is supposed to be our captain. I’ll go ask her if she wants to fly.”

George rolled his eyes, “That poor girl worships the ground he walks on.” He stood reluctantly took. “I should,”

Before he finished his thought aloud, Viktor was at his side kissing his hand. “Hurry back.”

George swallowed, “Greg? Keep an eye on Harry I won’t be long.” He fairly ran towards Gryffindor’s table.

“What are you doing here traitor?” Ron snarled. “You got Viktor Krum to kiss your hand? What are you? A useless poof?”

Seamus smacked Ron in the back of the head, “Like you haven’t been following him around like you had a crush on him. Always at his heels begging for an autograph? I get he’s an amazing Quidditch Player but,”

“I don’t have feelings for guys, famous Quidditch players or not! It’s disgusting.” Ron shouted.

“Be careful Ron. You sound like a Muggle.” Fred said harshly after obtaining Angelina’s consent for the match.
Hermione stiffened. “Why would you two be spending time with priggish people like Malfoy and cheaters like Harry?”

“Harry is not a cheater and I dislike hearing someone malign our brother.”

“He is also our charge.” George said nervously, before turning to Lee Jordan, “You want to announce for our match? We miss playing Quidditch and you’re the best announcer we’ve got.”

Lee grinned, “Sure thing.”

“You really got us a Keeper?” Angelina asked, her eyes shining with admiration of Fred who strutted.

“Krum offered a Keeper from Durmstrang. It seems he’s their equivalent of Draco, he’s their prince.”

“Draco offered his place as Seeker to Viktor.” George added fighting a blush.

Alicia glanced at him and said quietly, “I don’t have time to play. Too much homework. You’ll have to get someone else.”

George winced, he knew she liked him and it embarrassed him because he couldn’t return the favour.

Angelina moaned, “Where am I supposed to get a Chaser now!”

Colin spoke up unexpectedly, “Shay can fly. He is always on the Pitch with a Quaffle when it’s free. You should let him fly. Dean’s good too.”

The table turned to the camera-obsessed third year.

Fred laughed, “It’s settled then. We have two spare Chasers then.”
Angelina looked up at him gratefully, “Thanks.”

“No problem princess. Got to return to Harry. In my thoughts though.” Fred strutted off towards the Slytherin table.

Ron tried to fire a hex at Fred, “Tarantallegra.”

George leapt in front of it, the hex bouncing of his skin if it couldn’t penetrate it. He spun around and snarled, “How dare you attack a brother in such a cowardly way!”

“You are no brothers of mine.” Ron glared, ignoring Hermione who tried to get him to stop by wrestling away his wand. He smacked her so hard it rang throughout the chamber.

“Ronald Weasley!” McGonagall cried out in horrified shock.

Ron glared at her, “I’m doing what no one else will, punish traitors.”

“Detention.” She called out sharply.

“I beg your pardon Minerva but that Weasley already has detention with me for two weeks for striking a fellow student.” Severus practically purred.

“Then he is to have detention for the rest of December with me and banned from the Yule Ball.” McGonagall grabbed him by the ear and dragged him out of the Great Hall. “I will be contacting your parents.”

Ginny was in tears, one of the few reactions one could get from her.

Hermione was in tears herself; her hand on her cheek as if she could hardly believe Ron had hit her.

George brushed off his clothes, and headed back to Slytherin’s table.
Slytherin barely paid the Gryffindor table any mind until Ron started screaming at George.

“I don’t have feelings for guys, famous Quidditch players or not! It’s disgusting.”

Blaise, Draco, Harry and Viktor stiffened.

Harry worried how Viktor would take that since the speaker was clearly Ron and even as Ron’s former friend he remembered how the tall thin redhead used to dog Viktor’s footsteps and beg for autographs practically drooling.

Viktor’s eyes widened in horror when George leaped between Ron and Fred after the former cast a spell at Fred’s back. “No!” he gasped in Russian and Parseltongue.

Everyone was surprised when the spell had no adverse effect on George.

Mafalda was not surprised but shocked that Ron, her fool of a cousin dared not only to injure a girl but also to cowardly attack his own brother. She began planning harsh punishments for him, despite being struck by Ron her previous plans for helping Fred and George get back at Hermione would continue.

Viktor and Fred both were examining George for injury.

Finding none, Viktor crushed George in his arms, “That was a foolish thing to do. How did you know it would do that? Not hurt you?”

George swallowed, “I didn’t. I just would rather get hit myself then Fred. Mostly because I knew it was coming. I guessed the spell and it’s intent.”

“You idiot!” Fred glared, “Why didn’t you cast a shield?”

“Simple, I’m not supposed to use my wand out of the classroom or when I’m studying.” George
rolled his eyes. “Besides, if I never drew my wand I can’t be painted as the aggressor, can I? Mum can’t blame me for it. Besides, Ron hit Hermione. Mum won’t easily forgive that.”

Fred sighed, “Stubborn fool but thanks for watching my back.”

George laughed, “What are twins for?”

“Partners in pranking.” Fred chuckled.

“So my brave foolish friend,” Viktor hissed in George’s ear, “will you be my date to the Yule Ball?”

George turned beet red, whispering back, “Yes.”

Fred turned to look at George sensing his embarrassment and excitement, “What’s up?”

George’s eyes shone with happiness, “I have a date.”

Fred glanced at Viktor, “I guess he’ll do.”

George swallowed, thinking at his twin, ‘Thanks.’

Viktor pulled George to his side of the table; “I’m keeping an eye on you.”

Draco enjoyed the ease that George and Viktor seemed to flow into a relationship. He wondered briefly why the spell hadn’t affected George; it seemed to bounce as if impacting Dragon hide or Veela wings. Was George meant to be Chuvash? He could speak Parseltongue, a sign of his Black blood. He hadn’t heard of anyone being capable of resisting spells before coming into their inheritance; then again if George was a Sixth Year he was past sixteen. Unless, he was more like Viktor than anyone else...

After all, Fred didn’t understand Parseltongue at all…
Harry said George didn’t speak as well as himself or Blaise, sounding rather stilted but not speaking quite as poorly as Severus. Something was odd about that…

George did his best to eat but it was hard to concentrate with Viktor so close, he remained in a constant state of arousal the whole time he was near the Bulgarian Seeker.

Chapter End Notes

Draco received permission from his papa to have the Quidditch match, having gestured him over after McGonagall dragged out Ron.

Viktor and his schoolmate who had been volunteered to play as Gryffindor’s Keeper had gone back to their ship for their brooms while the Slytherin and Gryffindors went to dig out their Quidditch robes or at least something warm to wear outside. After all, not everyone had Quidditch robes, Blaise didn’t.

George looked nervous to be flying against his date to the Yule Ball next month.

Harry was excited and practically flattening Draco after returning with his Firebolt. “I’m so excited! I missed flying.” He was a bit saddened that he wouldn’t be flying against Draco who had been his best competition but to fly against someone like Viktor was amazing.

Draco caught Harry and barely managed not to fall, “I’m glad you’re excited. I missed Flying too. Remind me to show you my pitch.”

Harry had forgotten Draco had his own pitch at the Manor, “I can’t wait. We played Quidditch at the Burrow this summer after the World Cup. It was fun!”

“We’ll have to have some matches over the summer.” Draco said with a smile.

“Loser gets kissed?” Harry teased.

“You’re on.” Draco said kissing Harry so hard he felt the boy shiver.

Harry gulped when the kiss broke, “That was just evil. Are you trying to make it difficult for me to
fly?”

“Of course not. I want you to fly. I want you to fly your best against Viktor. I also want you to remember how I like to kiss because when you win I expect a kiss just like that one.” Draco smirked.

George swallowed; he wondered what it would be like to be kissed like that.

Nearby Blaise was having a similar thought.

The Quidditch players made their way to the pitch.

Seamus hugged Colin, “Thanks Cols.”

Colin blushed while his younger brother Dennis giggled.

Neville looked on from the fringe of the group heading out the pitch, he was surprised Harry was with Draco. But he had wondered if the Gryffindor Seeker was bent; he was too shy to admit that he’d had a crush on Harry. He never thought Harry would be interested in him that way…

Due to the last minute nature of the match, Severus had offered to referee but promised to a bit fairer this match then the one against Hufflepuff during Draco, Harry, Blaise and Seamus’ First Year.

Harry had laughed to himself remembering the match following the one where Quirrell jinxed his Nimbus where Severus was anti-Gryffindor in his calls.

The teams took the field.

Despite it being Draco’s idea, Draco ceded the captaincy to Adrian who was a decent bloke. To his knowledge, Adrian had never actually followed Flint’s game plan and cheated or played dishonourably. That made him a good choice…

The captains gave their team a pep talk and told them to have fun. Adrian was a bit overwhelmed in regards to having Viktor Krum on ‘his’ House team.
The noise of the match soon brought a familiar redhead to the pitch.

The Snitch was released and quickly disappeared in the cold grey winter sky, leaving Harry and Viktor to circle the pitch.

Adrian snatched the Quaffle, Blaise and Draco flying close.

Grimacing, George knocked a Bludger at Adrian.

Adrian barely managed to dodge in time.

Blaise took off after the falling Quaffle snatching it before a Gryffindor Chaser even got close. Using his natural instincts at flight due to his Chuvash blood Blaise scored the first goal.

Viktor’s volunteer Keeper was stunned; he hadn’t even seen the Quaffle coming. He caught it and tossed it to the Referee.

Severus caught the Quaffle tossing in the air to start it again.

Draco stole the ball under Angelina’s nose.

Fred tried to hit a Bludger at him but Greg’s bat was faster and instead he was flying away from the Bludger.

In the space of a blink, Draco scored.

It was now 20-0 with Slytherin ahead. It soon became apparent, despite the Weasley Beaters who were likened to Human Bludgers and the talented Chasers that Katie and Angelina were known to be; that they weren’t quite on the same level as Draco, Blaise and Adrian.

Harry quickly realized what that quality was, Draco was Veela and Blaise was a Chuvash. Despite
not coming into their inheritances yet they were born flyers and had keener instincts then his team mates Angelina, Katie and Seamus. Did that mean that Adrian had magical creature blood as well?

By the time Slytherin scored a hundred- their tenth goal, it became apparent that if Harry didn’t catch the snitch that Gryffindor would lose in a landslide.

Harry looked around vigorously, eager to find the Snitch first.

It finally made an appearance and Harry dove for it.

Viktor saw it too and soon they were neck-and-neck in a dive.

Those who had been privileged to attend the World Cup seemed to be seeing a repeat of Lynch vs. Krum. Harry, some realized, was a much better flyer.

Harry was desperate to win but so was Viktor who wanted to show off for George.

Then it happened.

Viktor and Harry’s hands closed over the ball.

Both could feel a wing touching their palm.

They managed to pull out of the dive safely with one hand.


Severus blew his whistle, calling the game to a stop. He flew towards Harry and Viktor; he had never seen a match like that. His snakes were slaughtering Gryffindor and Harry might have… he wasn’t sure yet. He reached the Seekers and ordered them to open their hands. To his shock, the Snitch was clearly in both their hands. Each boy had half the snitch in their grasp. To check the probability of a dual catch, Severus used a rare spell that only worked if caught by two persons. The Snitch shimmered and split in two; one fluttering weakly in Harry’s hand and the other in Viktor’s.
Severus sighed, “In a score of 280 to 150, Slytherin wins. It is my determination that clearly both Harry Potter and Viktor Krum have caught the snitch.”

Viktor clutched the Snitch in his hand, flew straight at George pulling him onto his Firebolt and kissed him deeply as he pressed the Snitch into his hand.

George barely had a chance to consider fighting, the moment Viktor touched him his arousal became quite apparent. The kiss blew him away; it felt like he was riding one of those firecrackers that he had been experimenting on with Fred.

Fred laughed; he could feel just how happy George was with that kiss which was a bit odd, because he wouldn’t enjoy being kissed by a bloke.

Harry was a bit distressed that he hadn’t really won. It was the first time he caught the snitch and they still lost. He landed dejectedly; he’d been looking forward to winning. He should have realized he was flying against the Greatest Seeker in the World and hadn’t a chance.

Draco sighed, Harry was upset. He flew toward the boy landed and kissed him. “You looked amazing in that dive. For a moment I thought I was back at the World Cup. You were amazing. Flawless. Merlin, you were better then Lynch. The only Seeker in Britain who could rival Viktor Krum! You managed a double catch. Do you know how rare that is?”

Harry’s mood was lightened by Draco’s praise.

Lucius was very impressed and so was Remus, both of whom had come to watch the match after being informed of it by Severus.

Remus picked up Harry and hugged him, “I forgot how amazing you were. That was… do you realize Krum is the best Seeker in the World? You caught a Snitch with him!”

Lucius congratulated his son and their House on the win. He had plenty of praise of Draco, Blaise and Adrian especially having been a fine Chaser in his day. He decided he was taking them out to dinner to celebrate. “I am so proud of you all, that was an excellent match. I would like to treat you all to dinner.”

Blaise grinned, “You mean it Mr. Lucius?” his childhood name for his best friend’s father.
“Yes Blaise.”

Blaise danced around with joy.

Lucius cordially invited Viktor in Russian, who had finally landed after snogging the daylights out of George Weasley. “Mr. Krum, if you would like to join us.”

“Only if George can come.” Was the Bulgarian’s reply.

Charlie appeared beside them, congratulating Harry and gently ribbing his brothers about the match.

Blaise stared in awe at the tall redhead. Slytherin help him if he wasn’t the finest specimen of wizard he’d ever seen. He spotted the darkness of a burn and winced, “That must have hurt.”

Charlie turned toward the musical tenor voice with a hint of an accent, “Oh this? I had forgotten about it. It’s a couple hours old. Be gone by morning, I’m a fast healer.”

“Is that a burn from a Dragon?” Blaise asked excitedly, absentmindedly slipping into Parseltongue.

Charlie blinked, “Yes. How did you know?” No one was really supposed to know about the dragons until the First Task on Friday.

Blaise grinned, “Because, I’m the son of Chuvash.”

Charlie shifted nervously, replying in English. “I work for Harvey Ridgebit’s Dragon Sanctuary in Romania.”

“We’re very proud of our Charlie.” Fred smirked.

Viktor glanced at the tall man, “You are his brother, no?”
Charlie nodded, “I’m a few years older, five to be exact.”

Parseltongue was easier for Viktor than English, so he asked quietly if Charlie thought it would be a problem if George joined them for dinner.

Charlie shook his head, “I doubt it if Lord Malfoy is inviting them, he’s been good to my family as of late.” Politely referring to the help Lord Malfoy had given to Percy.

Viktor smirked, “You’re coming beloved.”

George swallowed nervously.

Fred was surprised by all the hissing and couldn’t understand anything. “Huh?”

“Nothing Fred.” Charlie said teasingly.

George was a bit surprised when Viktor took his hand but didn’t really fight him. He was nervous but pleased that someone like Viktor, who could have anyone, seemed to want him. He’d spent most of his life being treated like an embarrassment, nothing he did was ever good enough and his mother never bothered to learn how to tell him apart from Fred. Yet this professional Seeker, the best in the world saw him as a separate person from Fred and thought he was desirable.

XoooooX

The group all assembled at the Entrance Hall, where Charlie arrived to chaperone his twin brothers.

George had to transfigure his and Fred’s best jeans and sweater to something more like what the Slytherins wore; freshly pressed woollen slacks and silk shirts. He even transfigured handkerchiefs into ties.

Fred came with Angelina, Seamus with Colin, Katie with Dean and George was going with Viktor.
Harry was wearing a blue raw silk shirt, grey slacks and silver wool vest. Draco tied a silk scarf around his neck like a tie and wore a Slytherin green cardigan over a silver shirt with obsidian coloured trousers under a warm cloak.

Remus reluctantly borrowed clothes from Lucius because his own were far too worn.

Lucius and Severus complimented each other as well as Draco by wearing similar colours beneath their outdoor wear.

Charlie showed up in Dragon leather pants, matching knee-high boots and vest over crisp white shirt.

Blaise couldn't help staring at George’s older brother, now that was a man. He oozed danger and sex appeal. Blaise felt so shy but he felt truly attracted for the first time in his life, he remembered that his name was Charlie and he was five years older then George. Slytherin’s cauldron, that made the man seven years older then him. A seven year age difference was nothing amoung Chuvash, it could be any amount from months to over ten years.

Greg had decided to ask Mafalda while Vince had brought Tracy, a rather shy fellow Fourth Year Slytherin rather than Pansy who was busy glaring the rest of the day while they were celebrating before getting ready for dinner.

Ivanovski invited a girl from his own school who he seemed close to Ekateirna Petrova who seemed shy and quiet but had a very Ravenclaw-like air about her.

After much discussion, they finally decided on French because it was rarer.

Shyly, Harry admitted he’d never had French food.

Draco hugged him and kissed his forehead, “If I have my way you’ll never cook or clean again. I intend to spend my life spoiling you.”

Harry said quietly, “But I like to cook...” He did, just not with someone glaring and yelling at him. He didn’t mind baking even if it was for his whale of a cousin, but he would prefer to do it for people he cared about rather than feared.
Draco thought about that for a moment, “Then with Dad’s approval, our house elves will be informed you are allowed to cook when you please.” Merlin forbid he refuse Harry anything, his Veela though unrisen would not allow it. Later, he may have to learn how to ‘discipline’ Harry because his Chuvash was more likely to be more wilful then his boyfriend was at present.

When Lucius was satisfied everyone coming was present, he turned an old Daily Prophet into a portkey and they grabbed hold of it.

Harry felt briefly ill after landing, outside a clearly expensive restaurant called Savoir Faire.

Remus gasped when he realized they most certainly weren’t in Diagon Alley. “Where is this?” he was a bit overwhelmed, something he would have to get over if he planned to be a part of Severus’ life with Lucius Malfoy.

Lucius chuckled, “Rue de Lion district in Paris, it’s an older version of Diagon Alley. Our family has ties to France and so we choose to eat here if we are in the mood for French Cuisine. Diagon doesn’t have a particularly fine French Restaurant, although there is that new restaurant in Hogsmeade but I haven’t had an opportunity to try it. Considering some of us French might be the best choice.” He gave his name to the Maitre’d after leading them inside.

They were escorted to a large private room.

Blaise claimed a place on Charlie’s right and Draco’s left.

George sat between Charlie and Viktor.

Harry was between Remus and Draco.

It was a large long table in their private room.

Soon a waiter, quite cute entered with the wine list and asked for their orders in French.

Lucius ordered wine, water, cranberry juice, Firewhiskey, scotch and Butterbeer to start. He wasn’t going to care what they drank tonight, since they were celebrating.
A variety of French dishes were ordered and there was much conversation.

Blaise took the opportunity to flirt outrageously with Charlie whose deeply tanned looks and long sun-burnished red hair gave him a roguish look that did his Chuvash homage.

Charlie didn’t know quite what to make of the beautiful Slytherin teen but he had to silently admit he enjoyed the attention. After all he didn’t often get flirted with…

Viktor coaxed George to try a lot of exotic French cuisine and silently promised to spoil the youth he was quickly becoming fond of. His parents would no doubt approve, since his Chuvash hadn’t risen at his inheritance as expected; his parents, but most his mother had bemoaned that he wouldn’t find a proper mate.

George’s cheeks felt permanently tinted pink and probably clashed horribly with his red hair but he had to admit it was pleasant to be the subject of such attention from a famous Quidditch player. Considering he grew up in a shack rather then a Manor and was expecting no inheritance, he hadn’t dare hope to catch the eye of a person of Viktor’s prestige.

Harry enjoyed the attention from Draco; the older teen seemed to ignore everyone else. He enjoyed the steak but things like escargot weren’t his taste. He didn’t like wine, the smell made him nauseous. Firewhiskey and scotch burned both his throat and stomach; he quite preferred juice and Butterbeer.

All the couples enjoyed dinner and were truly thankful at the close of the evening after returning to Hogwarts.

XoooooX

Seamus and Colin managed talk Harry back up to Gryffindor Tower, at least for the night. As he settled into bed, he tried not to stare at Ron’s closed curtain. Most of the Gryffindors had apologized for believing he’d cheated and Ron was said to be in the dormitory. While Hermione glared reprovingly from her place across the common room. After some uneasy laughs, Harry turned to go upstairs. He felt something pulling him toward the dungeons; he turned to look back, “Draco.” falling from his lips in a faint hiss. He hadn’t slept without the other teen since he’d found himself with Severus after falling unconscious following his name coming from the Goblet of Fire.

George hugged himself; he was missing Viktor’s arms not that he would admit it. Viktor was on the
ship and George was in the tower. He secretly wondered what a night in the man’s arms would be like but was too shy to ask. It was too soon, right? After all, they’d only just met really… but they seemed to fit with one another.

George ended up telling Fred to bring him his blankets and pillow, there wasn’t much difference between his cot bed at the Burrow and the stone flagged floor. George transfigured a pair of discarded jeans- probably Ron’s, into a carpet which he laid on despite Seamus’ protests.

Seamus, also the grandson of a lord claimed the floor was no place for one of their ancestry.

Neville had shyly protested George’s choice, even going so far as to offer to share his bed.

Seamus offered to sleep with Colin, he seemed a bit shy but eager to please the tall muscular Beater.

George laughed, protesting it was no hardship; Mum had punished him plenty of time forcing him to sleep on the cold floor of the cellar. The kitchen was only an option if she blood locked the cupboards.

Harry made his bed curtains impenetrable, casting silencing charms in case he had a nightmare. It was easy to return to old habits, but he missed the quiet reassuring presence of his Veela boyfriend. He felt cold and lonely, his body aching to be held…

He touched his wand briefly and cast a sleep spell on himself.

XooooooX

George woke sensing fear, he hissed for Harry’s snake after finding he couldn’t open Harry’s curtains.

Shishreyu appeared after sometime, “Master be in distress?”

George nodded, “I can’t get in and he’s scared.”
The snake nudged the invisibility cloak after finding she couldn’t wake him either, “Go wake Draco. Something is wrong.”

George reluctantly left Shishreyu in his place at Harry’s guard; covering himself with the invisibility cloak, he took the quickest path to the entrance to the Slytherin dungeons. Whispering the Gaelic password that was the proper name of Stonehenge, George slipped inside. It was late, nearly three in the morning so the fires were almost out in the grates and it was chilly in the common room. George whispered, “Lumos.” Before making his way up to the Fourth Year Boys Dormitory.

Blaise woke at once, throwing his curtains open. “George?” He hissed, he smelled the older Gryffindor though he couldn’t see him.

George nearly fell over, “Blaise? Did I wake you?”

“Yes moron. You walk like a mooncalf, all loud and plodding. It’s a wonder the Squib didn’t catch you prowling the halls.”

“It’s Harry. He’s having a nightmare. Shishreyu can’t wake him. She said it was a nightmare. He made the curtains impenetrable so I can’t get inside myself. I only knew something was wrong because I smelled fear.”

Blaise winced, tossing a book at Draco’s bed, “Drake! Wake up! Harry’s in danger.”

Draco woke up so fast, he practically fell out of bed. “What? Did that pathetic excuse for a Weasley try cursing him while his back was turned?”

George shook his head, “He’s having a nightmare. His curtains are impenetrable and Shishreyu can’t wake him.”

Draco cursed in four languages, as he summoned Dobby. “Harry’s in trouble.”

Dobby wrung his hands, “Dobby knows sir. Dobby been trying to wake Master Harry Potter for a hour. Nothing be working.”
Draco threw on a robe, “Take me to him.”

Dobby shook as he wrapped a long-fingered hand on Draco’s arm and disApparated.

George moved to pull the cloak back on, “I should head back.”

Blaise summoned his elf.

“Master be wanting Amry?”

Blaise pointed at George, “Take him back to Gryffindor Tower. He needs to be taken to the dorm room where Draco and Harry are.”

George was about to protest before he was Apparated away.

XoooooX

Draco was able to appear on Harry’s bed inside the red velvet curtains, Harry’s wards rose up and momentarily threatened to throw him but then relaxed. Draco slipped into the Gryffindor sheets, pulling Harry to his chest, kissing his neck, “Wake up love. Please wake up.”

Harry didn’t seem to hear him as he continued thrashing and screaming loud enough to raise the dead.

After three minutes of being subjected to Harry's screams, Draco finally sensed unfamiliar magic. He looked up at a hovering Dobby wringing his hands, “Get Remus and Papa. It’s okay if Dad comes too. Something is wrong.”

Pouting, Shishreyu was in agreement; she’d been saying that! She was so worried that she forgot that Draco couldn’t speak Parseltongue.

Draco kept trying to wake Harry but nothing was working, he was getting more and more worried. What was taking them so long?
Lucius had allowed Remus to sleep on a chaise day bed in the bedroom he shared with Severus. Remus woke with a start, his ears twitching. He sniffed, whispering “Dobby?” he’d recognised the scent of Harry's devoted house elf.

Dobby wrung his hands, “Dobby so sorry to disturb Master Remus. Master Harry Potter sir, he be in trouble. Master Draco be with him. Oh. Master Draco sent me to get you. Master Harry Potter not be waking.”

“Not waking from what?” Remus asked quietly.

“Nightmare!” Dobby blubbered.

Remus stormed out of bed, “Wake up!” his voice sharp as if he were yelling at students sleeping during lecture.

Lucius’ eyes snapped open, “What’s going on? Who is there?” he blinked sleepily only to see their former house elf Dobby who cared for Harry sobbing and wringing his hands up with Remus.

Severus woke at once sensing Lucius’ distress, he glanced from his Bondmate to Remus, “What’s wrong?”

“Harry’s having a nightmare and no one can wake him up. Not even Draco.”

Severus glanced at Dobby, “Wake up Ted Tonks. I’m not a Mind Healer but he may need help. We’ve been trying to help him recover from his abuse and other terrifying experiences. This could set his recovery back. I’ve really got to try to work on that potion.”

Lucius kissed his mate, “You’ll get it. You’re the best Potioneer of this century at least.”

“Dobby going now.”
The three adults stormed out of Severus’ room and tore out of his apartment, following Remus who instinctively took the shortest path.

XoooooX

George was pacing, unsure of how best to help. Harry being trapped in a nightmare had to be bad. Why wasn’t he waking up? Had someone entered him in the tournament to kill him? Gryffindor Tower should be safe! Why was it that the Slytherin Dungeons were safer? Harry was a lion after all...

Draco was getting more and more worried, why wasn’t Harry waking? What was wrong with him? He was his mate damn it! He was Veela, just because he hadn’t come into his inheritance shouldn’t mean he couldn’t help his mate. What was taking Dobby so long to retrieve his fathers and Harry’s guardian?

Shishreyu stared hard at her master, something was wrong. But what?

XoooooX

Dobby Apparated into Lavender Vale where he nearly crashed into Dora who was just coming in from spying on Dumbledore to shower and change.

“Who are you and what do you want?” Dora snapped her wand pressed to the unfamiliar elf’s throat.

“Lord Prince-Malfoy be sending me. Master Harry Potter in trouble.”

Dora stared at him. “Harry? Trouble? How?” Hogwarts was SUPPOSED to be safe but Harry was entered into the Triwizard tournament and two children were murdered by possibly mad power hungry Headmaster.

Dora removed her wand from the elf’s throat, “I’ll get dad.” Harry trapped in a nightmare that his mate couldn’t wake him from? She’d seen some of his worst memories and Snape’s, just what kind of nightmares could the poor boy be trapped in? She hurried to wake her dad. Throwing open their door, “Dad. Emergency. Hogwarts. Harry. Nightmare trapped.” Summing up the situation like giving a report to a superior after waking them up at an odd hour.

Ted was used to being called away at night because he was a Mind Healer.

Andromeda had been a Healer since when she was young, so she had been called in when massive injuries had occurred during the war despite having a specialty. “Nightmares? That poor child…”

Dora closed the door; letting her parents dress but began pacing. Was this a punishment by the Headmaster or by the nameless person who placed Harry’s name in the Goblet of Fire?

XoooooX

Severus had to strain his magic to break through Harry’s magical protection of his private space. The moment the wards crashed, it was like a magic bomb went off.

Four Gryffindor lions practically fell out of bed.

It didn’t help that Harry was screaming loud enough to wake the dead but nothing was understandable. How did Draco stand it? His son was holding Harry and trying to wake him still. Harry was so loud…

“What is that noise?” was Dean’s remark.

“What is the amazing bouncing ferret doing in the Tower?” Ron said glaring from the floor.

“Why is Harry screaming?” Seamus said rubbing his eyes.

“He sounds like mum.” Neville said quietly, it was true, Harry sounded like he was under the Cruciatus curse. Sometimes when he visited his mother, she fell asleep and would have nightmares where she screamed and thrashed like that while his father was always vacant and silent even when
‘sleeping.’

Severus glared, “I can’t wake him.”

“Do you know what’s causing him to scream so?” Remus asked worried.

Severus cast more charms at Harry’s violently thrashing, screaming form. “A variant of the nightmare curse that I’ve never seen.”

Remus cast a series of spells to make his own determination. “It’s Dark, very Dark. Cast by someone trying to obscure their magical signature.”

Lucius remembered something, “What was it that the seer said about us? Remus would gain that Severus’ potion ability? I would gain Severus’ ability to create new spells and Severus would be able to heal?” Why was his Veela trapped?

Remus remembered the Triad Charm; “The Triad Charm…” if someone powerful cast this whose spell Severus couldn’t break immediately, that meant Dumbledore. His second night in Hogwarts and Harry was already in danger.

Lucius nodded, “I can’t access my Healing but maybe Severus can.”

Ron was confused, why would a Death Eater being trying to help Harry? A Death Eater who could heal? That was something worth telling...

“Lucius can create a spell. With the Triad charm we might be able to break the curse.” Remus nodded.

Lucius closed his eyes, “Tell me what the spell signature looks like. How does it vary from the normal Nightmare Curse?”

Severus winced, “It’s much Darker.”
Remus swallowed, “That’s not the nightmare curse…”

Severus cast another spell, Slytherin’s Bullocks! “Remus is right…it’s the Nights of Hell curse…”

“That’s one of Grindelwald’s.” Remus said staring at Severus. “It’s…supposed to be irreversible.”

“Has it been cast more than once I wonder? Three times makes one usually die. It’s only supposed to have a three-day limit. This…has been unbroken and unceasing for years.” Severus’ eyes widened, “The bed. Draco! Get him off the bed!”

Draco pulled the screaming, thrashing boy into his arms, tight to his chest and launched them both off the bed.

Harry’s eyes sprang open, his mouth mid-scream. He looked down to see Draco and burst into tears, burying his face in Draco’s pajama shirt. “Draco…”

Draco pressed his lips to Harry’s forehead, rocking him, “You’re safe…” his magic threw itself behind him and the bed burst into flames. “I’d never let you be hurt or suffer. Damn it! It’s my job to protect you.” If he couldn’t wake Harry or soothe him, he deserved to suffer as well. He’d been forcing himself to endure Harry’s screams and thrashing, knowing that he’d incur bruises and a headache.

The burning bedstead didn’t spread fire anywhere else; it was merely destroying any magic.

Dumbledore, McGonagall and Flitch were heard noisily arguing against Andromeda, Ted and Dora about waking the Fourth Year boys.

George opened the dorm door, “We’ve been waiting for you.”

Ted scurried into the dormitory, casting diagnostic spells unique to his healing field.

“Really, there is nothing wrong with a few nightmares. It’s normal.” McGonagall continued to protest.
“Professor! That bed! It’s burning!” Filch cried out.

“Who did this?” Dumbledore glared, “Destruction of school property!”

Dora examined the flames, “I see no damage. Except to the spell cast on the bed.”

“A Dark Curse Auror Tonks.” Severus glowered, “At first I thought it was the nightmare curse but I was wrong. Remus and I discovered it was the Nights of Hell curse. Declared illegal over fifty years ago!”

“Oh please, where would someone learn a Dark Curse like that?” McGonagall scoffed. “You can’t cast spells like that in the castle.”

“Quite right Minerva. Severus please, I ask you not to speak falsehoods in front of the children.” Dumbledore said pleasantly.

“If my Bondmates claim that this is the Nights of Hell curse created by Grindelwald, I believe them.” Lucius glared.

“Bondmates?” McGonagall blinked.

“Yes, it seems that Severus’ magic is too great for myself to ground. We have decided to take on a grounding mate.” Lucius said with a strained smile.

“A pity two Bondmates can’t change the fact that the last of the Prince line is barren. I would have thought that someone like your Lord Malfoy would prefer to be bonded to someone capable of having children.”

Remus growled, his wolf eager to rip Dumbledore to shreds. Severus’ infertility was that crazy bastard’s fault!

Lucius’ Veela fought against the magic that bound it, his mate’s honour was being impugned. He
wanted to rip this insufferable man’s head off.

Every Chuvash’s ears winced, as Lucius’ Dark Mark seemed to scream.

Harry clung to Draco, “I don’t want to stay here. Don’t leave me.”

“I’m not leaving you.” Draco laced his fingers with Harry and brought the tiny Gryffindor’s hand to his lips, “I promise.”

Dumbledore sneered, “How do we know you didn’t cast that curse on Harry?”

Lucius snorted, “Because, I refused to let Draco be taught Dark spells. Unlike my father or his former relative Cygnus Black would have wanted, Draco was never instructed in the Unforgivables. I have taught him no Dark Arts.”

“You were a Death Eater Lucius; don’t try to tell me you wouldn’t teach your son Dark Spells. He spent enough time bragging about it.”

Draco snorted, “Oh please. I didn’t want to look bad in front of my House. I’m their Prince after all. I would never use those spells; I was uncomfortable with Moody showed them to us. I think Professor Lupin was a far better teacher then Moody. Moody is insane.”

Dumbledore sneered at Draco, “I heard you became a ferret.” clearly believing Draco disliked Professor Moody because he turned him into a ferret.

“I’ve always been drawn to Harry and he mostly ignored me. Being rude was the only way to get his attention. It was foolish and childish but I’m learning there are better ways to get his attention. I believe I owe one of my professors an apology.” Draco schooled his features into a mask to not react to the ferret comment. It was one of the most humiliating experiences of his life. He had been in the wrong and he deserved to be punished but not by becoming the ‘Amazing Bouncing Ferret.’ Despite appearances, Papa had punished him and Greg for attacking Harry, Weasley and Granger.

“Who is responsible for this wanton destruction of Hogwarts property?” McGonagall protested, the fire burning on Potter’s bed may not be destroying anything but some purported curse but she was still incensed about it.
“It is a product of a Veela’s rage at an attack on his mate, an unconscious uncontrolled burst of magic.” Lucius politely informed the insufferable woman.

“What proof is there of such?” Filch glared.

“The investigation of an Auror!” Dora snapped.

Filch stiffened and then shifted nervously.

“He is still destroying something...” Dumbledore said pompously, “for that he must be punished.”

“I will fight any punishment Dumbledore!” Lucius glared, “He has done no wrong or harm to Hogwarts property. For wanton unprovoked assault on two members of his own House Ronald Weasley has been inadequately punished. Detentions for the rest of term and being banned from the Yule Ball? I thought you were showcasing your Hogwarts as a welcoming place Dumbledore.”

“Your new pet Potter took great pleasure in impugning the reputation of this school and it’s Head the other day. You expect me to stand up for him?” Dumbledore asked incredulously.

“I expect you to stand by your charges when they are grievously assaulted. I would hope that a man of your reputation Dumbledore would be incensed that someone would place Potter’s name in the Goblet of Fire and would cast an extremely Dark and Illegal curse on him or at least his bed. Surely a boy of his marks and lack of proper instruction prior to Hogwarts would be incapable of discovering a way to bewitch an Ancient Artefact or discover the existence of such a dangerous curse to cast on himself.” Ted said stiffly.

Dumbledore laughed, “I have said it once and I’ll say it again, Potter suffers from Munchausen Syndrome. He requires constant care, preferably in the Janus Thickey ward. It is a pity that a Mind Healer of your experience and reputation has been deceived by this troubled boy.”

“You never once claimed he was unstable before until he started protesting the validity of his status as a Triwizard Champion.” Remus glared.

Ted said through gritted teeth, “My dear Professor Dumbledore, I reviewed Munchausen Syndrome
recently. There is no way that Harry exhibits anything that could signify it. Munchausen syndrome is a type of factitious disorder or mental illness, in which a person repeatedly acts as if he or she has a physical or mental disorder when, in truth, he or she has caused the symptoms. Harry has done nothing of the sort. I have reviewed memories of his abuse and I find them clearly based on actual events. He does not have the knowledge to manipulate his memory. He didn’t even know the spell to copy or remove memories until I told it to him.”

“Ah yes, a fine actor isn’t he? He even fooled me for a while.” Dumbledore said with feigned sadness.

George snorted, “I suppose he paid to have bars put on his own window? Padlocked his precious Hedwig in her cage? Installed a tiny flap thing in his door? Locked his school things a cupboard under the stairs?”

Harry winced, he’d half-forgotten that Fred, George and Ron had broke him out.

“His relatives had written me to inform me he’d gotten violent.” Dumbledore said nonplussed and shaking his head sadly. “They were afraid he’d use magic to hurt them.”

Harry shook his head, “I’d be thrown out of Hogwarts. I can’t do that…it was bad enough that I blew up Aunt Marge. If Sirius hadn’t escaped, I would have been expelled. Uncle Vernon hasn’t forgiven me for that. He enjoys ‘punishing me for exposing his sister to my unnaturalness’.” He shook slightly, “I can’t help being born a wizard anymore then you can. They wouldn’t like me any better if I weren’t one.”

“Now Harry, you really should try not to tell such lies. Where would you get any idea you were a Chuvash? Your ability to speak Parseltongue? I told you that was a result of your connection with Voldemort. I didn’t want to tell you this Harry, you see you’re a Horcrux like the diary. A vessel he secreted a part of his soul, you were an accident unlike the creation of the diary which I believe was the reason for poor Myrtle’s death. You boy are no Chuvash. I don’t even know where you would have heard of such Dark Creatures. Many foul things lurk in the Black Bloodline; you Harry Potter are not Black enough to be Chuvash. There have been no Chuvash born to the House of Black for Generations.”

Draco snorted, “You are misinformed Professor. Prior to this generation the last Black to come into a Chuvash inheritance was Phineas Nigellus’ older brother Sirius, current King of the Chuvash. The personal Seer of the Veela Queen told me that Harry was my mate.”

“A true seer has not been born to the Veela for generations. I would have known.” Dumbledore
“I am afraid you are far from well informed Headmaster.” Draco sneered, “At least three students were named Chuvash by that seer. We have found a near Chuvash and others who bear signs of Chuvash Blood.”

“Name a sign of Chuvash blood.” McGonagall snapped.

“Speaks and understands Parseltongue.” Draco laughed.

“Reflects back curses, hexes and jinxes.” Harry whispered.

George chuckled, “A natural flyer, understands Dragons, easily gains their confidence and abnormally fast healers.” Charlie had all the signs.

Neville spoke up, “If I can understand snakes, does that mean I have Chuvash Blood?”

Andromeda who had been seething at Dumbledore’s foolishness glanced at the boy, “You are a Longbottom? You have Frank’s face and Alice’s eyes. I remember them; we were only a year apart in school. If I remember correctly, Callidora Black was Bonded to Harfang Longbottom. Who is Harfang Longbottom to you young man? Isn’t that your father’s grandfather?”

Neville shook his head, “Yes Madam. Great uncle Algie always talks of him, his father-in-law Harfang. Uncle Algie was Bonded to my Aunt Cassandra.”

“Who is Callidora Black?” Draco asked curious.

“The elder sister of Lady Cedrella Weasley nee Black.”

George blinked, “That’s my grandmother. Sorry Neville, I had no idea we were cousins.”

Neville shrugged, “Me either.”
Ron choked, “I’m not related to that useless excuse for a wizard. He has the brains of a flobberworm.”

George slapped him, “It’s a pity I’m related to you. You’re an embarrassment to the family.”

Ron snickered, “You’re the embarrassment. How many OWLS did you get again? Three?”

“More than that fool. I just didn’t choose to publically do well enough to take all my courses for NEWTS. I hate this ‘Mandatory Education’. I’ve learned very little here other than how to cause mischief. If it weren’t for Quidditch Fred and I wouldn’t really be here. The soonest we can clear out, Fred and I will. I promise our exit will be as dramatic as we can make it.” George snarled, leaning into whisper in Parseltongue, “You are nothing to me. You are a miserable excuse for a wizard who I am ashamed to consider family. Don’t think you’re not going to be punished for cursing me earlier. You will suffer Ron. You will rue the day you made up enemies. You think our making your teddy bear a spider was bad? Oh trust me you’ll soon realize that was harmless.” He turned his back on Ron.

Neville, Shishreyu and Harry understood that entire promise while Severus caught half of it.

“Professor! I think George cursed me. Did you hear him? He spoke Parseltongue. He’s a Dark wizard!” Ron yelped and tried to get as far away as he could.

“Oh please. That was too long to be a curse and I wouldn’t bother casting a curse on you. You’re not worth the effort. I wish you and Granger joy. You deserve each other, you lousy pair of turncoats.” George said rolling his eyes.

“I say we let these boys sleep.” Severus said helping Harry and Draco up from the floor.

Harry nodded, “I don’t think I’ll be able to sleep up here comfortably again.” He shivered.

Draco hugged him; “I’m not keen on letting you out of my sight.”

Dobby appeared wringing his hands, “Dobby help Master Harry Potter sir?”
“Yes.” Draco replied, “Please move all of Harry’s things to my dormitory. He can sleep with me.”

“My dear boys, I believe that is quite out of the question.” Dumbledore protested.

“I beg your pardon?” Remus glared.

“Now Remus I can’t condone two unbetrothed or unengaged persons to share a bed, it shows poor morals. We wouldn’t want a repeat of such wanton behaviour as yours Severus.” Dumbledore said pointedly.

“You mean Harry gets pregnant? Oh I doubt that. A young Chuvash knows better then to have sex with a non-Chuvash before coming into their inheritance. One never knows for sure if they are a Submissive or a Dominant, sex with a human for a submissive makes them infertile.” Severus snorted. “I doubt Remus would be alright if Harry had sex before he came into his inheritance. I would be upset with Draco if he did either.” It hurt to have his lost child rubbed in his face.

Ron looked green and ill, “I knew you were disgusting and creepy Snape. You got pregnant? While you were a student? Who would be interested in your greasy self?”

“I would.” Lucius and Remus snarled.

“So which of you knocked up Professor Greaseball? You must have really pathetic if only this dungeon bat would let you sleep with them. I thought you hated Snape, Professor Lupin. Was that a lie? How long have you been banging his skinny ass? I know Draco’s mother looked like she smelled something rotten but how could you leave a nice looking woman for someone who has burned and patched robes and frog guts under his nails? No wonder Draco’s so ugly and ferret-like. Is he really the son of a dungeon bat and some poncy ex-Death Eater?”

Lucius looked at Ron coldly, “That is so heinously untrue that it barely dignifies a response. Come on boys, we should leave.”

“Wait! Neither the Headmaster or I gave Harry permission to leave the tower.” McGonagall protested weakly.
“He doesn’t need it.” Remus seethed, “He has mine. I’m not leaving my charge up here another minute. Cursed bedsteads. I won’t be forgetting them.”

Neville shifted nervously, he wasn’t feeling safe either. “Can I… come too?”

Harry smiled at him, “If its alright with Draco.” There was something familiar about Neville and Luna said he could trust him.

“Longbottom, go back to bed.” McGonagall glared.

Neville swallowed, “No. Go ahead and owl Gran I don’t care. I won’t spend another night in a Dorm where someone got cursed with something that made them scream like Mum. Gran will understand.” At least he hoped so…

Seamus sneaked out; his bed was closest to the door anyway. He wouldn’t spend the night in there either. He’d crash with Colin…

George pointed up towards his dormitory and Dean left too. George had every intention of going back down to the Dungeon with Draco and Harry.

McGonagall, Flitch and Dumbledore continued to make some type of protest but soon they were alone in the room with just Ron.

Chapter End Notes

Chapter 21 Dora stumbles on a secret

Dora was hiding in a corner behind one of Dumbledore's many tables crammed with silver instruments spying on him in the Headmaster's office since she slipped in early that morning. Her dislike of the man was growing, especially after the incident with Harry's nightmares brought on by curses. Her mother informed her that it had taken some time for Harry to finally settle down to sleep.

The silence was broken by the sharp crack of apparition; only house elves could Apparate into Hogwarts or any other location with anti-Apparation Wards in place.

"Elf! What are you doing here?" Dumbledore thundered.

The elf quaked before Dora's eyes, "Headmaster sir, my master he be ill. Please, you must let him be with his beloved. Jocy hate seeing him in pain. Master near death."

Dumbledore's face contorted in fury, he held out his hand and the elf began to scream and writher in pain.

The elf stammered after collapsing when the spell broke. "Jocy sorry your eminence but Master needs his beloved. He weeps for his children, Jocy want to see Master's children. Jocy not understand why Master and his beloved can't be a family. Five sons...his father and brother would be happy the line continued. He grows weak. I beg you; let him see his beloved and his sons."

"Pah! Let him die. I should have killed him in the beginning. His brother dared rescue him from my care. If only they had died at the hands of Dolohov then your Master's beloved would have been free to accept his bond with another."

The elf hissed fiercely, "Once a soulbond has been formed no other bond is valid. Separation will eventually kill them both, the dominant's magic becomes weak while the submissive's health deteriorates. If Master dies, his beloved will soon follow."

Dumbledore raised his hand and the elf crashed into the fireplace, "Stupid foolish elf! You think your lies will faze me? A soulbond will destroy all I have worked for? Five sons? You think I truly care how many kids your master bore? If it were possible I would have killed every misbegotten bastard."

The elf's eyes hardened "Don't think us elves at The Aerie are unaware of what you do here. We know when one of the blood dies, you killed our master's grandson here in this office. He should not have been taken from Master; he was sickly and needed care. It is customary for the bearer to have input on the names of the children of our line. By stealing Master's children, you have impugned our line's honour."

"Your line had no honour the moment it tried to join with your master's so-called beloved."

The elf glared, "Harm anyone dear to our master and you will see what protection the elves loyal to this ancient line are capable of. We have been biding our time but Master's life is fading and we won't allow him to die if we can prevent it."
Dumbledore snarled, "Get out. I'll come by the Aerie. I'll bring Poppy."

The elf spat, "Pomfrey? She couldn't diagnose Dragon Pox if there be an outbreak. She be an embarrassment to healers. You should have let master finish his training. Then perhaps, you wouldn't be so blind as to miss that one of your students was being abused."

"Miss it? I knew it. I knew everything that happened in that house." Dumbledore laughed wickedly

You monster, Dora thought.

"I'll be sure to pass that on. The other house elves will be delighted to know we were right and that you are a Dark Lord in the shadows."

There was a pop and the elf was gone.

A curse was cast at the elf's last position, but it was gone and the stone floor cracked beneath the curse.

Dora waited for the lunch bell to ring and Dumbledore to leave the Headmaster's Tower before flying out the tower window and casting a scrying charm to locate Lucius or at least Remus. She let out a sigh of relief when she found them both together. She flew into the window nearest the stairs to the dungeons and made herself invisible as she weaved through the throng of students. As she neared Snape's apartments she ended the spell making her animagus form invisible as well as rearranging her features to that of a non-descript Hufflepuff. She had learned that Hufflepuffs usually found themselves invisible and that often helped her surveillance. Her hair was mousy brown, she appeared to be wearing glasses and her eyes were grey. As she raised her hand to knock, she heard familiar steps behind her.

"May I help you?"

Dora turned and winked, "Professor Prince-Malfoy, I was glad I caught you. I have a few questions regarding today's lesson." Tapping out her name in a silent code used by potioners to communicate, Dora wasn't a potioneer but she could fake it well enough to infiltrate the Potioneers Society of Great Britain.

Severus lifted an eyebrow, Dora Tonks? He replied in the same code, "Dora Tonks?"

Dora nodded, "May I come in?"

Severus opened the door and invited her inside.

Lucius was reviewing reports from his Wizengamot committees on Severus' desk while Remus was curled up with a thick book in front of the fire.

Lucius looked up sensing his mate, "Severus, is it lunch time already?"

Severus chuckled, "Yes, two classes of Double Potions with students who are mostly dunderheads who couldn't brew to save their own life much less anyone else's."

Lucius glance at the unfamiliar girl in time to watch her face rearrange itself into Dora Tonk's normal look with shocking purple hair. "Dora?"

"Yes uncle."

"No matter how much I see you do that it's unnerving." Lucius said shaking his head.
"I came with a disturbing report. Dumbledore is holding someone captive and has apparently stolen away their children."

Remus was shocked; his eyes had been opened to Dumbledore's nefarious deeds but kidnapping? "Who?"

"That I don't know. They have a contingent of house elves. One who called themselves Jocy was pleading for his master's beloved to be allowed to see him. His master was soulbonded to a wizard and Dumbledore separated them. Jocy's master had a father and a brother; he seems to be from an old family. He mentioned Protections that the elves knew that they could use if roused. Apparently, Dumbledore killed his master's first grandchild and they were furious. The elf threatened Dumbledore if he injured anyone else. Dumbledore wants the man dead. He kidnapped him prior but his brother rescued him only for them to be attacked by the Death Eater Dolohov. Apparently, he was near death but didn't die."

"A father and a brother?" Remus mused, "Two brothers attacked by Dolohov? The only brothers I know of that were attacked by Antonin Dolohov were the Prewetts; Fabian and Gideon."

"Was one of them studying to be a Healer? Jocy claimed he was good and should have been allowed to continue training."

"I believe that was Gideon," Remus began to pace, "Do you know where he might be?"

"Some place called Aerie." Dora replied.

Remus turned, "Imprisoned in his own home? That monster!"

"Jocy claimed his master is dying and if he dies the soulbond will kill his beloved. Apparently, being separated drains the dominant's magic and weakens the submissive's health. He's been forced to carry five sons to term; one was weak and should have remained with his master."

Severus staggered, stolen children? Five sons?

"The only person with at least five sons in this day and age is Arthur Weasley." Lucius said, moving in the blink of an eye to steady his mate.

"I know Arthur was in your year Lucius, so he was what four years ahead of Severus and I? He graduated with your mother Andromeda, Dora. I don't remember him being weak. I remember he used to be an Auror but as soon as the war was over he was transferred to his current department. Could his magic have begun being weakened? We were told it was because he was believed by Fudge not to 'have a proper wizard's pride.' If he wasn't proud it was Molly's fault. Going from an Auror in training and firstborn son of a Wizengamot Lord to owner of the shack known as the Burrow had to dent his natural pride somewhat."

"You mean to say that Arthur Weasley was soulbonded to a man?" Severus was shocked.

"He did spend a lot of time in the company of the Prewett twins."

Severus' floo flashed green and Oliver stepped out, "Come quickly, Arthur collapsed. He came to visit Percy and was taking us to lunch. I summoned Healer Smythe and Healer Tonks. Percy was beside himself and nearly fainted, I just left them. Something is terribly wrong."

Severus whispered, "The soulbond... it's weakening." He knew what a soulbond was, Lucius and himself were nearly soulbonded when they had been magically separated.
Lucius touched his arm, "How do we heal it?"

"I'm not a healer but I believe they have to be taken to a safe place and lain in a bed together, so their magic can heal them."

"How do we get to The Aerie?" Remus asked. "We don't have Prewett blood."

"Percy does," Oliver was a bit confused but that wasn't important right now, was it?

Severus stared him down, "Was Percy sickly as a child?"

Oliver swallowed, "Yes… why?"

"That settles it. We need the sons closest in blood."

Remus nodded, "The twins."

Lucius glanced at Severus, "Blood scrying is difficult. Are you sure you're up to it?"

"Who do we need?" Remus was curious having little knowledge of such magic.

"As much of his blood as we can get. Oliver, is Bill still in Britain? I know Charlie is about the grounds because of the Tournament." Severus paced.

Oliver nodded, "Yes. Bill is staying with his grandfather; he hasn't been to The Burrow."

"Good. Inform him his father is ill. Have Arthur removed from the Ministry and taken straight to Weasley Hall. Tell the Healers he is suffering from a breaking soulbond. It is killing him. Send Bill here. I would ask for Percy but he must stay with his father. Percy is of his blood and his only tie to his beloved; Percy must hold Arthur to life. Perhaps Remus, you could ask Dobby to get Charlie? He should be with the dragons on the western edge of the forest."

"I don't understand." Oliver said.

Remus snapped, "Percy is Arthur's son but not by Molly. Arthur's true mate is dying or at least very ill, it is weakening Arthur. If we don't find Percy's bearer, then both Percy's fathers will die. Now GO!" he summoned Dobby and sent him on his errand.

Oliver grabbed floo powder and jumped into the floo shouting, "Wellsley Hall."

Severus left his apartments brooding; he had to find the twins. He made his way to Great Hall, making his way to Slytherin table. He spied them, his robes flowing behind him like black wings. "Weasley!" he hissed in Parseltongue.

Harry, Viktor, Neville, Blaise and George's head snapped up in surprise hearing the familiar language.

"I want the twins. Come with me. We need to talk."

"But Snape," Fred began, he couldn't understand anything, all he heard was hissing but he sensed his twin’s confusion.

"Its Prince-Malfoy ,remember? Something has happened to your father. We've already sent messengers to Charlie and Bill."

George winced and glanced at Fred, "We'll come." Grabbing his brother, and whispering in English,
"We've got to go." Thinking at his twin hard, 'dad's been hurt. Got to help.'

Fred sensed George's panic and didn't argue, he did wonder what the fuss the hissing was about since he couldn't understand it.

"Quickly now, I wouldn't want to make you late for your next class." Severus said tapping his foot impatiently.

The twins had already bolted to their feet and followed him.

XoooooX

Bill and Charlie were pacing in Severus' apartments when the door opened and Severus entered with their twin brothers.

Fred was surprised, "What are you doing here?"

George stared, "Why aren't they with Dad?"

Severus snorted, "It was my idea to insist on your presence. Like I told you George, your father is ill and might die. There is only one way to save him and we need your help."

Bill was surprised; "I know you've helped Percy but why?"

"Because I know what it's like to be forcefully separated from the person you love. I know what it's like to have your child stolen." Severus said firmly. "This would work best with the blood of three or of seven but I have four. My apartments are specifically warded; they were warded by Slytherin himself." He summoned an ancient chalice, not Hufflepuff's but one belonging to the House of Prince. "This is a grey ritual, not Dark. It is also a Blood ritual, which is frowned upon by the Ministry. I cannot force you to participate without tainting its purpose but I can request it. This ritual can save your fathers."

"Fathers?" George stammered, "You mean,"

"Molly did not bear you, therefore none of you are her children."

Bill nodded, "That's why none of us bonded to her."

Charlie held out his hand, "I may not care for her but I love my father, I would do anything for him including shed my blood." He rolled up his sleeve carefully.

Remus blinked, his werewolf eyes blinking. Charlie had scales? His skin had a scale-like appearance, it reminded him of Sirius, the Chuvash king. When he spent enough time around the powerful ancient Chuvash, he’d seen through the Glamour. Why hadn't he noticed them yesterday? "You're a Chuvash!"

Charlie stiffened.

Bill blinked, "What?"

George had guessed as much but said nothing.
"No matter," Severus walked to the hearth, held his hand out to a silver casket, which opened at once. He withdrew a sharp silver knife that was etched with faint designs. "You must sit in a circle and hold hands. Bill to the North, Charlie to the East, Fred to the South and George in the West."

The four brothers arranged themselves as such.

Severus anointed their third eye with oil and held out the knife to Bill, "Slice your left palm from left to right and squeeze the blood into the chalice. Then pass the knife to Charlie who should slice his right. Then Fred's left and George's right."

Each brother sliced the proper hand and passed on the knife before squeezing blood into the goblet.

Severus took the knife with the blood of four brothers and used it to cast two circles. "Repeat these words, 'Blood of our blood we call to you. Blood of our blood we summon you. Come to us father. We name you: Gideon Lamorak Prewett!"

Nervously, the four brothers began. Their voices started low but the chanting increased in power. The air above the chalice crackled above them, then a thin window-like vision appeared. Of a man, with red hair or what might have once been red who resembled the twins strongly but seemed weak. His lips were parched, crackled and black with blood but they formed the name soundlessly of Arthur.

Severus whispered, "Chant louder. George. Don't break the circle but bring Charlie and Fred's hands together. Then you need to reach into the shadow, you have to pull him out. Only you can do this. Charlie, pull on your Chuvash. Use your magic to strengthen to circle.

Bill, Charlie and Fred were practically shouting as George reached into the vision, his hand seemed to lose its clarity and appeared blurred.

"Focus. Arthur's life depends on this. I doubt we can actually physically enter through the wards. This ritual is the only way. Bring him through."

The hand George was using was the one he cut; he reached out to thread his fingers with the man who looked like him, "Blood of our blood, we call to you. Blood of our blood, we summon you. Come to us father. We name you: Gideon Lamorak Prewett!" George spoke in unison with his older brothers but directed his voice into the portal or whatever it was.

The hand tightened around his and George pulled with all his might, focusing his magic. George fell backwards, a tall man weak and barely breathing landed on top of him and the window-like aperture slammed closed.

"Quick, that magic will echo. We must get him to Wellsley Hall." Severus returned the magical implements to their homes and grabbed a scrap of parchment. He handed it to Charlie; "Focus of a part of your grandfather's home, then cast 'porto' on it. It will become a temporary portkey. The moment he speaks it. Grab it."

George held onto the weak man tightly, he felt a connection to him. His blood and magic seemed to sing with his own but the reply from Gideon Prewett was weak, almost silent.

Charlie focused on his Grandfather's library, casting the spell.

Everyone reached for the parchment as the spell was spoken.

Immediately, they were under the sensation of a portkey and then nearly as quickly, found themselves crashing to the plush carpet.
The Weasley brothers recognized it at once; it was their grandfather's library.

Charlie who was the strongest and the tallest, thanks to his Chuvash inheritance took Gideon in his arms. This was his true bearer, his Chuvash recognized him. He sniffed out his father's scent and led them there.

The Healers were tending to Percy and Arthur.

Arthur stirred faintly when his other four sons entered the room.

"Sweet Merlin! Is that Gideon?" Septimus gasped.

Cedrella, who had softened because of her Gryffindor Bondmate, felt her mask of Black superiority crumble, "Slytherin's Cauldron. He's still alive? Put him on the bed."

Charlie set his bearer down; following his Chuvash's instincts he placed Gideon's hand in his father's. Arthur's hand squeezed Gideon's and both began to breathe easier.

Healer Smythe cast diagnostic spells, "Merlin. What is going on?"

Severus had finally entered and answered the Healer, "Forced separation was slowly killing them both. They were soulbonded in their youth. An Auror discovered, quite by accident, that he was being held against his will. We managed to safely retrieve him and hoped we would arrive in time. Is the damage being healed?"

Healer Smythe nodded, "When Oliver Wood mentioned a breaking soulbond, I was sure he was misinformed. Soulbons are rare."

Severus paled, "No wonder he tried to separate Percy and Oliver. He was worried they might become soulbonded."

Oliver had been holding Percy's limp form in his arms, "I'm here, Percy, your dad will be okay."

Percy slowly awakened, "Ollie?"

"He's resting now." Percy blinked, before his eyes he saw a face that reminded him of the twins, its wrinkles were ironing out, colour slowly returned to his skin and the hair began turning red. They were familiar, who was that? "Who is this?"

"The man who bore us." Charlie said, "He was kidnapped and imprisoned. He somehow bore dad five sons; Bill, myself, Percy, Fred and George."

"What about Ronald and Ginevra?" Septimus asked.

"They share no blood with us." Charlie announced.

Septimus thundered, "She dare to sleep with another after bonding to my son and heir?"

"Be quiet, Septimus." Cedrella said imperiously, "We both know that his soulbond with Gideon makes any other bond null and void, if not impossible. I doubt Arthur actually could sleep with her despite that woman's attempts to charm him into bed."

"Because she didn't bear us, would that explain why we felt nothing for her? No connection?" Bill asked.
Ted spoke up after determining despite the shock that Percy would recover. "Magical offspring who have not been adopted usually attach to their bearer and sire in some instinctive way. If for some reason one parent is not around, the child might attach to a parental figure that assumes that place. For example, young Malfoy attached to Professor Prince-Malfoy rather then to the bearer who birthed him."

"That is why I felt a connection with Gideon the moment I touched him." George said quietly.

"I think, because you are very much like him, are you not?" Ted replied, "The younger twin, his son. You are also attracted to men as he is."

George flushed scarlet, "Yes. I am attracted to them but I haven't attempted to pursue a relationship." Fred's eyes laughed at him, he felt guilty for the statement because of his growing intimacy with Viktor Krum. As well as the pleasurable feelings being in the Bulgarian Seeker, Durmstrang's Triwizard Champion's company gave him. He was too shy to really attempt to be extremely forward or flirtatious. But he'd never met a guy who could make him hard by speaking…

"Because you were afraid of how your family would take it. As you can see your father's true Bondmate is a man, I doubt he will object. You see how your grandfather accepts Oliver, how could he fail accept the man of your choice if he already accepts them?"

"If they are worthy of you and treat you well that is all we wish for, George." Cedrella said with a firm voice that allowed for no objections.

"I don't care if you like blokes." Bill shrugged, "all the more ladies for Fred and I."

"Bit odd being the same in everything but sexual tastes." Fred said with a frown, despite already having approved of Viktor.

Remus said from the doorway, "Your uncle Fabian was so attracted to girls that he slept with more girls then Padfoot and Padfoot was the biggest playboy in my year. Younger, older, he didn't care. He loved all women; any woman and few could resist him without massive effort. He was so attractive and attentive that most girls couldn't spend more then five minutes in his company without becoming willing bedmates."

Fred laughed, "So I am as like Fabian as Mu… Molly claims."

"Of course, you are born of his twin."

Septimus shifted nervously, "Can you tell how many children he attempted to bring to term?"

Healer Smythe cast a rare spell, "Six. But he lost one."

Bill whispered, "The miscarrriage Mu… Molly claimed to have had after Percy but before the twins. She has no ties to us but that of an aunt. She faked pregnancies with us… she had to have been involved in this."

"As well as passing off Ronald and Ginevra as Arthur's children. I never understand how she managed to have a girl. All Weasleys are male…" Cedrella said contemptuously. "I never liked her, how Arthur could go from inseparable with Gideon to engaged to his sister, I never quite understood. Gideon never came to the Bonding, so we assumed there were bad feelings there. A mother knows her son and I swore Arthur loved Gideon. He would never have cheated on him."

"He hasn't." Charlie said firmly, "Those are my parents; I know them by scent and magic. I have no true memory of him," pointing at Gideon, "but a part of me recognizes him."
"As do I." His four other brothers muttered together.

"Let their magic recovers from the forced prolonged separation. I'll inform his superior Madam Bones that he is recovering at home. I'll also request that Molly be investigated," Healer Smythe began.

"No. As the Head of the Weasley Family, I'll be speaking to Madam Bones. I want that woman investigated for interference with a soulbond and kidnapping of children. I will bar her access to Arthur's vault and inform the Goblins that she is not Arthur's true mate. They will want her for embezzling. The only vault of her family's she should have had access to was the vault containing her dowry, but only if she were granted access by her spouse of head of her family. The Ministry may have claimed the Prewett line was dead in the male line but the Goblins should have known it was not." Septimus interrupted. "Anything she has attempted to claim in the Prewett name through her sons will have to be reversed."

"Is that why you vote for her?" Bill asked.

"Molly claimed not to be interested in politics and lamented that her brothers weren't there to vote."

Septimus was thoughtful.

"No. She said, she regretted that Fabian wasn't there to vote. She never mentions Gideon by name, only Fabian." Cedrella corrected.

"So clearly, she knew he was alive the whole time." Dora said shaking her head, "I'm glad I was where I was today."

There was a crack of Apparation.

Dora blinked.

Standing there wearing a clean but shabby pillowcase was the house elf Jocy.

"Master!" his big eyes widened, "Master and his beloved together? I thought that he'd taken him away."

He looked at Bill and then each brother in turn, "You're here. Together." He started to cry, "Jocy never so happy." He spied Percy and wailed. "Jocy and other elves punished ourselves severely for allowing harm to come to you. We swore we protect you. Then. Then."

Percy saw the creature's scarred hands, "You knew? What he did to me?"

"Jocy know. Jocy and other elves taking care of master. He sensed danger approaching you, his children and was restless. Each one of us were charged to protect one of you. Master gave me you. Percival is terrible name. Master never agree to it. That bad man wanted to name you. He pick it, Percival Brian Weasley. He'd have preferred you were Percival Brian Dumbledore." Jocy spat.

Percy shivered, "He named me?" that man who murdered his child? He felt faint…

Dora was furious, "He dared name someone else's child? Percival? Arthurian name or not, Percival Dumbledore murdered children!"

Lucius glared at Dora wanting her to be quiet.

"Percival Dumbledore? I remember that name. I had no idea that was who Molly named Percy after. I thought it odd that she named the children and not Arthur." Septimus mused.

"She belittled Arthur all the time. Telling false stories about their romance, I finally washed my hands
of her." Cedrella said stiffly.

"I didn't exactly disown Arthur but we decided that as long as he was legally bound to that woman he would never inherit the headship of the family or the Wizengamot seat. We were hoping that one of you might prove responsible enough for it." Septimus said with a shrug.

"What about Uncle Cadmus?" Bill asked; Uncle Bilius died when he was a boy and had no children that he knew of.

"His sons are younger and not as magically grounded as you are." Cedrella said through pursed lips.

"If Arthur had no children as Bilius did then he would have been passed over anyway. We were considering Bill." Septimus nodded.

"I wondered why so soon after graduation both William and Charles took jobs as far away as they did." Cedrella looked both curious and worried.

"Molly is overbearing and runs The Burrow like she is the Head of a Ministry Department and we work for her. She allows for no deviation from her plans for us. I wanted to continue playing Quidditch but when I became Head Boy she made me quit. I would have rather stayed Quidditch Captain but they did let me pass it on to Charlie. I missed being Keeper; I never wanted to be Head Boy. I had the grades for it and did it well but I didn't enjoy it as much as being Quidditch Captain. Molly wouldn't hear of me giving it up, she told me I was and I quote, 'being a fool and passing up a great opportunity’. She would not allow me to ruin my life because of some stupid game. I would have liked to play Keeper Seventh Year; then I might have had a shot at playing for the Cannons. They wouldn't even let me attend Tryouts because I didn't play my last year. I had Twelve N.E.W.T.s so I interned for Gringotts and got accepted into their Cursebreaking Department, which had me transferred to Egypt. I was pleased that I ended up being quite good at it." Bill said reluctantly.

"I didn't realize she meddled so much, I am sorry William. If you had told me I would have interceded." Septimus said apologetically.

"I never stood up to Molly until I woke up and realized I was a Chuvash on my 16th birthday. I kept it a secret, a bit difficult but I already knew I had an affinity for both Flying and Magical Creatures. I was determined to succeed at one or the other. I was glad my marks weren't high enough for me to earn Head Boy. I saw how miserable Bill was and just focused on the subjects that would get me accepted." Charlie said in his deep voice, not admitting his difficult with reading that hadn't resolved until he came into his inheritance. "I would never be able to be with a woman, I expected to be single forever considering that submissive males are considered rare."

"How did you get accepted by the Preserve Charles?" his grandmother asked.

"I proved I could understand the Dragons. I could from the start convince even the most unruly dragon to behave. They allow me closer then their human caretakers; I can actually treat their injuries or magically examine their eggs without being attacked with intent to kill." Charlie shrugged, he sometimes was injured but usually from playing hero and rescuing a colleague from an angry dragon.

"They know you're a Chuvash?"

"The Dragons do, and the current head of the Preserve Dragomir is one as well. His mate is a pretty female submissive. I have only been allowed to visit their home twice; he is very protective about his brood."
"It's the Black blood showing through." Cedrella said. "We claim to have Chuvash in our bloodline."

"That and Metamorphmagus." Dora laughed as she copied Charlie's face with some difficulty. He was far too tall to truly become, and the faint scale-like skin weren't something she could copy well.

"So you really are Andromeda's daughter, I see." Cedrella said.

"Of course I am. The first Black to accept me was Sirius I, the brother of former Head Master Phineas Nigellus Black."

Cedrella gasped, "Sirius? Grand Uncle Sirius? Grandfather's brother? I thought he was dead."

"He still lives." Lucius said politely, "He closed Black Manor to all Blacks when he found his mate. He has risen to be King of the Chuvash and has told Dumbledore to leave Harry alone for they share blood. I wonder why he doesn't know about Charlie."

"Chuvash aren't as cliquey as Veela." Charlie replied, "We claim deference to the Chuvash King but few meet him much less know him. I have never heard his name and had no idea that I was one of his descendants. I would gladly swear fealty to him if he is honourable."

"He is. He was furious at his descendants for forgetting their true heritage. He was going to strike my mother's sisters from the family. He was incredibly dismayed that they would submit themselves to follow He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named." Dora said with pride. "It was the first time I was proud to be a Black."

"I always wondered why Walburga did such a thing. Septimus was as pure-blooded as anyone and my parents weren't against our bonding but she was. I was never so ashamed to be Black as when I heard she blasted me off the Family Tree." Cedrella said stiffly, "I wouldn't have given Septimus up."

"Andromeda wouldn't give me up, not for threats or anything. I think she suspected you loved someone else or at least wouldn't be interested in her. She was surprised I dared pursue her when she was already betrothed from the cradle to you, Lucius." Ted said quietly.

"I wish you both joy and I beg pardon for any injury I caused or slight I gave while reluctantly Bonded to that woman." Lucius apologized.

"We should probably take our leave and let Arthur and Gideon rest." Cedrella fixed each person with a pointed stare that dared them to protest. She glanced at the elf, "I don't know exactly why you couldn't protect my grandson or my son's beloved but I expect you to remain in this room until they wake. When they do, you are summon only myself or my husband. If you fail, I will see to it that your Master gives you clothes."

Jocy nodded wiping away his tears, "Jocy be very good elf. Jocy promise not to leave Hall. Jocy be telling no one where Master is. Master safe."

"Very well. We will see to it that no one outside this room discovers your master is here. Despite being the unacknowledged Head of the Prewett family, we owe him all duty." Cedrella said as she herded her family and guests from the room.

"Thank you for doing what you could to save our son." Septimus said as his wife closed the door to their son's room.

Severus bowed, "I merely offered your grandsons the tools in which to accomplish this. It was they who saved him."
Bill shook his head; "We could never have done it without you."

His brothers agreed.

"We are in your debt, Lord Prince." Septimus said, "If there is anything your family needs we will do our best to give our assistance."

"This will make up for my family's recent treatment of yours, so our debts are cancelled. While I was Bonded to that woman I did your son ill and treated him far less then he deserved." While Ginevra was not Septimus' blood granddaughter, he had put her in danger and threatened the Weasley Family's honour when he placed the Dark Artefact in Ginny's cauldron. That was a debt he intended to repay by helping or at least allowing his mate to help Arthur.

"It is as my Bondmate says. He deems our debts even but we would agree to an alliance." Severus added, "Despite Lucius' attempts to guide Fudge, he is a great fool. Though he was the only one to run against Crouch, it would behove the British Wizarding world to have a stronger leader and an honourable one." A weak leader played into Dumbledore's hands, which was the last thing they needed.

Lucius nodded, "If we have the Malfoy, Prewett, Prince, Weasley, Black, Potter and Wood votes, it might be enough to gain a vote of no-confidence and a discussion during this year's session of the Wizengamot."

"Many are calling for his head. Especially in light of the riot at the World Cup, we were embarrassed before the world. I might be able to convince Augusta to vote with us. She has nothing but disdain for Fudge." Septimus spoke as if he was already in line with their plan. Convincing Augusta might not be too hard; they'd always gotten on well. She might look old but losing her son and daughter-in-law had aged her considerably. Augusta was the widow of his nephew after all.

"It's settled then." Lucius glanced at Percy, "Any news about Crouch? Is he still ill?"

Percy shook his head, "I'm still trying to keep the Department running. I maybe the youngest there but no one is really stepping forward to fill in for him."

Septimus sighed, "Are you sure you can handle it?" he worried for his grandson, after finding out so recently what that dratted headmaster did to him and trying to repair his relationship with Oliver it was a lot to handle.

Percy smiled wearily, "A wise leader is determined by the events that shape him. I maybe young but I'm doing my best. Who is on the Foreign Relationship Committee? I would prefer if someone from that body took over the Triwizard Championship. I have too much on my plate. Between refusing importation of flying carpets, not to mention ensuring cauldron imports and exports are of safe thickness."

Fred snickered, remembering their teasing from that summer.

Severus raised an eyebrow, "Sufficient thickness is important. A thin cauldron can ruin a potion as you two enterprising young men should know."

Fred swallowed chastised.

"I expect you to study harder." Severus said firmly. "I would think you would like to make Gideon proud of you rather than ashamed. He was a bit of a prankster himself as was your father. He wouldn't hound you about marks like Molly but he would be proud of you if you applied yourself. If you do well enough and still wish to not return next year I am sure your fathers and grandparents
would agree to hear you out."

Fred and George looked at one another.

"As much of a bother that school is," Fred began.

"We have learned stuff that helped with product creation." George added.

"We'll actually start studying." Fred said pleasantly, though they had already sort of decided it would be smart to set an example for Mal and Greg. Fred wondered briefly if Mal might not be a good match for Greg if she was blood adopted by a non-Squib. Pansy was a very disagreeable person.

"Yeah, have to set a good example for Harry. Ron is just a lost cause. He's saying terrible things about Harry still. Any objections to a few pranks to teach him a lesson?" George asked.

"Since he is no blood of mine I don't." Cedrella said walking off.

"Just no permanent injuries you have to explain to Arthur." Septimus said shrugging.

"We better get the twins back to school before anyone really notices they are missing." Remus spoke from his place at the fringe of the group.

"Yes, it's getting late and I still have to teach." Severus nodded, "Come boys, back to the grindstone." Besides, leaving Harry for too long was disconcerting considering the curse Harry returned to Gryffindor Tower to be subjected too.

Chapter End Notes

Molly Weasley stormed out of Dumbledore’s floo, “Arthur hasn’t been home in days. I just heard from Amos Diggory’s wife Sarah that my husband had taken ill at work on Monday. Why was I not informed? I am his Bondmate, his wife! I heard he took ill at the Ministry and was taken to Weasley Hall. The Wards won’t let me throw and their floo is closed to the Burrow. I demand to know what is going on! My personal elf informed me that not only is That Person missing so is one of the other Prewett elves. The other elves aren’t talking. I was visited by Gringotts goblins this morning Albus. You promised this wouldn’t happen.”

“Molly, you came to me saying you would do anything you could to be Mrs. Arthur Weasley. We tried Love potions, and memory modification but that Weasley is so stubborn. He wouldn’t sleep with you. We found out Gideon was pregnant and we spirited him away after forging a letter saying he was through with Arthur. You spent the night in Arthur’s bed immediately and then began claiming you were pregnant. Being an honourable sort Arthur agreed to Bond to you but his heart was never in it. We tried numerous methods to entice him into your bed sexually but he could not so we had to just use Gideon as a substitute. Arthur would sleep with him, Gideon would conceive and then you would take the child and raise as yours.”

“Like I ever wanted to raise five of my worthless excuse for a brother’s brats. Arthur should have been mine from the start. Gideon was unnatural, what Dark magic did he use to trap Arthur in a soulbond? I blame that person for the death of Fabian. If Gideon were never born then I would have truly been with Arthur. Fabian wouldn’t have been killed trying to whisk Gideon away.”

Molly was clearly very involved with this whole business; Dora had wondered how much she possibly knew and now she was suspicious that in the case of her brother Molly knew everything.

“Any chance of them discovering Ginny’s true parentage?” Molly asked.

“Anyone with sense knows that Weasleys have no females. I told you it was utterly foolish.”

“I owe you a great deal Albus. I wanted a little girl.” Molly said with a far-away slightly mad looking smile.
“To seduce and Bond to the Chosen One. There is a complication I didn’t see, his Chuvash inheritance and his apparent mate Malfoy.” Albus sneered at her.

“We can’t have our Saviour Bonded to the son of a Death Eater. Besides, it’s disgusting.”

“It’s not so simple Molly, this Malfoy is Veela, a creature of light.” Albus shook his head, “I’ve noticed that George is getting awfully close to Viktor Krum. Percy and Oliver have been seen in public together recently.”

“That worthless Quidditch obsessed git! You told him to stay away from my son! How dare he impose himself and muddle up Percy’s future. He raped my Percy once already and Imperioed him into thinking he was liking it. Percy was supposed to be Bonding to former Head Girl Penelope Clearwater. Bill needs to settle down with a nice quiet girl, and then perhaps he would find a more reasonable career then Curse-breaking. I didn’t bribe you to make him Head Boy for him to waste his future in some backwards country like Egypt. As for Charlie, that boy makes me uneasy. He had an unhealthy attachment to Quidditch and that useless oaf Hagrid. I can’t believe you let him be accepted to that stupid dragon preserve.”

“I had no say in whether or not Charlie was accepted there. I cautioned Minerva and Professor Kettleburn about giving him a glowing letter of introduction. I felt that it would be a poor fit. How was I supposed to know that he had natural talent for it?” Dumbledore protested.

“If he had been my son, he would never have gone into such a dangerous field of study. Dragons! Curse Breaking! At least Percy had the sense to see that to become Minster for Magic that he needed some experience in International Relations. Crouch may have his faults but he is a stickler for rules and a very good Head of Department.” Molly grumbled.

“Especially since Crouch is ill and the only person trying to keep the department running is Percy. You were right to bribe me to make him Prefect and Head Boy. He wasn’t as social as Bill and positively interacted little with his House. He couldn’t even get his younger brothers to study or get decent Marks.”

Molly pouted, “I was a prefect, but Fred and George are an embarrassment. If only I could convince Arthur to disown them. Their OWLS were so pathetic they weren’t even worth the parchment they were printed on. If they spent half the time they waste on that useless junk they are forever inventing they’d get high enough marks to continue more then three or four subjects a piece.”
Dumbledore thought that that ‘useless junk’ was quite clever but if they put their wits to more appropriate things they might have made good choices for his ‘Order’.

“How do we find that person?” Molly asked arms crossed.

“Can’t your elf track him?” Dumbledore snapped exasperated.

Molly snorted, “Dilly claims she can’t.

“Maybe we’ll be lucky and they are both dead. With the rate Arthur’s magic was depleting he would have been useless to me in less then two years. Soulbinding! Pah! The most ludicrous accidental magic there is.”

Molly frowned, “Percy has seemed overly morose since you separated him from Oliver. Are you sure they weren’t soulbonded?”

Dumbledore snorted, “No but your precious Percy was almost an unwed teen mother like that pathetic excuse for a Death Eater Severus Snape. Leave me. I’ll send you a message if I discover anything. I’ll see if I can get anything out of the Goblins.”

When Molly was gone Dumbledore poured himself a Firewhiskey and sneered, “The reason the Death Eaters were a motley crew of misfits is because I hand picked each and everyone of them. Well…” Dumbledore frowned, “I vetted which would join up. I knew that Barty Jr. would, as well as Pettigrew. I offered to be James and Lily’s Secret Keeper by then Lily didn’t trust me.”

Dora was shocked; one of the Potters hadn’t trusted Dumbledore? She knew that her old mentor Moody had been in something called ‘the Order of the Phoenix’. Rumour had it Shacklebolt had been too...how far could she trust them? At least Scringour didn’t trust Dumbledore, the Head Auror was rumoured to be a Vampire but no evidence that was reliable was ever brought forward. Not that it really mattered as long as he didn’t lose control and attack people leaving a trail of bodies.

Dumbledore scowled, “She kept trying to make contact with Snape, stupid woman. James was such an easy boy to manipulate just like his son used to be. He wanted Sirius; it was I who convinced Sirius to suggest Peter. By implying that Remus had joined a pack that had sided with the Dark Lord, I didn’t inform the Auror that Remus did this under my orders. That foolish werewolf let one in and they worship you. He would have done anything I asked. I knew Peter had joined up, everyone who went to school with the Marauders, especially Slytherins knew he was the weak link in the chain. It
wouldn’t have done to have that group made up of anyone else."

What hadn’t Dumbledore meddled with?

“Ah yes Sirius, the snake in the lion’s den. I hoped he would turn out to be a natural spy but he was a Black reject. Potter was so malleable. I picked Lily for him and nudged him to her. After all, it wouldn’t take much to make him hate Severus. A lack of punishment for Slytherin-baiting or more specifically Severus-baiting encouraged it to continue. I wonder if Lucius was that much of a fool in school for Severus? I expected Lucius would be made to join by his father. Then Severus who worshiped the ground Lucius walked on would join. Severus was too talented a wizard to expel or to allow to be anything less then a criminal. Making sure he ended up falling among the Death Eaters was so simple I did nothing.”

“Of course Bellatrix would join taking her husband, youngest sister and cousin. Bellatrix was a bit mad from the start. If anyone had mentioned the Dark Lord was half Muggle she would never have joined. She half-convincing herself she was in love with him.” Dumbledore laughed maniacally at the thought of blood purist Bellatrix Lestrange in love or at least in lust with a ‘dirty Halfblood’…

“Molly was easy to convince that Arthur was hers. She was righteously indignant that her brother stole her Arthur. Anyone could tell that Arthur was besotted with Gideon. Fabian guessed it. I didn’t have Gideon there at the Aerie at first. Gideon was stolen out of my place in Godric’s Hollow. I hate that place; I have used it often to hide people. First Gideon and then James, Lily and Harry. I can’t believe James was foolish enough to move out of Laude Abbey. The Abbey was magically a more defensible place, his father died abruptly and never explained all the wards.” Dumbledore laughed manically. “Activating the Blood ward would have prevented access to any without Potter blood. Of course James was ignorant of this. We lost the McKinnons because they refused to side with me. Really, what use or manner would Death Eaters have for reducing a body to bits? The wonders of Muggle land mines. I don’t know what happened to Caradoc Dearborn, but he disappeared from my ranks too.”

Everything Dora had been told about the Order and the war was being exposed as lies.

“Of course most of the Bones family ended up dying, only the youngest brother and Amelia left. The youngest brother was in America studying at one of their schools. Amelia’ll have to go soon. She’s too narrow minded, besides she sided with Harry. The Longbottoms never joined the Order; they sided with the Ministry through out the entire war. I was ever so pleased when I found out that Bellatrix dealt with them for me. It was so easy to convince Barty Sr. to be brutal with most of the Death Eaters, especially his son. Barty Jr. was just a little actor,” he laughed, “Casting that spell was the best thing I ever did. Karkaroff broke so easy. I was surprised that Lucius wasn’t as loyal as I expected. Damnable Veela Blood in the Malfoy line. Potter a Chuvash? Damn the Blacks too. Insufferable goody goodies when I was young. I was ever so pleased when they took a Dark turn. Always pure had nothing to do with blood purity. It was always pure of motive, the Blacks always
advocated the Rede: ‘If what thou harm none, do what thou wilt’. Stuff and nonsense.”

Memories like this would ruin Dumbledore…Dora was overwhelmed. Abandoning Harry with Muggles was bad enough, possibly knowing something about the Nights of Hell curse and lying about Harry suffering from that mental disorder was bad enough but this was worse then she’d ever guessed…

Dora was stuck listening to Dumbledore rant until near dinnertime. Grateful for his absence she flew out the window and a far enough distance away to shift into that ‘invisible’ Hufflepuff girl and go in search of Lucius to make a report.

XoooooX

Lucius stepped into Severus’ apartment after hours in a Wizengamot committee meeting. He’d had to make a report as well as attempt to track down a member of the International Relations Committee to ask them to sit in for Crouch as a judge. He still hadn’t been able to find one that wasn’t ‘too busy’. Seriously, This was the Triwizard Tournament. Why was no one interested in judging?

Remus was reading Severus’ potions journals since they were fourth years to when Harry was born. The man was brilliant, why wasn’t his work universally acclaimed? He was barely beginning to understand the depths of the man’s genius much less his notes. His gift from their triad would be some measure of his mate’s brewing talent. Considering he had none, any share would be appreciated. He wouldn’t attempt to brew unless Severus was satisfied he was no longer a ‘dunderhead’ at brewing. He glanced up as Lucius exited the floo, he was about to ask about his day but the expression warned him not to. He nodded, “Treca brought tea. It should be still warm. She should be along with dinner soon.”

“Where is Severus?”

“Class I believe. As Head of House I believe he will have to be present during the meal.”

Lucius grumbled, “If I didn’t have my sights set on making him Headmaster one day I would have him resign and we can educate the boys at home. It was not Narcissa who didn’t want Draco to go away to Durmstrang it was Severus. He’s doted on that boy since he was born. Tutoring him, teaching him to brew the moment he showed promise. Severus gifted Draco with his own lab; he took to it like a Snidget does to flying. Veelas make excellent brewers because they are deeply connected to magic, they also can locate rare ingredients by sight, taste and smell. He was looking forward to guiding his education here as well.”
Remus nodded, “I wanted to take Harry in. I was suspicious that I had been named a secondary guardian. The Headmaster convinced me that though I was a spy, too many werewolves fought with the Dark Lord and fear was running high. Historically we are considered Dark Creatures and the Ministry would not grant me custody until things calmed down. I pleaded with him yearly on Harry’s birthday to let me visit. I was told it would upset Harry; he would be frightened of me because he didn’t remember his uncle Moony. I thought Harry was being raised decent people. It wasn’t until I met Harry that I realized he was with Petunia. That woman was never okay, always a bit crazy. Hated Lily. Called her a little freak. She once said babies like her were like unwanted kittens and puppies, that they should be drowned at birth.”

There was a knock at the door.

“Molly showed up. She’d heard from Cedric’s mother that Arthur took ill at the Ministry. She was told he was taken to Weasley Hall. The wards wouldn’t allow her passage; their floo is closed to The Burrow. She has a personal House Elf who told her that Gideon and an elf were missing. Goblins visited her at The Burrow this morning.”

“Septimus works faster. What did the old fool say?” Lucius said leaning back in his chair listening.
“That Dumbledore facilitated Molly’s desire to be Mrs. Arthur Weasley using love potions and memory modification. Nothing worked really because Arthur wouldn’t have sex with her. She slept in his bed naked and then claimed to be pregnant. He agreed to be Bonded because he didn’t consciously remember Gideon. They didn’t realize they were soulbonded at first. Dumbledore called it, ‘The most ludicrous accidental magic there is.’ Molly wished her brother was never born so Arthur would have been her from the beginning.”

Dora sagged, “Molly called Bill, Charlie, Percy, Fred and George, ‘my worthless excuse for a brother’s brats’. Also claimed Gideon used some type of Dark Magic to trap Arthur in a soulbond and that Arthur was meant to be hers. Something Dumbledore claimed responsibility for not only helping her but also encouraging her. He told Molly that Percy and Oliver were seen in public together. Molly’s response was to accuse Oliver of raping Percy and Imperioing him into thinking he liked it. Also that George is spending too much time with Viktor.”

Lucius snorted, “Oliver would never hurt Percy.”

“Molly Prewett admitted to bribing Dumbledore into choosing Bill and Percy as Head Boys. Dumbledore tried to convince Professor McGonagall and Professor Kettleburn to write less then glowing letters of reference to any of their choices. Molly didn’t want them to get jobs out of Britain. Molly called Hagrid that stupid oaf, blamed him for Charlie’s obsession with Dragons…”

“Wow, I never knew she was that bad. She always looked down her nose at me, because I was officially half blood. I was surprised that she allowed Hermione to visit the Burrow summers.” Remus said shaking his head.

“She admitted that Arthur wasn’t Ginerva and Ron’s father. She wanted a daughter to be bonded to Harry. She was furious that Harry was supposed to be with Draco. That their Saviour couldn’t be Bonded to the son of a Death Eater. He was not happy that the Black and Malfoy bloodlines were polluted with Chuvash and Veela blood. He said that Death Eaters had nothing to do with an Order member being found in pieces. He said something about a Muggle land mine- whatever that is, being responsible. He had no idea what happened to Caradoc Dearborn. He claimed that the McKinnons deserved what they got for not siding with Dumbledore. HE admitted to kidnapping Gideon. He hide him in the house his mother and sister died in before he loaned it to the Potters. Lily had started distrusting him and trying to contact Severus. He manipulated Slytherins into joining He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named by isolating them from the rest of Hogwarts. He was so angry with Madam Bones that he thinks she ought to die. He was upset not every member of the Bones family died. He said that attacking the Longbottoms was the best thing Death Eaters ever did. He implied to Sirius your friend that you had betrayed them by joining a pack. He made sure not only did Peter become a Death Eater but that Barty Jr. did. He encouraged Crouch to make an example of every Death Eater they caught. I wonder how many Death Eaters were trapped in webs Dumbledore designed.”

“The Dark Lord is Dark but I’m not sure whether he entered into it of his own free will now.”
Lucius mused.

“The Headmaster claimed Bellatrix was mad when she entered Hogwarts. He had hoped that your friend Sirius would prove to be a natural spy but he was too honourable. James was manipulated and his father died before he could explain much about the wards on their house. Dumbledore convinced James that his own home was safer then the ancient dwelling of the Potters Laude Abbey. They had blood wards on the Abbey. He was an Auror, why did he trust what Dumbledore said?” Dora cursed.

Remus shrugged, “We all did, we thought he was our leader. He was the one person He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named was supposed to be afraid of. He was offered the post of Minister for Magic three times and refused. He said he was content melding the minds of the next generation. Oh Merlin, he was serious…” the implication of the significance of his words striking him.

“I should say. He allowed the sport Slytherin-baiting to isolate your House so Slytherins would band together and join the Death Eater ranks. I think he’s trying to weed out the people and lines he doesn’t want to continue. By eliminating persons and lines of those he disliked, distrusted or feared he was solidifying himself a band loyal followers. He allowed Hagrid to be expelled but arranged his loyalty by having him hired on a Gamekeeper and later Care of Magical Creatures Professor. He hired Pomfrey who we know is useless. Look at Flitch; he also worships the ground Dumbledore walks on because no one else will hire him because he’s a squib. He fills Hogwarts with people who owe him. No one would hire Snape because he was rumoured to be a Death Eater, Dumbledore did. Then he tried to make it seem like he turned him into his spy. Ms. Pince is so disagreeable that no one would want her around. He hired useless Defense Teachers when he knew He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named was still out there. He no offence meant Remus, invited a werewolf to attend knowing it was dangerous but hopefully making a lifetime ally.”

Remus quite understandably winced, “You have a point.” It was embarrassing to know how Dumbledore abused his gratefulness. “I never joined a pack. I was ‘too wizard’ for them. They dislike wizards, they haven’t organized themselves in quite the manner the Veela and Chuvash have which is quite the pity. Most follow the wolf that sired me out of fear. He is very much a wolf, not so much a man. He has enemies amoung both wolves and Wizarding folk alike.”

“As crude as it is to say, he should be put down like the dog he is.” Lucius said gruffly. “Disliked him. Honorary Death Eater or no if anyone was more responsible for creating mistrust between our two sides it was him. For all his faults, the Dark Lord did what the Ministry could not; he had Dragons, Chuvash, Werewolves, giants, goblins, some vampires and wizards working together in a common cause. The Ministry is corrupt yet, instead of trying to reform it from the inside they sought to overthrow it and start again.”

“What were the Death Eaters purposes?” Dora was curious having never had the opportunity to ask one before.
“They saw the damage that Muggleborns were having on our society. This distrust of non-Human races is a Muggle view.” Lucius began slowly, “The Dark Lord never ordered mass Muggle killings in my hearing. Perhaps, I was not as high in his esteem as my father wanted. Being born Veela was a handicap in some ways, especially with the Dark Mark locking away much of my Magic. They wanted to separate ourselves from Muggles completely, not like Grindelwald who wished to enslave them. The Dark Lord was against Muggles raising Wizarding children. He grew up unloved and unwanted in a Muggle orphanage; with no one to teach him appropriate behaviour so he used his magic to get what he wanted and to punish those who humiliated him. He wanted to live and study among his own kind but he was refused. Summer after summer until graduation from Hogwarts he was sent to live among Muggles. He was right, he was superior to them as we all are for we can do what they cannot. In a way they are right to fear us, just as we in our own way fear them. Muggleborns bring strange and unwelcome ideas that threaten to topple the culture we love; they have no love for non-humans only fear, they condemn us for being Bonded to those of the same gender, they often learn what they can from us and then return to the world from which they first came.”

“I see, their methods may have been wrong but I can understand their point.” Dora said thoughtfully, “I’ve overheard the school laughing about S.P.E.W. and House Elves refusing to clean the Tower well because of Granger’s so-called hats.”

“She has dangerous ideas.” Lucius nodded, “A mass freeing of House Elves would leave them bereft. They long ago decided they desired to serve; thus they tied themselves to families magically and have given good service. Most forget that while a Master has the right to free them they also have the right to refuse to serve. I was displeased to have been tricked into having freed the woman’s personal elf, mostly because she would see fit to punish me. Something my Veela abhorred.”

Dora relaxed in her chair, “I am pleased that that Molly Prewett is suffering humiliations galore. Perhaps, I should drop in on Ms. Skeeter and give her a tip. Something like, ‘Supposed Bondmate of the firstborn of Lord Weasley, Molly Prewett is said to be accused to conspiracy to kidnap, kidnapping, bribery, kidnap, filling false birth records with the Ministry and interfering with a soulbond. She is also under investigation by the Gringotts goblins for embezzlement.’”

Remus snickered, “Do it. By airing Molly’s dirty laundry to the Wizarding World we embarrass Dumbledore. There will be an outcry to have her arrested and questioned regarding co-conspirators.”

“I recommend you go pass on this juicy story to Ms. Skeeter. Tell her to get a good picture of The Burrow. I wonder why a heiress and the firstborn of a Wizengamot Lord would choose to live in a shack?” Lucius mused, “As the purported sole heir to the Prewett family she could have held in trust the Prewett fortune for her children. Yet instead she used said fortune to bribe the old fool.”
“I wonder…what the true meaning behind the prophecy is. I wonder, what if it never was meant to be regarding He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named?” Remus said almost to himself. “What if James and Lily were killed for nothing?”

“Never for nothing,” Lucius admitted sadly, “They in the end proved the Dark Lord right that Muggles cannot be trusted to raise a Magical child. Look how much damage they’ve done to children like the Dark Lord, Severus and Harry.”

“I’m not sure how they would feel about becoming poster children for the Death Eaters.” Remus hated to think that he was finally coming to understand his former enemies. His enemy was now the supposedly the most powerful wizard in the world, while his allies were less dangerous then he ever dared hope.

Was the Wizarding War a lie? Good people had died it was true but had the Dark Lord ordered their deaths or had Dumbledore? That was the question of the century…

Dora left to leave an ‘anonymous’ source for the beginning of a story that might make Skeeter’s career.

Chapter End Notes

Chapter 23A-The First Task, King Sirius summoned and The Weasley-Prewetts meet their Bearer

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Chapter 23-

Viktor was understandably nervous given that it was the Morning of the First Task.

George attempted to comfort him, by not protesting when the Bulgarian Seeker insisted on holding him close. He was still worried about his dad; he’d had no news from his Grandfather. No news must equal good news.

Fred had been rather attentive to Angelina after seeing his dad’s pale body struggling to breathe before they had placed Gideon in bed with him. He split his time outside of classes with Greg tutoring, which usually meant Harry was close by and with Angelina. Fred and Angelina were usually studying, with not so random breaks to snog.

George studied in the Slytherin Common Room with Viktor; it was the only place they were mostly ignored. Hufflepuff, Ravenclaw and Gryffindor weren’t as kind, things ranged from being accused of betraying Hogwarts by dallying with a ‘rival’ to denouncements of his sexuality from Muggleborn or Muggle-raised witches and wizards. Though the poof remarks mostly came from Ron or Muggles. Hermione was rather vocal about it as was Ron that it was ‘unnatural’.

Alicia stayed quiet but Lee Jordan, Angelina and Fred all jumped to his defense. Angelina thought it was romantic, but only when Alicia wasn’t around.

Karkaroff came over to fetch Viktor after lunch on the Friday of the First Task.

Viktor pulled George to his feet and kissed him hard, “Watch me, will you?”

George hissed softly, “I'll be cheering for you.”

Viktor hugged him and then followed Karkaroff joining Madam Maxime with Fleur Delacour and McGonagall who was with Cedric.
George swallowed nervously, what was the dangerous task his Viktor was about to face?

The First Task

They headed out following the crowd.

Draco held Harry’s hand as they made their way towards a not-quite invisible stadium-like enclosure. It wasn’t much different from the Quidditch World Cup stadium except that it was smaller.

Remus and Lucius had saved them all plenty of seats.

A whistle blew and Bagman tore out of a large tent.

Moody was pacing near the Judges’ dais looking angry.

Bagman announcing, “The object ladies and gentlemen is for the Champion to retrieve the Golden Egg from a nest of dragon eggs as safely and creatively as possible. Number one is Cedric Diggory of Hogwarts, Hufflepuff House.”

A roar sounded in the stadium, in it was a dragon.

Blaise shouted excitedly, “Swedish Short Snout!” he’d been reading up Dragons most of his life due to his complex relationship to them because of his Chuvash ancestry. He felt a little thrill seeing Charlie down there.

Cedric looked a bit green, as he headed out to the stadium’s floor and faced the dragon.

Everyone looked on, both curious and frightened.
Cedric transfigured a rock into a Labrador.

A curious piece of magic that had Fred contemplating a new product…

At first Cedric’s ploy seemed to work, he was able to sneak up on the dragon at first.

“He’s taking risks, this one!”

Then to everyone’s horror, the Swedish Short-snout turned and started breathing fire at Cedric. He grabbed the egg and ran, but not before his robe caught fire.

“Clever move with the dog- pity it didn’t work! Narrow miss there, very narrow…”

A dragon keeper, Charlie verified that all the true eggs were uninjured and even untouched while the Hogwarts’ Champion was tended to by Nurse Pomfrey.

“Very good indeed!” Bagman was shouting. “And now the marks from the judges!”

Cedric was awarded points by the judges, receiving a eight from Madam Maxime, a ten from Dumbledore and Bagman, a nine from an exhausted-looking Percy Weasley who must still be running the tournament in Crouch’s absence and a six from a glowering Karkaroff. Leaving Cedric with a grand total of forty-three points.

Cedric was hailed with a Hero’s cheer from most Hogwarts students and staff.

“One down, two to go!” Bagman yelled as the whistle blew again. “Number two, Miss Delacour, if you please!”

Fleur was trembling from head to foot.

Having met other Veela and realizing that her abrupt and proud nature was probably a creature trait;
Harry felt more warmly toward her than he had done so far as she exited the tent with her head held high and her hand clutching her wand.

The crowd waited with baited breath as Fleur approached the Welsh Green.

Fleur’s voice rose singing an incantation in French.

The Chuvash and their companions watched surprised, as the Dragon’s eyelids grew heavy and soon closed.

Fleur managed to put the Dragon to sleep with her unusual spellwork, it did however manage to snort fire a bit set her robes alight. Barely concentrating she put out the sparks with a bit of conjured water.

While the crowd watched with bated breath Fleur managed to pass the sleeping dragon and retrieve her golden egg.

The crowd erupted into applause once more…

Fleur was of course successful too. A pause, while Fleur’s marks were being shown. She was awarded a seven by Karkaroff, Percy drew a nine, Madame Maxime gave her ten while Dumbledore and Bagman chose to grant her eight.

There was more clapping… then, for the third and final time, the whistle.

Bagman shouted, “Last, but by no means least Durmstrang Institute’s Champion, Seeker for the Bulgarian National team and the Vratsa Vultures, catcher of the Quidditch World Cup Snitch, Viktor Krum.”

Though his cheering couldn’t truly be distinguished from the others, no doubt George’s was the loudest. Though Viktor hadn’t made any true claim or overture, George found himself wondering if his fathers recovered if Viktor might wish to ask for the right to court him. Despite his cheering, George was a bit worried about Viktor facing a full-grown nesting mother dragon.
Viktor smirked, holding his wand aloft he did what all Chuvash do when facing difficulty: he changed the rules. “Acio Firebolt.”

Zooming from the ship came his Firebolt, Viktor leapt into the air landing gracefully on his broom. Winking at George he flew quiet close to the dragon. Mostly she ignored him, he could adjust his scent some and gave great care to avoid giving off the scent or aura of a predator. He spotted an opening for the eggs and dove.

“Very daring!” Bagman was yelling, “Look at him Fly! The best Seeker in the world, Ladies and Gentleman. I give you VIKTOR KRUM!”

Viktor ignored the screams of terror for him and shouts of awe. Trusting his instincts, Viktor held onto his broom until the last second when he pulled out of the dive. Snatching up the golden egg and was careful not to touch any of the other eggs.

“That’s some nerve he’s showing - and - yes, he’s got the egg! Viktor Krum has managed to succeed in the shortest time. With a broom, what else should we expect to see from the greatest Seeker of our times?”

Now it was time for scores, begrudgingly Madame Maxime gave him a nine, while Dumbledore gave him an eight. A slightly pale Percy awarded him a nine as well, while Bagman and Karkaroff gave Viktor both tens.

George shouted. Viktor had the highest score at forty-six having scored higher then Cedric.

He got strange looks from his own House and Ravenclaw while Hufflepuff glared.

At a nod from Blaise and seconded by Draco, Slytherin stood and gamely clapped for all the participants.

Due to Slytherin’s show of gamesmanship, the others present politely clapped for the champions.

“In First Place, Viktor Krum with forty-six points. Cedric Diggory with forty-three in Second. Third Place, Fleur Delacour with forty-two points. The second task, will take place at half past nine on the morning of February the twenty-fourth. Until then, folks have an excellent winter holiday and I hope to see many of your smiling faces at the Yule Ball.” Bagman announced.
Viktor ignored his schoolmates and went to find George.

George grinned up at him, speaking in faltering parseltongue, “That was really amazing. Merlin, you’re an amazing flier. It was like watching you at the World Cup all over again.”

Percy made his way over, “That was some flying, your reputation is well-deserved.”

George blushed slightly.

Percy laughed, “Percy Weasley, though hopefully not for long. I’m filling in for my boss Mr. Crouch. I work in his department. I’m George’s older brother.”

“Not for long?” Viktor asked confused.

“I’m hoping my boyfriend sees fit to propose.”

Fred glanced to see both Charlie and Bill coming towards them. He let go of Angelina’s hand. “Bill’s here.”

George turned white, sure it was bad news.

Bill however, was grinning broadly; “I guess I made it right on time. That was spectacular flying. William Weasley, call me Bill. I used to be a Keeper for Gryffindor but I’m a Curse Breaker for Gringotts these days. I came to fetch my brothers.”

George’s fingers ended up holding fast to Viktor’s without realizing it. “Is he… are they…”

“They’re fine. They’d like to meet us. Since you two are sure of age, unlike my numbskull brothers, Ms. Johnson and Mr. Krum, you can join us if you like.” Bill said nodding at them. He lightly jabbed Charlie in the shoulder, “It seems Percy, George and Fred found themselves people who don’t find them ugly. We can’t lose to them, right?”
Blaise felt his heartbeat quicken, he was definitely more then a little attracted to the older Chuvash. He had every intention of finding a way to get Charlie’s attention.

“I need to…” Percy stammered nervously.

“Oliver’s already at the Hall. He stops in daily to check on Dad. Remember he was there when he fell ill.” Bill tugged a paper out of his robes. “Did you see this?”

“Molly Weasley nee Prewett under investigation,

‘Molly Prewett, former Gryffindor Prefect is under investigation for numerous charges’ says a source, ‘Aurors are investigating her on charges of seven counts of kidnapping, illegal use of Love potions and mind rape, filing falsified records with the Ministry, bribery and abuse of minors amoung other charges.’ This reporter was also told that Gringotts is investigating her for multiple counts of theft, false representation and the purported worst crime under goblin law- embezzlement.

An anonymous source close to the Weasley Patriarch said that on behalf of his son and grandson, Ms. Prewett would soon find herself under a lawsuit brought by Lord Weasley. In a world that relies on the paternal line for inheritance mostly, a woman who goes so far as to present children to her ‘Bondmate’ as his own is a person of no concept of honour or shame. As such two children falsely attributed to Arthur Weasley, Head of Ministry Department of Misuse of Magical Artifacts will be summarily disinherited from the Weasley family. Considering their marks are public record, if I were their father I wouldn’t claim them either.

Rita Skeeter Exclusive- stay turned for more on this exciting shocking story.”

“Wow, so…” Charlie began.

Bill put his hand up to hush him, “I believe this is a topic for another location. I have a portkey from grandfather to take us all to the Hall.” He tugged it out; it was an empty bottle of Ogden’s Firewhiskey.

Blaise touched Charlie’s arm, “Do please tell us how they are. New friend I maybe to the family but I would hate to have you loose a beloved parent.”

Ron had stolen a Daily Prophet after Hermione was done with it; the whispers of his Housemates
had made him angry. He’d spent the entire First Task in his dormitory reading these lies about Mum. He punched Blaise, “Get your filthy hands off my brother you disgusting snake.” He shook the paper at Fred and George, “Tell me this is one of your pranks!”

Charlie slapped Ron and knelt to help Blaise up. “I would apologize for my brother’s ill-treatment but he’s no brother of mine. We share no blood.”

Ron stood shaking, “What do you mean you aren’t my brothers? All Skeeter writes is lies. Everyone knows it.”

Bill snorted, “This time, it seems she has her facts straight. You are no blood of ours. Never have been. Compared to us, you’re a coward, your marks are worse than Fred and George together and you have no sense of honour.”

“Neither does Percy have honour, I’m surprised you haven’t decided he isn’t part of your precious family.” Ron sneered.

Bill, Charlie, Fred and George closed ranks around Percy.

“He is our brother. We’ve already forgiven him for his mistakes because he was not at fault. Unlike you he’s redeemable.” Fred glared, he still hadn’t forgiven Ron for cursing him in the back, well attempting to.

Bill held out the portkey, “We should go. Dad is expecting us.”

Ron reached for the portkey.

Charlie slapped his hand, “It’s useless to take you, and the wards have been locked to blood. You have no Weasley blood.” Ignoring the fact that Viktor, Oliver and Angelina weren’t blood. Then again, it had been locked to Molly’s blood and no matter who Ron’s sire was, Molly was still his bearer.

Before Ron could speak again, the five Weasley brothers were gone alone with the twins’ significant others.
Ron was shaking with angry and embarrassment. He went to lunge at Harry but Shishreyu knew what he was about and leapt at him, winding her coils around him.

“My my Mr. Potter, still causing trouble. Ordering a familiar to attack another student. Tut tut, you’ll be severely punished for this.” Dumbledore drawled, “I believe expulsion would be appropriate in this case and this snake will have to be put down.”

Blaise snarled, “Harry did nothing of the sort. You can’t lay one hand on Harry. All punishment of Chuvash must be met out by our King.” He was still angry that Ron had hit him but warmed by Charlie’s solicitous behavior.

Dumbledore sneered, “I don’t see him and I don’t believe his presence is warranted in this case.”

Dora ran to get Skeeter, knowing this would be an excellent article.

Blaise stood in front of Harry, hissing loudly in Parseltongue. “A child of thou is in danger. I summon thee, Sirius Black, true Lord of the Ancient House of Black and King of the Chuvash!”

There was a crack not unlike Apparation.

Standing there before them was the Chuvash King in all his glory.

“Who summons me?” Sirius I roared.

“I, thy weak and unimportant child.” Blaise said falling on his knees before his lord and king.

Harry bowed low.

Remus, Lucius, Severus and Draco gave slight bows despite not being members of his race.

“Why have you summoned me, Blaise son of Elise and Gregorio?”
Blaise swallowed, “Because this insignificant human believes himself to have authority over one of your children.”

Sirius I turned to glared at Dumbledore, “I told you sir to leave Harry Potter alone. I revealed myself to the Ministry as King of the Chuvash. You dare to threaten my descendant?”

“He ordered his familiar to attack a student.”

Shishreyu hissed, “My lord, king. I am the humblest of your subjects. My Master did not order me. I sensed he was in danger. Our bond though new bide me to protect him. This boy had murder in his heart. My master is a kind soul and deserved no such treatment.”

“It seems this instrument of vengeance disavows your tale, Dumbledore. She claims that this boy had murder in his heart when he attacked my child.” Sirius I glared. “Your threats are not backed by evidence.” He smelled the air, “I smell the scent of my kin.” He hissed in Parseltongue, “Blood to blood, I summon you. Come to me, my kin.”

Harry knelt at his ancestor’s feet.

Neville who was close by also knelt beside him.

Out of the Slytherin ranks came two, Adrian Pucey and Mafalda Prewett.

Sirius I felt one attempt to fight his call, he turned towards them. His face flickering with angry, “You! How dare you hide behind the face of a man who has such blood on his hands!” Sirius I raised his hand and power exploded from it.

This left no doubt in anyone’s mind that he was truly the King of the Chuvash.

Moody tried to fight the tug he felt toward the Chuvash, he had Black blood through his grandmother Charis and did not wish to be exposed. He heard the condemnation in that voice, and then power slammed him to the ground.

“Show me your true face!” Sirius I ordered.
The wooden leg was torn from his body, and magical blue eye at well. His flask soon found it’s way to Severus’ hand.

“Polyjuice potion. I know whose been raiding my private cupboard now.“ Severus said sniffing it.

The still changing body of the presumed ‘Mad-Eye’ Alastor Moody was summoned once more to his Lord.

Lucius blinked, as the straw-coloured hair began to sprout in place of wild grey locks.

Bagman stared.

Severus gasped, “Barty Jr Crouch? I thought he was dead. He was sent to Azkaban.”

Dora whispered, “A truly loyal servant cursed to deny his master.”

“I am his most loyal servant! I was unable to search for him. I alone does he trust. He is coming for you, Lucius. You will be punished for your betrayal.” The man formerly holding the guise of Moody shouted.

“I never abandoned my true ideals. I am a child of light and can not follow the Dark.” Lucius said quietly, “I never joined of my own free will, a crime the Dark Lord would have hated. My father and former Bondmate conspired to force me to join. Though I may have agreed with the Dark Lord’s views, I cannot say I agreed with his methods. Nor do I sanction the unwarranted attack and torture of good people such as the Longbottoms who never sought to harm anyone.”

“We found a memo claiming that the Ministry kidnapped our lord. We were only trying to rescue him.” Barty Jr. protested.

“You tortured my mum and dad!” Neville yelled, moving to attack the man who had forced him to watch him use Unforgivable Curses on spiders.
The closest person near him was Sixth Year Slytherin Prefect Adrian Pucey whose hand darted out
to catch his shoulder. A Glamour encompassed the hand holding onto the irate Gryffindor still and
hiding from sight Chuvash claws. “Be still. He will face judgement.”

Something in Neville stopped dead, his attack forgotten as he was chastised.

“I never heard our master order attacks on Muggles or torture of Aurors.” Lucius stated firmly.
“Perhaps, my Veela blood made me untrustworthy.” for it was Narcissa who was entrusted with the
diary and not him, just as Bellatrix was similarly trusted with an object of equal importance to the
Dark Lord. “For all his faults, the Dark Lord did the one thing the Ministry cannot seem to do. He
brokered relationships and treaties with Chuvash- mostly without your knowledge sir,” addressing
the Chuvash King, “werewolves, some vampires, and giants.”

“Those are all Dark and Dangerous creatures, Lord Malfoy.” Dumbledore chuckled.

“Chuvash are not Dark!” Sirius thundered. “It is through us you receive many things. We oversee
your Dragon Preserves. We raise snakes for familiars, we harvest dangerous to acquire potion
ingredients. We mostly stay out of Wizarding affairs. Though we do allow our younglings to attend
your educational institutions if they show an affinity for Wizarding ways. Most of us choose to send
our children to Beauxbatons or Durmstrang because they are more welcoming to those with active
creature inheritances. It is through Bondings with Chuvash, true Elves, Fae, Veela and the Like that
your Magical blood doesn’t weaken.”

“Surely, Bonding to creatures like Werewolves and Vampires are out of the question.” Skeeter
stammered.

“Why? True they are cursed, but who cursed them? The Werewolves were created by a curse cast by
Morganna herself. She was a Dark Witch; those she cast the curse on had offended her. Her magic
was so powerful that it could not be reversed and was passed on because that was the nature of her
curse. Vivian, another Dark Witch who was her rival cast the Vampire Curse. It too cannot be
reversed.”

“But it can.” Glowing and shimmering, so pale she was almost translucent, the Veela seer stepped
forward. “When a Child of Light joins with a Child of Dark in a union of three. Love itself is
stronger then any curse. Love can break any curse. Those who wish to be free can be. Those whose
souls have been lost will fade away in the presence of the three.”

Lucius, Severus and Remus glanced at one another, was the seer talking about them?
“Is it true that if one copulates with a werewolf during the full moon that cubs, rather than humans will be born?” Skeeter asked.

Sirius I snorted, “I’ve never heard of such a thing occurring and I am older then this fool here. I left the Wizarding Community because I felt my place was amoung my own kind. I see that choice was wrong; the Wizarding World suffers greatly from its own folly. A King of the Chuvash cannot serve as a leader of the Wizarding World but if one cannot lead and return us to our ideals then they are not fit to lead. Hark to the words of Merlin, my friends. All those who use Magic are our kin. Merlin himself was Veela, Arthur himself had Chuvash heritage. Ravenclaw was Veela, Slytherin Chuvash, Hufflepuff true Elf.”

“What was Gryffindor?” McGonagall asked.

“As Head of his House if you do not know, then I shall not tell you.” Sirius stared at her.

“He was half Chuvash.” Neville said quietly.

“Yes Great Grandson of a Daughter of the House of Black.” Sirius I glanced at the shy boy, Chuvash yes but submissive surely. “What was the other half?”

“Fae.”

“The Chuvash overpowered his Fae when he came into his powers. When one couldn’t find a witch or a wizard in those days, they often Bonded to those of the Magical races. Or had you forgotten that Dumbledore?”

“I know the Black line is polluted with creature blood as are many others.” Dumbledore glared.

A Hufflepuff stepped forward, “I am Susan Bones, and we have Wood Elf running through our veins. We do not see ourselves as polluted.”

“The Woods have Wood Elf blood as well.” Lucius added.
Dora glared at Dumbledore, “Sir, what blood did the McKinnons have that you distained?”

Dumbledore turned red, “I will not have the Ministry spying on Hogwarts Business.”

Dora laughed, “I never said anything about the Ministry, Headmaster. Is there something we should be investigating?”

“Auror Tonks, Daughter of the House of Black. I am sure that this embarrassment to our House will be wanted by the Ministry.”

Dora kicked Barty Jr., “Where is my mentor?”


“Alastor Moody is no murderer.” McGonagall stammered.

“Sticking up for your ex-Bondmate won’t do him or you much good, Minerva.” Severus said quietly.

“But Alastor would never…” she protested weakly. “Take this scum to the Ministry but Alastor won’t be going before the Judicial Council without me. I may have lost some standing because my mother was the last of my Family but the Ross name is still considered honourable. I won’t have him tossed into Azkaban like Sirius Black was without a trial.”

“Would you like us to summon Healer Smythe and Mind Healer Tonks, Deputy Headmistress?” Lucius asked the shell-shocked woman, “Surely after a long and traumatizing confinement, he deserves the best of care.

McGonagall was pale and drawn, “Yes… please. Poor Alastor, I should never have left him…”

Lucius left to go summon the healers he promised, while Severus went with his colleague to help rescue her ex-Bondmate from confinement.
“If you are done threatening young Harry Potter, Headmaster.”

“He has been rude since he returned from Lucius’ care. He refuses to stay with his House.”

“He’s not safe in Gryffindor Tower!” Draco snarled. “His bed there was Cursed. Despite evidence by a Mind Healer, two experts in Dark Arts and an Auror he refused to believe that Harry was under the Nights of Hell curse.”

Durmstrang students whispered the name of that curse in their native tongues. Grindelwald had left deep impressions on them, having lost family through various means to the last Dark Lord.

“That’s a curse of Grindelwald.” Karkaroff whispered.

“Quite true.” Sirius I glared. “If I hear you are personally responsible for any harm done to my heir, I shall rip your head from your shoulders and feed it to the ancient Wurms. Harm any of my children and I shall enact vengeance. The Queen of the Veela’s eye is ever upon you, harm her own and you will soon learn why the wrath of a Veela is sometimes more feared then that of a Chuvash.”

Reaching out to rest his hand on Harry’s head, “Son of my blood, I bless thee.” He rest his palm on Blaise’s forehead, “You who seek to honour and serve will find yourself blessed beyond measure.”

Blaise bowed, “I thank thee for thy attention to one as unworthy as I.”

“Thou shall find yourself in a position of prominence, young Zabini,” the Seer spoke, “as the Veela’s right hand. A student of decorum and law, you will prove to be a guide to many. Your children shall be blest.”

Sirius reached Neville, “You too have suffered much, yet your soul is pure. Leave your fear behind; step up from the shadows of your parents. Find your own place.”

“Rise above Longbottom. Someday, your mother shall embrace you.” The glowing Veela child spoke softly.

Neville saw only truth in those eyes and choked on a sob. His mother? Returned to him?
“Mafalda child, Daughter of the Houses of Black and Prewett. Poorly named you are, Battle strength does not suit thee. As the true Head of the House of Black, I grant you the name Sophronia Maia Prewett, Sophronia means wise. If the Prewett family fails to claim you, as is their choice, I grant you status as a Black Heiress. With most of our illustrious family dead, we could use a strong woman like you.” Sirius I declared in English.

Mafalda was in awe of this person; her lips formed her new name in silence. A rare smile spread across her features. “Thank you, sir.”

“A dear child you are.” Sirius I said quietly, “You remind me of my mate.” He turned to Adrian, “New to our ways, you are. First in many generations.” He sniffed, “Ah in the school hierarchy of our Wizarding kind=, it is you who lead. A Veela is prince. A Chuvash King. Eldest woman of Black blood is Queen.”

Mafalda swallowed, her? Queen of Slytherin?

Adrian was stunned, him? King of Slytherin?

“In my day in Slytherin, there was a council. If all present were there, each had a voice. I was not King of Slytherin. Only a descendant of that bloodline could be. You, my child are. Age matters not when tempered by wisdom, justice and mercy. We had a queen but she was weak and fell too easy under the influence of the Prince.”

Draco nodded, “No doubt, my great-grandfather.”

“Indeed, for he had a son named Abraxas. Malfoys have long been Princes, though not all have true right to the title, unlike you and your father.” Sirius I agreed. “Turn to Blaise, he knows much about us. His father was once a member of my court. I shall take my leave. By repeating Blaise’s summons, any of you might be able to summon me. If this person threatens either of you, I shall deal with him.” He glanced at Skeeter, “When you write about this, I did not threaten Dumbledore. I merely promised to protect my own. I am their King while they are too young to stand up for themselves. It is their leader’s duty to protect them even from another who should be charged with their protection.” A jibe at Dumbledore’s failure to live up to the honour and duty of his position as Headmaster.

There was a ripple of Magic and Sirius I; King of the Chuvash was gone.
The five Weasley brothers and two of their significant others were deposited by portkey in the Library of Weasley Hall.

Fred, George and Percy ran forward when they saw their Dad. “Dad!”

Arthur’s arm moved from embracing Gideon to holding his three youngest sons. “Boys! How I’ve missed you.” Ted Tonks had helped remove the tendrils of memory blocking spells. There were many holes in his memories but he knew his sons. In his own way, he’d tried to do his best to protect them. He kissed their foreheads, “Percy I am so sorry I didn’t realize how much she hurt you. Your future should be your choice, if Oliver is who you desire I will not refuse your Bonding to him.” He glanced at the twins. “I know I wasn’t supposed to have favourites but you two were. You reminded me of my greatest friends.” He turned to Gideon. “This is Fred and George. It was George who pulled you out of The Aerie.”

Gideon pulled George into his arms, “You’ve grown up. So tall. I’ve missed so much.”

“I had to do it. You were dying.” George protested weakly. “I didn’t do it on my own. Bill, Charlie and Fred helped.”

“It was you who reached into my prison and pulled me out. You are the most like me and yet not like me. You have your father’s blood. I heard you are inventors.”

“We want to open our own joke shop.” Fred said excitedly, hoping Gideon would approve.

“Tell me about it.” Gideon wanted nothing more then to know everything about his sons…

Fred wracked his brain for a good description, “Honeydukes meets Zonko’s. You should see some of our products. We’ve got Canary Creams. Eat one and it turns you into a giant Canary for five minutes of feathered fun.”

“The Skiving Snackboxes. Still working out the final touches. Sweets that make you too ill to attend class but after leaving, you take its counter sweet. They give you nosebleeds, headaches, and nausea.
We’ve got a potion that lets you breathe under water for about ninety minutes. We wanted to play tag with the Giant Squid. We’re working on weather in a bottle- like snowstorms, tornadoes, and thunderstorms. Portable swamps, Ton-Tongue toffees. Don’t work on Muggles well. They are only supposed to have a limited duration.” George grinned.

“Yeah about five minutes.” Fred nodded, “they give you a tongue that’s thick like a snake. Oh and the Quills, we make dictation, spell-check and smart answer. Working on our own firecrackers, got some neat ideas. Oh I want some stones that turn into pets, I’ll call it ‘pet rock, needs no feeding or watering, just your attention. When finished, return to original form’, it’s bloody brilliant.”

Charlie laughed, “You got that from Cedric. He tried to use a Labrador to get past his dragon.” He informed his parents and grandparents.

Gideon chuckled, “You’re all brilliant. Is it true Percy, that you’re barely out of Hogwarts? A former Head Boy and currently the de-facto Head of a Ministry Department?”

Percy blushed, “I’m filling in for Mr. Crouch. I was graciously allowed to sit in as a Judge for him today. How did you know?”

“Your betrothed Oliver was singing your praises. I quite approve of him. He may be a Keeper, but he’s got a fine figure. Arthur used to fly but he was a Chaser like I was. Fabian was a Beater.”

Fred grinned, “George and I are Beaters. Best in School. Draco told Viktor that we could teach his teammates a thing or two.”

George flushed at the mention of Viktor.

“Who is this Viktor?” Gideon asked curious at his youngest son’s reaction.


George blushed more.
“The Viktor Krum?” Septimus asked, “You’re interested in my youngest grandson?”

“Yess. Em. Hee ess and yeet ess naut Chuvash. Like me.”

“Chuvash? That’s a Creature inheritance in the Black line.” Cedrella said in shock. “Charlie is a Chuvash.”

“Shishreyu said that Viktor’s Chuvash never rose. He can’t transform like Charlie can.” George said quietly.

“You wish to Bond with my son?” Gideon asked, still surprised that an international Quidditch star was interested in his baby. Well, George wasn’t so little and he’d missed out on most of their lives. To have three sons with lovers when he met them for the first time and who were interesting in Bonding was hard to take. He’d lost so much…

“Yees. Eef my parents have no objection. Otec and Maht should like him.”

George whispered, “I promise I’ll get all my NEWTS. I’ll even retake my OWLS. I didn’t care to pass all of them before.” He’d hate to embarrass Viktor because of his marks.

Fred stood up, taking Angelina forward, “This is Angelina Johnson. She’s a prefect and Gryffindor’s Quidditch Captain.”

“I fly Chaser as well.” Angelina said nervously.

“If Fred likes you well enough, I don’t see why you wouldn’t do well for him.”

“Fred’s been studying and we’ve been tutoring a Snake named Greg Goyle.” George added.

“Greg’s a decent bloke but he’s got terrible taste in girls. He likes Parkinson. She’s an awful person. Called poor Harry an ugly whore.” Fred added, and glanced at his grandmother who glared at him, “Was just quoting Grandmother, meant no offence.”
“What would you like us to call you sir?” Bill asked, “Dad’s always been Dad but…”

“Papa is fine.” Gideon said looking up at his oldest son, “You’re twenty-three, correct? Charlie is taller and broader but he’s twenty-one still. Percy is nineteen. Fred and George are sixteen.”

“We’ll be seventeen on April 1st.” Fred said quickly.

“You already came into your inheritance then.” Viktor asked in Parseltongue.

George blushed nodding, “but I’m not a Chuvash.”

“Not a true Chuvash but Chuvash enough to suit me and certainly gorgeous enough to attract my Chuvash. If we were both True Chuvash as is your esteemed brother Charlie,” Viktor bowed slightly, “I have no doubt my Chuvash would have chosen you. It is a rare thing to find a mate of similar age.”

“Excuse me Viktor, but only us three understand Parseltongue.” Charlie said after he translated the exchange for the rest of the family.

Septimus nodded, “If your Fathers have no objection, the House of Weasley approves.”

“In the absence of my brother, I find I am the Head of the Prewett family. It is my joyous duty that my thoughts are in accord with my father-in-law. The House of Prewett has no objections to either Bonding. I wish you joy.” Gideon said with a sad smile, his children were grown and setting out to make their own families.

Arthur hugged Gideon sensing his distress, “Beloved, I see no reason why we can’t put the past behind us. Perhaps, we can start over fresh. Recapture our youthful dreams.”

Gideon felt his eyes fill with grateful tears, children? Children this late in life was not unheard of. James Potter’s parents were older and they had James.

“Papa, a cousin of yours was born a Squib. They’ve been living in the Muggle world; he has a daughter Mafalda who is in Slytherin. She was declared a halfblood by Draco Malfoy, Prince of
Slytherin but,"

“With a Squib for a father and a Muggle mother things aren’t going well for her. I shall see if I can adopt her.” Gideon said quietly, “If Arthur has no protests.”

“None beloved.” Arthur said with a grin.

“Now that you’re had a chance to bond with your sons and meet their future Bondmates, we must discuss your sister.”

“Molly, I know what she has done. Stealing my beloved and my children, trying to live a life that should have been mine.”

“I filed charges against her on behalf of the Weasley Family. Perhaps, you would like to add charges yourself.”

Gideon closed his eyes in pain, “I should. Because of her my twin is dead. My health slowly began to fail after the loss of my twin and prolonged separation from my beloved. Until I woke this afternoon in Arthur’s arms, I hadn’t seen him since you were conceived, Fred and George. If not for our soulbond, they might have killed me. Molly hated me. Fabian used to dote on her as did fatherm but she had always been cold to me. Perhaps she sensed that unlike Fabian and Father, I was drawn to men, particularly Arthur. I wanted to be a healer; I studied hard and was accepted to St. Mungos prior to my graduation from Hogwarts. I took and passed their entrance test even before sitting for my NEWTS. Like Percy and Bill I had Twelve NEWTS. Fabian contented himself with eight. He was keen to be an Auror. We were considered at war, despite being physical copies, you could find no brothers so dissimilar as Fabian and I. He was a Beater, while I was a Chaser. I wanted to Heal, he wanted to chase criminals. I was too weak to fight Dolohov; but he fought to protect both of us. When he saw Moody, he thought we were saved. Dolohov cast a curse at us and Fabian took the brunt of it. I was weakened from imprisonment and separation from my beloved and our children. Moody transfigured a Death Eater to look like me. He hid me under an invisibility cloak and summoned the Ministry. Dumbledore had sent Moody to retrieve me. He allowed my brother to be killed and kidnapped me. For that, I shall never forgive him. I shall disown Molly and her children. Her rights as a pureblood heiress shall revert to Mafalda.”

“The Goblins want her,” Septimus said quietly, “for accessing vaults not her own as well as other crimes.”

“Let them have her.” Gideon said bitterly, “She has dragged our family’s honour through the dirt. If it weren’t for her desire to take my place, Fabian might still be alive.”
Fred and George had been together for their entire lives, to suddenly, violently lose their twin would no doubt leave them feeling empty or at least half gone.

Viktor bowed, “Vith yoor permission sirs, might I take George home for zee weekend? I vould like fur heem to meet my parents.”

Gideon nodded, “If it is his wish.”

Arthur added his agreement, happy to have his family together. He would have to help Gideon heal emotionally from the loss of his twin and theft of his children as well as missing out on their children’s childhood and adolescence. They might do with a few sessions with Percy’s Mind Healer Ted Tonks.

“We should return to school, Angelina has rounds.” Fred said quickly.

“I’ll take them.” Charlie nodded, “I have to see to the Dragons. They’ll be returning to Romania this weekend. I’ll be returning to indefinite leave. Best thing about having a Chuvash boss, family is highly important to him.”

“You are more then welcome here, Charles.” Cedrella said hugging him impulsively, “It is your home too.”

“If Molly is imprisoned and her children disowned. What will be done with Ronald and Ginerva?” Arthur asked.

“Their father should be searched out and given custody,” Septimus interjected. “They were falsely claimed as Weasleys by a Prewett. I doubt Molly will without Veritaserum divulge their father.”

“I'll leave that to you sir. I'll have nothing to do with my sister.” Gideon said.

“I’ll be announcing to the papers your return. Perhaps, we can invite Ms. Skeeter to interview you. She’ll put a wonderful spin on the story that will have romantics crying and people railing at the Ministry to have Molly punished.” Septimus smirked; he would enjoy ruining the woman who had so tortured his son.
Chapter End Notes

Chapter 23B

Dora had delivered her prisoner Bartimus Crouch Jr. to the Ministry cells and went to return to Hogwarts after returning home for her Auror’s robes and her father.

She still knew her way to the Defense classroom but had to use a point me spell to find the professor’s apartments.

She opened the door and found Severus had spun around and had a wand at her throat. “I’ll overlook that.”

“My apologies Dora.” Severus bowed his head regally, “Can’t be too careful now. Especially with you know who on the warpath.”

“How is Moody?” Dora asked.

“He has pneumonia. Most likely wouldn’t have lasted too much longer in that dreary pit.” Smythe replied. “He has an infection where his magical eye was supposed to be. Have to treat that before he can have it back. He is truly muttering things about blood on his hands. He shows signs of being cast into magical sleep as well as being under the imperious but that isn’t really my field. I leave mental magic up to my esteemed colleague. I’m leaving instructions for potent potions to fight his infections. I do hope the Ministry sees fit to give them to him. I can’t guarantee without treatment from both myself and Tonks that he will be well enough to answer questions. In particular his second potion will if veritaserum is taken while he is using that potion will turn the truth potion into a deadly poison. I hope your supervisors heed my warnings.” The Healer left after handing Severus the prescription.

McGonagall was sobbing, holding Moody’s dirty shaggy grey head in her lap. It was more emotion then Dora had ever seen her express.

Moody looked less imposing then she remembered, he was unconscious and missing his wooden leg and magical blue eye. In short, he looked vulnerable.
Ted stepped forward, casting a variety of spells. “He’s been subjected to mental magic over a long period not just recently, decades. He has many memory blocks that are disintegrating. True the caster was talented but too many can destroy a great mind. I doubt he will end up in Azkaban no matter his crimes. He will probably end up in the Janus Thickey ward in St. Mungos.”

McGonagall sobbed harder, “Who could have done this? He was a great Auror, devoted to tracking down Dark Wizards…murdering innocents…he would never…could never…”

“The strength of his mind and conscience would have no bearing if the caster was stronger.” Ted tried to soothe her, “It might not be his fault but that is up to the Aurors or the Council of Magical Law to decide.”

“Dad, in his condition would it be safe to imprison him at the Ministry?” Dora was curious.

“The cells are too drafty and it would make his pneumonia worse I think. Perhaps, the Janus Thickey ward would be prudent. He would have the best care there for both mental and physical maladies.” Ted said shaking his head.

“We should take him there then. I’ll inform Scrimgour. He won’t be pleased but having Moody die in a Ministry cell would be embarrassing. I’ll insist on having Auror guards to appease him. It was lucky I was there to take Crouch into custody. There will be an investigation as to how he managed to escape Azkaban.” Dora said smirking.

“Most fortunate.” Lucius chuckled from his place guarding the door after arriving with Healer Smythe. “How shall you be transporting Moody?”

“Perhaps, through his floo. It would be faster.” Though not a big man, Ted could carry most patients without lightening charms. “Deputy Headmistress is welcome,”

McGonagall pulled out a handkerchief and wiped her tears, “Minerva, please. We may not be Bonded anymore but he is still important to me.”

Lucius was perversely pleased, Deputy Headmistress she maybe but having a former Bondmate who would no doubt prove to be a pawn of Dumbledore who probably helped kidnap Gideon once and many other crimes yet to come to light. Her candidacy for Headmistress would be badly damaged by her association with Moody. His Severus had a better chance now. Lucius wasn’t sure after
removing Dumbledore that Severus would immediately be a viable choice. However, Professor Flitwick who he remembered from his days as a student might not be a poor choice. He was honourable and had always looked out for his students. Though they would need to hire a replacement Defense Professor now that a fake Moody was unmasked and the real one would be incapable of fulfilling that task for a number of reasons. McGonagall might prove to be taking some time off because of Moody’s illness. If he could spare Dora he would have her take over the Defense post but he needed her to investigate Dumbledore especially now that his character was taking a Darker turn.

Severus glanced at Lucius, “We’ll be needing a Professor to teach the Dark Arts. I’ve wanted that Position for a long time but I don’t think now would be wise. Perhaps, you could convince the Governors to accept Remus? He is probably bored hiding out in my rooms all day. Perhaps, you could fill in on days he should stay in bed?”

Lucius chuckled, “I see we think alike. I shall do my best to see that his position as Professor of the Defense Against the Dark Arts in reinstated. He left abruptly last year. I’ll inform the parents that he is not a werewolf and that it was all a misunderstanding. After all the seer said it was reversible.”

Severus was pleased that Lucius agreed, “I’ll go tell Remus. I’m sure he’ll be excited.” He swooped out of the room.

Lucius approached McGonagall, “Would you like Moody’s things packed up at taken to your rooms? You can ensure they are not meddled with that way.” Despite her blind following of Dumbledore, Minerva McGonagall was a very intelligent and powerful witch.

“Yes, thank you Lord Malfoy.” She seemed surprised.

“Rumours of my bad character have been greatly exaggerated. You are in for a difficult time. I will render whatever assistance I can.”

McGonagall nodded looking at Moody sadly, “For all his faults, he was a great man.”

“If no one else will remember that about him, you should. In the end it is you who once knew him best.” Lucius said gently, amazed at how seeing how distressed she was could change his opinion of her from early Monday morning. He had thought her foolish and insufferable.

Ted picked up Moody, “Come now ladies. We should take him to St. Mungos. Dora if you would
retrieve his leg and eye.”

Dora did but not without feeling a bit squamish.

Lucius watched until they entered the floo, summoning two of his house elves he set them to packing up Moody’s things, ordering them not to repair anything including the Sneakascopes but to makes sure both the Defense Professor’s apartments and office were cleaned but not to let the Hogwarts elves touch a thing. Moody’s things were to be taken to the Deputy Headmistress’ apartments and sealed until her return.

The elves bowed several times promising to do as instructed.

XooooooX

Severus burst into his rooms where Remus was eating dinner alone, “Remus! With Moody gone there is an opening on the staff!”

Remus nodded, “So when is Tonks starting?”

Severus snickered, “Not Tonks you dunderhead! YOU!”

Remus blinked, “I thought you wanted the job?”

“And miss out on tormenting Ron at his worst subject? Deflating Granger’s ego? Melding Harry in and my snakes into eminent potioners? Never. Besides, you are eminently qualified. I’ve always been too interesting in grey magic and some Dark Spells to be extremely confident in my ability to teach Defense. Lucius is going to hire you; he’ll be informing everyone that you resigned because you were taken ill. Your Werewolf status will be swept under the rug. I’ll gladly brew your potion and Lucius will fill in on days you are ill.”

“What about Ron and Granger? They’ve seen me transform.” Remus said a bit worried.

“Ron’s word will be taken as that of a insufferable git, they’ll think he’s mad. Besides, who would believe that Lucius would hire a werewolf anyway?”
“Does that mean I have to move out of these rooms and into my old apartment?” Remus was a bit wary of that.

Severus stared, “You think I want you to move out?” he grabbed Remus by his robes and kissed him hard.

The older man shocked Remus with such forward behaviour, but his wolf groaned in contentment. He pulled Severus into his lap and kissed him back eagerly.

They didn’t stop kissing until a clearing throat interrupted them.

Severus turned red.

Remus looked up to find a jealous Lucius.

“By all means, ignore me.” Lucius said trying to hold back his desire to rip HIS Severus out of Remus’ lap.

Severus said quietly, “I’m sorry Lucius. I couldn’t help it. I desire him too but I’m still yours. We’ve only snogged this once.”

Lucius sighed, “I should have expected this. You were so excited to tell him about the job. Some of the students thought you’d lost your mind. You were grinning…”

Severus left Remus and leaned up to kiss Lucius, “You know I love you.”

Lucius kissed those swollen lips eagerly, “I do,”

Remus caught a glimpse of their Dark Marks, “Um…did you notice? It’s been getting darker? I don’t remember it looking like that last year.”
Severus swallowed, “I’d tried not to notice. Karkaroff has been twitchy lately I know he’s nervous. I keep trying to avoid him. Especially with the Fake Moody being all nosy.”

“For Draco and Harry’s sake we’ll have to figure out how to make this work.” Remus said pleasantly.

“Perhaps, it’s time I do some investigation of my own. I might be able to find the Dark Lord and see if I can find out what he is planning.”

Severus shivered, “I won’t be there to…”

“Yes you will. We will go tomorrow. Remus can watch the boys. It’s a Hogsmeade weekend. I’m sure Draco would want to take Harry on a Proper date. There is that new restaurant in Hogsmeade. He is welcome to choose elsewhere if you escort him.”

Remus was not pleased that Severus was going ‘Dark Lord hunting’ with Lucius but they were adults. “I’ll watch over Harry and Draco. I expect you to bring Severus back in one piece. I may not be his legal Bondmate but I will be very upset if he is injured in anyway.”

Lucius would have verbally attacked Remus for implying that he would let Severus come to any harm.

“I think we both have had quite enough excitement for today. I think we should have a nice quiet meal, I’ll check on the House and then we are going to bed.” Severus said firmly, his hand gripping Lucius’ forearm

Lucius sighed, he knew better then to argue when Severus used that tone. He summoned Treca, “Dinner for two.” since Remus had already been brought a tray.

They ate quietly after dinner was brought and little was said until Severus left to do his nightly check on his House.

XoooooX
Draco had led his group down to the dungeons and then up for dinner. Viktor hadn’t returned by dinner and neither had Angelina or Fred and George.

Harry waved at someone, “Fred’s back with Angelina but I don’t see George.”

Blaise spotted Charlie; he hurried over to the three, “Please come eat with us?” he was hungry to spend more time in Charlie’s company. He was in the space of a few days becoming quite attached.

“Are you sure it’s okay?” Angelina asked, “I am a Gryffindor Prefect.”

“You’re Fred’s girl. He’s one of Harry’s protectors. Besides, he has to introduce you two to Sophronia.” Blaise said reaching out to touch Charlie’s forearm.

Fred blinked, “Sophronia?”

Blaise laughed, “You know, Mal? The Chuvash King renamed her.”

“I have yet to meet this new cousin.” Charlie said giving in to Blaise’s invitation. “Besides, I should pass on the good news.”

Blaise gently tugged Charlie by the arm and thus leading Fred and Angelina over to Slytherin’s table.

Draco raised an eyebrow but gestured for them to sit. He worried about Blaise, his old friend seemed quite smitten with George’s older brother and he worried Blaise would be disappointed.

Neville had been a bit shy since his outburst and had taken to watching Adrian who seemed most uncomfortable at Draco’s gradual deference and acceptance of the Chuvash King’s decree. Why had he stopped when Adrian told him to? He’d never really spoken to the Slytherin Chaser and Prefect before…

Adrian tried not to notice the young cute Gryffindor’s stare much less the rest of his House.

Mafalda asked quietly, “What did HE mean by saying that I am a Daughter of the House of
Draco smiled at her, “He is the true Lord of the House of Black, and you have both Black and Prewett blood in your veins. You are the only woman of Black blood in our House. By his decree you are Queen of Slytherin, you outrank every girl in our House including the Prefects. You also technically outrank me. For example you have the right to disagree with me. Only Adrian outranks us both.”

Greg moaned, “That means I have to re-memorize our House March to meals!”

The House laughed.

“A House that prides itself on tradition should graciously accept the change. Daughters of the House of Black have always had the highest status.” Draco acknowledged. “As for Adrian, according to the Chuvash King, specific blood runs through his veins. Only the blood of one can raise him to the highest rank our House can grant.”

Every Slytherin bowed their head in reverence.

Harry didn’t understand.

Blaise leaned over to hiss. “He’s a descendant of Slytherin to be sure. Only that Blood outranks Malfoy and Black.”

Harry nodded in thanks.

“You expect me to believe that daughter of a Squib is my Queen?” Pansy sneered.

The House gasped at her brazen disrespect.

“The true Head of her Family has granted her that place.” Draco said scornfully.

“Sophronia has been accepted by my papa, Lord Prewett as a member of his House and she shall be
Blood Adopted and made an heiress by the New Year. I won’t have you disrespecting my sister.” Fred glared.

“I’m not afraid of you bloodtraitor” Pansy glared back.

“I am no bloodtraitor. The Bloodtraitor is that useless scum who dare call himself my brother.” Fred snapped.

“I declare the sons of Gideon Prewett, Lord of the House of Prewett and Arthur Weasley, firstborn of Lord Weasley to be pureblood heirs. They are NOT bloodtraitors. Watch yourself Parkinson, you are trying my patience and you are disrespecting our Queen. I am sure my Aunt Andromeda would be pleased to make your acquaintance. She was our last Queen. Had my cousin been a member of our House she no doubt would have accepted the role.”

“Andromeda Tonks was a coward and a bloodtraitor.” Pansy sneered.

“Her Bondmate is the most talented Mind Healer in Britain. His services sought from the Ministry and even among our leading families. His blood status is not an issue, if the Chuvash King accepts him as worthy of her and she is a Daughter of his House what right do you have to besmirch her reputation or his?”

Pansy’s mouth was not only turning Greg’s heart against her but it was alienating her from her House. She dared to question not only Draco’s but also Sophronia’s authority. It was so utterly unSlytherin of her, that even her dormmates were properly ashamed of her.

Draco vaguely noticed Neville’s constant glancing at Adrian and wondered what that could mean. Adrian had been claimed as a Chuvash and Neville was supposed to be one at his inheritance. Knowing Neville’s personality due to his previous attempts to bully the forgetful boy, he was sure due to his shyness he would prove to be a submissive Chuvash. Was Adrian’s Chuvash laying an early claim?

Blaise spent much of dinner doing his best to flirt with Charlie, who managed to deflect or pretend not to notice his attentions.

Draco was politely solicitous of the Durmstrang students, who looked a bit lost without their Prince Krum.
Harry had Draco’s arm wrapped around his waist, it was comforting to feel the warmth of the older boy’s body so close to his own.

Dinner was a light-hearted affair; Fred was taking great pleasure introducing Mafalda- now called Sophronia to his girlfriend and his older brother. If their papa was adopting her that made her more sister then Ginny, Mal was a more interesting person then Ginny the mouse.

After dinner, Draco waited for Adrian and Mafalda to take their new places before falling just behind them with Fred and Vince between them. Harry was at Draco’s side, Blaise was one step behind them, having invited Charlie to visit the Dungeon, the Dominant was walking beside him, unconsciously assuming the place of mate of the Prince’s second. Greg was behind them and the Seventh Year Prefects, then the rest of their year ect. The only true difference was where Mafalda Prewett and Adrian stood.

They made their way amid stares to the dungeon.

When Adrian broke formation to hide himself away in his room, Neville felt a bit lost and alone with no way to explain his feelings. He didn’t really know the Sixth Year Slytherin, but a part of him wished he did.

Adrian couldn’t avoid a feeling of incompleteness, like he’d touched something amazing briefly and then had it slip through his fingers but he was too distracted to guess what it would be. He had little idea he was related to a Founder, much less Slytherin…

Blaise made sure there was a fire in the dormitory’s hearth, escorting Charlie to a chair near it. He was proud to showcase Slytherin’s comforting charms to the person he admired. Shyly he took a place at the Dominant Chuvash’s feet after retrieving his homework and a rare book on Chuvash for Charlie.

Charlie had to admit the Slytherin Dungeons were a far warmer place then he’d thought before. A fire in a dormitory? How charming…

Blaise summoned his elf for soothing drinks.

The elf returned with Firewhiskey and a hot chocolate.
Harry was shown to Draco’s bed where they curled up to finish their homework early.

Draco had managed to break Harry’s four-year habit of putting homework off to the last second by promising sweets or other incentives to get Harry to agree and focus.

Harry was eager to finish his work so he was actually paying attention to his Potions Homework. He didn’t want to disappoint Severus who had been so kind to him in recent weeks.

Draco had the foresight to realise that with Moody gone that the position of Defense professor opened up. Although he knew Papa had wanted the job, it would be more prudent to return it to its previous occupant. He glanced at Greg, “Do your best with your Defense Homework. I’m sure the new Defense professor would be more then willing to help you with your problem.”

Greg shifted nervously, “How do you know?”

“I’m betting papa will have Remus rehired. He’s already around anyway, plus he’s got experience. I know his specialty is Charms but we do need someone and Papa is not so easily replaceable. Brewers of his talent don’t just show up more then once every generation.” Draco laughed.

Neville had the same homework as Harry but sat near Greg so he could hear Fred’s explanation of their Transfiguration assignment.

Draco chuckled, “I think you should see about dropping Divination, Trelawney is a terrible teacher. I’m focusing more on Ancient Runes; I think you’d do well in that class. Blaise does but he did have a pre-Hogwarts education.”

“I don’t really understand it and I spent half my time making up ludicrous predictions.” Harry said quietly.

“I’m sure that the Veela Queen’s seer doesn’t attend that class, but then again Trelawney might be too oblivious to recognize a true seer.” Draco shrugged, “I’m sure if we talked to Professor Vector that she would let you in. Especially if Blaise and I helped you catch up. If all else failed you could take it with the Third Years. You might not get to take your NEWTS in it but it would be far more beneficial to you then Divination.”

Neville sighed, he hated Divination but he didn’t seem to have a talent for it. Unlike Herbology…
Gran was always berating him because of his marks but he had some hope of specializing in Herbology like Professor Sprout.

Soon Homework was finished because Slytherins like Ravenclaws believed in finishing immediately and turned to more pleasant tasks.

Harry and Draco curled up behind half drawn curtains for privacy.

Draco had one arm around Harry’s waist, resting his hand on the tiny teen’s cheek and drew him into a demanding kiss.

Until Draco Harry hadn’t even known what a kiss truly was or how enjoyable it could be. Draco could make him forget everything.

Draco loved the feel of Harry’s skin beneath his hand, the softness of his lips and the warmth of his body. Draco had been restraining himself because sleeping with non-Chuvash was known to make them infertile and the last thing he wanted was to destroy Harry’s chance of having a family, just because they were supposed to be together didn’t mean they wouldn’t have challenges to face first. He would be lying to deny an urge to explore Harry’s body, to memorize every muscle, every erogenous zone and more. He felt his prick harden as he pulled Harry close.

Blaise’s ears twitched as he felt every moan escaping Harry’s lips no matter how faint. He was thankful for his dark complexion and the folds of his robe that his reaction to their endearing shy snogging session was giving him. He glanced sideways up at the Dominant Chuvash whose attentions he wished to be the recipient of but seemed to guess nothing of his desires.

Charlie did his best to ignore them; he did wish that he could find someone…he just didn’t expect to. Submissive male Chuvash were rare and he didn’t expect to find one.

Draco had managed to forget they weren’t alone; his hand crept beneath Harry’s crisp white linen dress shirt, after slowly tugging it free from the Gryffindor’s trousers. Splaying his fingers on Harry’s bare stomach, he groaned, looking down into those green eyes wide with shock and pleasure.

Harry hadn’t felt Draco’s hand on his bare skin before; after all they’d never bathed together. The touch felt branding; Draco’s hand felt like it burned where it touched him.
Blaise flew to his feet; clapping his hands, “Bath time. I’m sure Adrian’s done. We should go claim the bath.”

Blaise’s announcement startled Draco that he fell out of bed.

Charlie was surprised, “What?”

Blaise grinned at him, “You don’t think the Hogwarts Prefects’ bath was the only one of its kind here do you? Slytherin had one installed here. Of course there is a boy and girls one. Never seen the girls but I heard it is staffed by Neriads. Ours has Naiads but we can ask for Neriads.”

Vince groaned, “Can I shower? I’d prefer not to…”

Blaise chuckled, “You’re welcome to the deep end and all the Naiads you desire with Fred and Greg.”

“What are Neriads?” Harry asked after catching his breath.

“Neriads are like Naiads, unlike merfolk they are actually beautiful. They are sexually flexible. If they were human they would be considered bi-sexual. A Naiad is a female water nymph while a Neriad is a male water nymph.” Blaise explained gently. “Slytherin baths are a secret pleasure usually afforded only to the Slytherin King, Queen, Prince, Prefects and their Court. Ordinary Slytherins don’t get that kind of special treatment.” Blaise was quite eager to see Charlie naked. “We get massaged with fragrant oils and then washed before soaking in hot water that has potions that promote beautiful, healthy skin.”

“That’s why you are all so good-looking.” Fred said astonished.

“I think Pansy hoped as my consort she would be granted access to that world of pleasures. Now she never will.” Draco said reaching for his dressing gown and swiftly undressing. He slipped his feet into velvet slippers, gesturing for Harry to do the same.

Harry swiftly followed Draco’s example.
Charlie was a bit surprised at the swiftness everyone undressed.

Blaise summoned his elf and requested a dressing gown for Charlie.

Charlie attempted to protest.

Blaise grinned up at him, “You’re my guest.”

Fred summoned his own dressing gown from the Tower but it was used and frayed. He took pity on Neville and summoned the shy boy’s as well.

Draco was ashamed for his friend; the son of the Prewett Lord shouldn’t be forced to wear clothes like that.

Blaise’s elf returned quickly with a stiff and dated dressing gown but had clearly belonged to a wealthy person.

Properly attired, they made their way deeper in the Dungeon.

Blaise led the way, opening the shining polished wooden door, “Welcome to paradise.”

The room was far from empty, there were two Neriads present with the normal number of Naiads present but the two Neriads were tending to Adrian.

Neville blushed, wrapping his dressing gown tighter around him.

Draco bowed, “My apologies for disturbing you my Lord.”

“Slytherin’s Cauldron! Give it a rest Malfoy. I’m sick of that. I never asked for this blood, imagine my surprise when I woke on my sixteenth birthday to find I had inherited this? We hadn’t had a Chuvash in the Pucey line before, the portraits of my ancestors were stunned. You want to use the room’s services, I have no objections.”
“Chuvash had been considered extinct in the Weasley line. I guess I inherited mine through my grandmother Cedrella.” Charlie said politely.

Adrian’s Chuvash sensed another dominant, sized him up and decided that a fight wasn’t worth it. The other Dominant was taller, broader and seemed to have more natural strength.

Blaise cast a more experienced eye over Adrian; he’d known more Chuvash personally but never intimately. Charlie was more manly, more clearly a Dominant. His own unawakened Chuvash was more drawn to the Dragon-tamer rather then the Slytherin Chaser.

The room was hot and the air filled with incense.

Draco shook his head politely at the Naiads, "only Fred, Greg and Vince shall be using your services. If the Neriads are free, we would prefer a host of them to serve us."

One of the Naiads flirted off and soon returned with at least twenty of her male kindred.

The Neriads surrounded Draco’s companions, four to a boy.

They sensually undressed Draco, leading him to a cushioned table.

Harry followed Draco’s example and let himself be led.

The Neriads ran sensual hands over their bodies, pausing to anoint their liquid hands with oils and perfumes.

Harry moaned softly, unused to such pleasures. His skin riddled with scars was very sensitive.

Draco couldn’t help in his eyes were glued to Harry’s slight form.

Neriads had no rules about what not to touch, they used their skills to bring their clients pleasure.
Rubbing nipples in a circular pattern, their water like hands almost lapping at your skin, the sensual pressure of their hands on sensitive thighs and…

Harry and Neville having never been subject to a Neriad or Naiad’s attention or spent much time pleasuring themselves were soon fully hard and gasping.

Their reaction hadn’t been expected to be so quick.

They took to the pleasures like a bird does flight.

Blaise could hardly hold back his enjoyment; it was a sinfully enjoyable experience. He eagerly awaited the day when it was his Dominant’s hands on his body but he hoped they were rougher.

Neville and Harry came first, their cum mixing with the smell of the incense. They were carried over to the fountains where their bodies were washed with a soap-like mixture that smelt strongly of olive oil. Languidly they relaxed being carried by the Neriaeds who laid them in carved seats in what the Muggles would call a Jacuzzi.

Blaise was next, his cry escaping tightly pursed lips.

The two dominants in the room could not fail to notice something similar about the three.

Draco’s Veela though unawakened had memorized the smell and sound of Harry’s total pleasure and abandon.

Soon all of the boys had tasted the pleasure of a Neriad or a Naiad’s massage, they were bathed and washed before escorted to join Harry and Neville who were boneless.

Draco did something he’d never done before, join Harry and pull him into his lap.

At first Harry fought feeling the sensation of a manly body beneath him, his Chuvash soon recognized his mate and relaxed. His head resting on Draco’s shoulder and his back leaned against Draco’s strong chest.
The bath was small and didn’t truly allow for this number of people.

Blaise blushed and apologized as he slid into Charlie’s lap.

Charlie was stunned but did nothing to push him away.

Adrian saw nowhere to sit.

Neville swallowed, “I…can share…” his blush spread quickly from his cheeks to his toes. Why did he desire to be near the older student?

Adrian accepted not knowing quite why, lifting the other with a weak levitating charm and slipping in behind him.

Neville’s human desire to flee was calmed by a rush of contentment.

Blaise could feel Charlie’s muscles taunt beneath him, his ardour for the Dominant increasing.

So Harry’s nervousness had disappeared and he started to doze off comforted by Draco’s closeness and the relaxing experience.

Chuckling, Draco lifted him out kissing him softly, “Merlin you’re gorgeous.”

The Neriads hurried to dry them both and helped them into their dressing gowns.

Those reluctant to leave were Neville and Blaise but they had no words to explain.

Blaise had relaxed openly for probably the first time in his life.
“It’s late I should head back to the tent.” Charlie said quietly.

Blaise clutched his sleeve, “Please don’t. You can take my bed. Neville and I can sleep on the armchairs. I’ll transfigure them into daybeds Amry will bring bedding.”

“What about Fred?” Charlie asked curious.

“If it’s too late to be in the halls, he curls up on the floor by Greg’s bed. He said he was used to hard beds.” Draco replied as he dressed a sleepy Harry and put him to bed. Stripping out of his own dressing gown he slid into silk lined velvet monogrammed pyjamas.

Charlie nodded, “They’ve been treated harshly much of the time at home. Most of us were too wary of Molly’s wrath to step up for them.” He’d briefly seen Viktor with George, in person the Bulgarian Seeker had a different persona then he did during a match. He found he approved of the young man who was less then two years older then his youngest brother. He changed into clothes he summoned quietly from the tent and almost gratefully crawled into Blaise’s bed. As he drifted off he wondered why the boy seemed so eager to please him.

Fred noticed slightly and thought Charlie was oblivious, remembering Blaise’s teasing comment about choosing George as a type rather then himself because he liked girls too much. Only to have his twin reply that their tastes were probably too similar to match. Literally, they both drifted to Seekers, rather well built one’s with Chuvash blood and rather protective natures.

Theo buried himself in the covers having been mostly forgotten. Blaise was practically whoring himself for the tall muscular redhead, how could the man not notice? He worshipped Blaise, yet he’d been turned down before he could even ask properly. Blaise was so good and kind, he helped him with his schoolwork and kept other Slytherins from bullying him. He hero-worshiped the other and yet he remained invisible.

Harry snuggled sleepily into Draco’s chest unconsciously wrapping an arm around the older boy’s neck.

Draco kissed his forehead, how quickly things changed between them. They’d gone from hurling curses at one another to cuddling in a few short weeks. Until seeing beneath the illusion he’d built up of Harry Potter, he’d not believed in Love and had expected he’d find himself trapped eventually in a lonely, unhappy Bonding with Parkinson. But his last thought as he drifted off was of Harry and how much he’d fight to stay at his side.
Having left Weasley Hall, Viktor flooed holding George close to his parents' home in the forests of Bulgaria. He made his way to his father's study, finding the door closed he knocked and hissed out in Parseltongue, “Father?”

The door opened of it’s own accord, “Son?”

“Father I have come with glad tidings.”

“Enter.”

Viktor entered his fingers entwined with George; “I bring one whom shall bear your grandchild if you consent. I present George Weasley, grandson of Lord Weasley, fifth born of Lord Prewett. He has running through his veins Chuvash blood. Like me his Chuvash cannot shed it’s skin. He is a distant relation of the Chuvash King.”

A man taller then Charlie and far more imposing rose from the desk. “Let me have a look at him.”

George swallowed and felt almost naked as Viktor’s hand released his, but he stood tall and proud as if he were watching Oliver accept the Quidditch Cup finally.

“He shall do I think. He has spirit this one.” The man drawled. “Smells of Earth.”

“His eldest brother is a Gringotts Cursebreaker, unmated. The second born, a Dominant Chuvash, unmated that works for Dragomir at the Dragon Preserve in Romania. The third is the effective Head of the British Ministry’s Department of International Relations and betrothed to a Professional Quidditch Keeper. The fourth is George’s twin, they have plans to open a business together, and both being keen inventors.”

“A Submissive’s place is at home.” The man said firmly.

George was a bit angry but was careful not to show it, “If I have a Greenhouse in which to raise needed plants and a potions lab as well as the ability to fire-call my brother I don’t see how I can’t do
“What about the raising of your children?”

“Do we not use house elves to some extent? Spending too much time with a child can be a detrimental to proper development as ignoring them. My aunt exhibited both behaviours and those she spoiled are lazy, unsocial, either loudmouth bullies or dreadfully shy. I would have no problem bearing children, in fact…” George blushed, “I’ve always wanted some. I have four older brothers and a cousin who is a soon-to-be sister. I would see to their feeding and give them appropriate attention but I see no good reason why one should respond at once to every cry a baby makes. Sometimes a House elf can give appropriate care but love or affection comes from the parent. As for discipline, parental expectations should be consistent yes? Both bearer and sire in agreement most of the time at least in what discipline should be. I don’t agree to beatings, but sometimes a light smack or a slap to the bottom is needed. I don’t believe sleeping on a cold stone floor is a decent punishment.”

“I like this one, he is very family minded. He has thought out about how to raise children. He will make you a fine mate.”

Viktor grinned, reaching to squeeze George’s hand, “It was a test. You passed.”

George sighed in relief he was approved of. At least this man would not meet his purported mother; she would be embarrassing and rude. He would hate for this man to see the shack he was raised in.

Viktor’s father held out his hand, “I am Branislav Krum but more often called Branko, Viktor’s Otac. You may address me as Otac, Branko or Tast,”

Viktor whispered, “Tast is father-in-law in Croatian, his bearer’s native tongue. Otac is father.”

“In Britain it is customary to address if desired your Bondmate’s parents as mother and father. I have a dad and a papa, if it is your will I shall call you father so Otac will be alright with me.”

Branko grinned, “I like this boy, he’s very polite. I believe he’ll be a fine addition to this family.”

Viktor was more then a little pleased that his father approved of George.
“Your mother must meet him.”

Viktor was a bit worried; his mother had wanted him to a nice female Submissive. Well, he couldn’t help it if he lost his heart to his George.

Branko led the way to his wife’s conservatory, upon opening the door he called out, “Rozica, srce. Viktor is home.”

“Viktor?”

George was a bit surprised that all that was truly spoken was Parseltongue. He’d have hope he got good fast…

“Viktor! My child! You came to tell us about the First Task? What a wonderful boy! So how did you do?”

“Uncle Dragomir brought dragons.”

“Dragons? Your score was best?”

George laughed, “Of course, he flew and snuck past a Chinese Fireball.”

“You would be?” the tiny slim woman glanced at him, annoyed that this stranger was speaking out of turn.

“Mari, this is my betrothed. Otac, his grandfather and his papa already agreed. He,”

“You bring this boy to me?”

Branko glared, “Rozica!”
“What boy would be good enough for my chick?”

“He has the blood of the Chuvash King running through his veins. His Grandfather is a Lord; his sire is the firstborn of that lord while his bearer is also a lord. His brother works for Dragomir, another as a Cursebreaker and a third works in the International Relations Department at the British Ministry.

“Branko Solnyshko moyo, why do you agree to this? Why was I not good enough a submissive? If he had been born a true Dominant he would have found a nice real submissive.” Viktor’s mother moaned.

Viktor pulled George close and gave him a kiss just as intense as the one after casting the snitch.

George was shocked; he didn’t even think to fight it. His arms wound around Viktor’s neck and his knees were weak.

Viktor pressed George tight to him and felt the younger teen’s instantaneous hard-on.

Branko chuckled, “Now Rozica, if that’s not a true submissive I don’t know what is. I think this boy would let our Viktor have him right here. I don’t think he could defy his Dominant.”

George blushed but he really couldn’t break that kiss, especially not with how tightly Viktor was holding him with one hand tightly gripping his neck and the other around his waist.

Viktor broke the kiss, pressing George’s face to his shoulder, “I could do that to him but he deserves better then to have our first time anywhere but in private.”

Branko laughed, “So…he is a virgin.”

George swallowed and then nodded blushing fiercely. Fred was not, but he hadn’t slept with anyone…somehow internally he’d know he couldn’t jump into bed with just anyone. He hadn’t known until Professor Sna…Prince-Malfoy told Dumbledore that Chuvash Submissives couldn’t sleep with just anyone before mating or they’d become infertile.
“I knew he was special the moment we shared a table. I was determined to get to know him better; a Dominant needs little time to convince a submissive that they are the right fit. Less then a week and he’s my betrothed. I wasn’t going to sexually pressure him until we were, though I could have.”

Branko clapped his hands, a House elf appeared. “Our son and his betrothed will be joining us for dinner.”

“We’ll be bonded properly but by Chuvash standards when a Submissive accepts a Dominant they are a couple.” Viktor smirked, his eyes undressing the shy Gryffindor.

George swallowed, he could hardly think or breathe when Viktor looked at him like that.

They ate a rather interesting meal, with Viktor’s mother still mostly glaring at him.

After dinner Branko poured them drinks and toasted George welcoming him to the family, which his Submissive wife barely acknowledged.

Viktor kissed George’s cheek, “Thank you Otac. We appreciate your approval.”

George was a bit saddened that Viktor’s mother didn’t approve of them but at it seemed his father’s opinion was the only one that mattered. It still hurt to be disliked by a mother…

Chapter End Notes


A/N: For all my fantasyism [mpreg, magical creature inheritances ect] I do try to keep some amount of realism especially with interpersonal relationships. I try not to stereotype too much but Vince seemed to be the typical jock type so I thought making him a bit homophobic would be realistic. I like the 'I'm better than you' aura Draco gives
off but I used it to my advantage. As for Fred, he is epically straight. He loves his twin but can't really fathom how someone so like him doesn't like girls. I am still considering whether or not Fred had a Creature inheritance. He is a private person despite his troublemaker/playboy image, either is truly isn't aware of it or he is just keeping it to himself. Werewolf doesn't work, he is obviously not Chuvash, He isn't Veela or Draco would know of course.

Contrary to some readers misunderstanding not everyone in their story is gay.

Submissive males must be gay; it's part of their make-up. A Dominant isn't really gay or straight despite their own personal beliefs. Truly they are whatever sexual orientation in relation to their submissive, if they are male and their submissive is technically they are gay.

I rationalize mpreg is that it's a magical world and for whatever reason wizards can have children IF they are sexually drawn to one another. Not all Wizards get pregnant and likewise not all witches. Besides, it's not fair to make it so only one gender can bear kids. Its supposed to be more open-minded in the Magical World, it does make more sense to have them more open-minded to same-sex relationships. Especially, if you blame the Muggles for such prejudices as well as anti-nonhuman views.
Chapter 23C- Viktor claims George

Eager Viktor led George to his personal rooms in the West wing, upon his inheritance he was treated by his father as an adult despite his dubious inheritance. He lifted his submissive’s chin, “Welcome home.” Throwing open the door.

George was shy, both eager and nervous about this. He wanted to be with his boyfriend… no were they betrothed or bonded?

Viktor chuckled feeling him shiver, “You know I won’t do anything that would displease you. I want you. You’re mine.”

Weak though his Chuvash was, George felt him fighting mightily. “Yours.” They’d both been waiting for Viktor without knowing it. His wizard intelligence was fighting with his not so dormant Chuvash instincts; it was not too soon to be intimate. His Chuvash had won.

Despite wanting to lift George up and carrying him to bed, Viktor guessed that George’s pride wouldn’t be too accepting of that. After all, his Submissive was a Beater, George maybe a submissive but he was a rather strong person both in will and size. Instead he chose to lead George to their bed, slowly undressing him. This day would always be important to him, the day he scored well at the First Task and the day George was acknowledged as his.

George was so anxious to not disappoint Viktor that he was at present content to follow his Dominant’s lead.

Viktor kissed his neck, removing first his robe and then his Hogwarts uniform. He almost couldn’t breathe, his submissive was more muscular then he’d expected. He still though George was one of the most beautiful person’s he’d ever seen, beautiful of heart, spirit and face. He kissed him deeply, holding George and kissing him insistently.

George felt naked, though he still was wearing trousers, knickers, socks and shoes.

Viktor smirked, banishing their clothes to a pile and leading his mate to bed.
George was naked; he shivered looking up at his dominant. “Viktor.”

Viktor gave into his instincts and tackled George to the bed, his broom callused hands running over George’s muscular chest. Brutally laying claim to the mouth he’d barely begun to memorize.

George moaned, the touch both familiar and exotic, was playing his weak Chuvash like a harp.

Viktor growled softly, with his lack of fangs and claws prevented him from doing marking George as his own, his magic leaping at George.

A Mark resembling that of a Dominant Chuvash’s fangs appeared on George’s shoulder. It morphed into a raven clutching a robin to his chest in what looked more like passion then terror.

Viktor kissed it, “Mine!”

George had allowed the marking, his desire to belong his greatest draw.

Viktor kissed, and touched him all over. He was a bit awed that a guy who looked like this would be submissive to a guy like him. It proved you couldn’t judge by appearances…

George was slowly being overwhelmed having no sexual experience beyond kissing.

Viktor reached down to take George’s prick in his hand, pumping it.

George thrashed a bit and moaned; no one had ever touched him there but himself and this felt so different. More erotic…

For a relatively big guy, Viktor was surprised how small George’s prick was. Stroking it and listening to George’s moans of pleasure, “You like this?”

“I’m not that big sorry. Fred’s is bigger.” Fred had matured more and teased him that sex was responsible for his large endowment. Fred had a long thick cock and big heavy bollocks.
Viktor smirked, “You’re perfect.” Straddling George’s large frame, George was rather tall for a submissive being about 177 cm; he was about 183 cm, which made him still taller than George. His own endowment was longer and thicker than his mate’s; he ached to sexually claim his mate. His Chuvash instincts tempered by his Wizard conscience chose gentleness rather than a rough sensual claiming.

George could see the sheer size of Viktor’s cock, it somewhat scared him. How would that fit inside him, he wondered since in theory he knew how sex between wizards worked. He’d swiped a few books while at the book store in Diagon when no one was watching a difficult thing to do with anywhere from four to six siblings around and a mother person like Molly around.

“Relax…” Viktor said stroking him more, the bollock sask that hung between George’s thick muscular legs. It wasn’t large nor did it hang much but it pleased him. Viktor could smell both George’s arousal as well as his fertility. Both excited his Chuvash,

George arched into the touch, the callused hand cupping his bollocks and the other touching his prick so intimately. He was too close; he didn’t want to come without…he blushed, Viktor being inside him. Although he had no idea how something so large would fit. He whispered between gasped of pleasure, “Please…I…”

Viktor smirked, reaching to stroke himself, “You want this?”

George blushed, his mouth dry, “I…” he closed his eyes and turned his head away. He looked nothing like any submissive he’d seen pictures of. He was taller, more muscular and technically ‘masculine. He felt his Chuvash’s desire merged with his own, they both wanted Viktor…

Viktor knew instinctively what to do, casting spells that relaxed George and would make entering him easier.

George cried out, the gentle magic reaching deep inside him and he felt it changing him.

Viktor spread George’s legs, moving them to his shoulders and slowly thrust into his mate.

George whimpered, blushing ashamed at the weak sound, submissive he maybe but he was no weakling.
Viktor was soon buried deep inside his mate, pulling him up for a rough kiss.

George’s instincts kicked in finally, his hands clawing into Viktor’s shoulders, he hissed, “Fuck me.”

Viktor smirked, his thoughts of easing his mate into a sexual relationship forgotten.

Their first mutual sexual experience became gradually rougher as George began rocking back into his Dominant’s deep, penetrating thrusts. His hands clawing at Viktor’s shoulders, his voice choked out hisses begging for more.

Viktor was quite pleased when he watched George come twice, one within mere moments of being taken and the next was from the repeated pounding he was giving him.

Neither time George came did he require any stimulation of his prick.

The second time Viktor’s enjoyment of George’s orgasm brought on his own as his mate’s unintentional tightening as he came took him over the edge.

They lay there covered in spunk and sweat, blood dripping slowly down Viktor’s shoulders from George’s fingernails clawing them.

George was exhausted, but strangely pleased. He loved his dominant; their coming together had brought only joy to him. Lying beneath Viktor, his dominant’s prick inside him George truly felt at home as he never had before. He wished his older brothers could feel that same measure of contentment…

Viktor kissed him lightly and then went to move.

George said quietly, “Don’t...” as pathetic as it probably made him sound, he liked this feeling and Viktor moving would break their physical connection. That was the last thing he wanted…
Chapter End Notes


Sorry this didn't end up as part of Chapter 23B. It was too perfect to leave out. I hope you enjoy it. Soon there will be a part with LuciusxSeverusxRemus finally getting down to naughtiness...um major smex.
Chapter 24A- Lucius and Severus go 'Dark Lord Hunting, Draco plans a date

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Chapter 24-

Lucius woke at dawn, as much as he was not looking forward to this 'investigation'; he knew that they had to move fast before wind of the escape and subsequent arrest of Death Eater and attacker of the Longbottom couple Bartimus Crouch Jr. reached the Dark Lord. He was nervous, he wasn't all that keen on Severus joining him but he knew better then to argue with the younger wizard. His mate had taken the Dark Lord's Mark and sold his loyalty to two false masters; to suit his own ends; which were to protect Lucius himself. Severus had even played the role of double agent spying on both sides without giving himself away.

Remus who also was Severus' mate had, much to his annoyance told him that he expected Severus to return unharmed. It had rankled his Veela, the implication that he would allow Severus to come to harm. He shook Severus gently but firmly, "We must get going. We cannot waste time. The Dark Lord could move if he got wind of the fact that his servant was apprehended.

Remus woke sensing Lucius' nervousness mixed with a slight hint of fear, most likely for their mate rather then himself.

Severus woke at once, he slipped from the bed he shared with Lucius, with his Muggle boxers slung low on his hips.

Lucius and Remus both had trouble looking away.

Despite his scars and without the fire-retardant potion in his hair, Severus was actually good looking. His nose, which usually had a hooked-like appearance, was more truly rakishly set after having been broken a few times. His hair had a loose, wavy quality to it and it seemed to tease his bare shoulders.

Remus whistled, "Damn Lucius, I am quite jealous. You've seen him at his best, no wonder you fell for him."

Lucius chuckled, "I walked in on him in the shower. He had fewer scars then but he had a pure spirit that shined through."

Severus tugged on a Muggle black t-shirt and his customary black robe. "It was disconcerting to be a First Year and be ogled by the Fifth Year Prefect and Prince of Slytherin."

"Come on Sev, you enjoyed it. You were having erotic dreams of me for years." Lucius teased as he dressed.

Severus protested, blushing, "You stripped in front of me numerous times. Only you could make showering alone look quite that erotic! I was twelve and ever since he's enjoyed showing off."

Lucius kissed the top of his head being a few centimetres taller, "Like I said, he enjoyed it." Having in the course of Severus' protests dressed in more serviceable robes for travelling.

Remus laughed, "With as little of you as I've seen; Lucius, I can imagine how you might be sexually attracted. If I'd had someone doing that in the Tower I might have been tempted."
Severus grabbed his wand and pulled on a cloak, tugging the hood over his loose hair. "We're wasting Daylight."

"Keep an eye on the boys Remus." Lucius reminded the former Gryffindor before slipping out to the floo. They'd Apparate from the Manor, it would be less traceable there he hoped.

Remus watched them go, feeling a little unsettled. Tracking down a probably insane, frighteningly powerful Dark Lord was dangerous business.

XoooooX

Upon arriving at Malfoy Manor, Lucius was reminded that Narcissa was no longer in residence and had been gratefully packed off by his house elves to some residence he'd forgotten that had been part of her dowry. Her access to Malfoy and Black vaults that she had had access to during the course of their unhappy 'marriage' had been removed. Black was the name she might have returned to but between Andromeda and Remus, she was not allowed access to Harry's inheritance as Lord Black. He shook himself pacing the library, where would Barty Jr. have been held and how had he escaped?

"I remember, Dumbledore mentioned that following Barty Jr.'s imprisonment, his mother who was never well took ill. Her last wish before her death was to see her son, Dumbledore had laughed when he heard that Crouch had taken her. He hadn't thought Crouch had an emphatic bone in his body." Severus said shaking his head.

"How did Black escape?" Lucius was curious how someone could escape a fortress considered inescapable.

"His animagus form. I snuck in and hid under Harry's cloak so I overheard. His animagus form is that a large black dog that might be mistaken for Grim by a weak-minded person, he was thin enough to slip through the bars and then swam as a dog back to shore away from Azkaban." Severus shrugged. "Not how I would have done it."

Lucius was curious, "What would you have done?"

"Had you been sentenced? I plotted it all through your trial. I would kidnap that woman, placing her under the imperious Curse and convince her she was you. I'd feed her a poison that would slowly kill her and tell her that she was dying. Then I would give her a small flask filled with enough Polyjuice to keep her alive for a bit. I'd slip you a potion that would make you ill but one I had an antidote to. Then I'd give you a Polyjuice potion to make you look like that woman. I researched Dementors; they are blind and have little sense of smell. They would sense me arriving with a seriously ill person and leaving with a seriously ill person. All though the poison I would have fed that woman would have no antidote. She would have taken ill and died with in days, convinced that the Polyjuice was a medicinal potion she needed to take on the hour. My research into Polyjuice potion revealed that if you die while under the affects of the potion, you retain the form of the person you are Polyjuiced as." Severus admitted quite embarrassed.

"You would have cast an Unforgivable Curse for me?" Lucius was shocked; Severus had to his knowledge never cast one of those Curses.

Severus stared at the floor; "I knew you didn't join the ranks of the Dark Lord of your own free will. It would have been a travesty of justice to let you rot in that hellhole. My conscience would not have allowed me to leave you there. That woman was just as mad as her sister and yet she was allowed to go free. I would have sooner imprisoned her in your place…"
"As well as fed her a poison that would kill her slowly to ensure she died in my place?" Lucius was shocked at the lengths Severus would have gone to be together with him. Then he realized it, "Wasn't there a rumour that Barty Crouch Jr. took ill soon after being imprisoned? What if he was smuggled out the same way? Would his mother have begged to see him or having him secretly freed, rather then die knowing her son was imprisoned?"

Severus thought about it, "She seemed unusually attached to her son and took his imprisonment hard. She had fallen dreadfully ill following his sentence, he pleaded with her to convince his father he was innocent. Then again, Dumbledore claimed to have been behind his protests of innocence. I wonder if Crouch had been moved by her pleas to attempt a similar escape. His wife was a Hufflepuff I believe; both Bartimus Crouches' were Ravenclaws. Would explain Lord Crouch's law fixation..."

"So if he was removed from Azkaban, I remember seeing announcements in the paper that both mother and son died within days if not weeks of each other." Lucius mused. "I remember! Crouch had two seats up in the Minister's Box at the World Cup. His house elf was saving him a seat. What if it wasn't empty? She was up there before anyone else arrived and left last."

"So, he not only escaped Azkaban, Crouch was holding him prisoner in their own home?" Severus was shocked, how such a man as Crouch could have fallen.

"Who was it that disappeared? Bertha Jorkins? She used to work in his department years ago. Quite a gossip hound, Ravenclaw I think. I never remembered her memory being spotty in school. She was dedicated, going above and beyond expected of her in classes. Yet Bagman explained her absence as having poor sense of direction probably read her map wrong and ended up in Australia instead of,"

Severus interrupted, eyes widening, "Albania! That was where Quirrell found him. He was weak then, more then ghost but less than a spirit. Harry mumbled in his sleep in the Infirmary about him. That the Dark Lord possessed snakes and other creatures but they died quickly not being able to stand being possessed by a human spirit."

"Could Jorkins have accidentally run into the Dark Lord while travelling?" Lucius was a bit doubtful.

"No, but someone else could have heard and understood Harry's mutterings." Severus said as the possibilities seemed fall into place.

"Who?" Lucius was curious.

"Pettigrew. After being discovered as himself rather then Scabbers, he found himself lost. If he had wind of the Dark Lord, he might have felt he had nowhere else to turn. His family thought he was dead, his friends wanted his worthless hide brought to justice for being responsible for Potter and Lily's deaths. Even Harry was denouncing him. He kept saying he was alive, that Black was innocent. Without family or friends to turn to, and clearly afraid that loyal Death Eaters would blame him for their Lord's fall, he probably returned to the one person who might still accept his worthless carcass." Severus explained.

"Pettigrew? He would have tracked down the Dark Lord? Wasn't he that spineless coward who followed Black, Potter and Remus around like a lost puppy?" Lucius was shocked the Dark Lord had accepted such a snivelling useless individual who would betray his own friends.

"Think about it, if he retained the Dark Lord's esteem, then the angry Death Eaters couldn't touch him." Severus was surprised he hadn't consider it before. "Now, think about it. Jorkins might not likely meet the Dark Lord while travelling in Albania but a supposedly dead schoolmate alive and
well is much more likely. Pettigrew wouldn't have known about her recently developed memory issues and would have found someway to subdue her. Then he would have been forced to seek out the Dark Lord with her in tow. Now unable to decide what to do with her and knowing she had gone to work for the Ministry, he would have turned her over to the Dark Lord hoping to win favour by bring him relatively recent Ministry intelligence."

"Jorkins worked for Bagman in the Department of Magickal Sports and Games, he would have learned not only about the Quidditch World Cup but also about the Tournament. Somehow he freed Barty Jr. who was no doubt being held a prisoner in his childhood home."

"Probably under the Imperious Curse to keep him from escaping."

"Wasn't it Harry's wand used to conjure the Dark Mark?"

Severus nodded, "So I heard from Dumbledore. Harry apparently lost at some point."

"I wasn't there at the Riot, I know that Woman used my mask."

"I thought she had her own." Severus was surprised.

"She did. Somehow no one ever checked her for the Dark Mark." Lucius shrugged.

"I know you weren't at the riot because you were with me. You'd slipped away."

"At least Draco had the foresight to get to the forest. I would have hated for him to have been accused of anything."

"It was Crouch's elf found with the wand. Arthur told Dumbledore after he came to reassure him about Moody that Winky had been described as tugging and pulling against something in the forest. Ronald had mimicked the poor elf, "People is high, high in the air. Winky is getting out of the way." Severus said nodded, grateful that Draco hadn't been closer to the riot.

"What if Winky's charge was Barty Jr.? She were sitting right behind Harry, I remember thinking he was quite careless because his wand was sticking out of his pocket rather then in a holster at his side. Could Barty Jr. even under the Imperious have a clear-headed enough moment to steal a boy's wand? I doubt very much that Crouch would have left his Criminal son have a wand after his arrest. A house elf has special magic, knowing her master's son had been a Death Eater; she might have wanted to prevent him from joining his former companions thus disobeying her master by leaving their tent."

Lucius and his mate had always managed to think on similar paths.

"Of course. I remember Arthur mentioning that Crouch went back into the trees after Diggory came out with Winky who had Harry's wand. Winky must have stolen it away from him after he cast the Dark Mark into the sky. Perhaps, he found a stunned Barty Jr. and recast the Imperious on him before returning to deal with Winky. He was probably terrified his secret would have been revealed. The fact that Barty Jr. was nearly caught for casting the Dark Mark would explain his harsh treatment of his elf."

Severus smirked, "That settles it. Crouch is missing, his son is free, I mean was free. Which means someone more powerful then Crouch arrived at his home. If Jorkins discovered by accident that Barty Jr. was at his home rather then dead, to safe-guard his secret Crouch would have had to use powerful memory charms."

"Charms powerful enough to damage her memory. To extract such deeply buried memories would
be something the Dark Lord could do.” Lucius admitted, although he hadn't been close to scandal-loving Jorkins, he was sorry her path had crossed with his former master.

"Extracting those memories would have further damaged her brain leaving her in little better condition then the Longbottoms." Severus was a bit disturbed by that; mental magic should be used for healing rather then harm, a view that put him at odds with his former masters.

"To keep an eye on Crouch while his son was masquerading as Moody would probably be Pettigrew. If the Dark Lord is as weak as you say, then he can't be far from the two." Lucius was surprised, but not really that they had divined the Dark Lord's location so easily though speculation and little evidence pieced together.

"I know the way to Crouch's home. Dumbledore sent me a few times there with private messages when Crouch was Head of Magical Law Enforcement." Severus admitted ruefully.

Lucius kissed his temple, "Then I shall allow you to Apparate me then."

Severus led his Bondmate to the edge of the Manor's wards, pulled him close and Apparated him to the Crouch's home.

XoooooX

Draco woke up; his first thought was that it was a Hogsmeade Weekend. He thought how much he would enjoy taking Harry on a real date. He'd seen glimpses that though Harry had no concept of the life he'd had been destined to have as the designated Potter heir at birth. He slipped out of bed, his dressing gown leaping into his hand as he tucked the blanket around Harry. Slipping into his dressing gown and slippers, he made his way to the patch of floor that Fred was sleeping on beside Greg's bed. He knelt and poked him whispering, "Fred."

Fred woke rubbing his eyes and looking around as if he couldn't remember where he was.

"You're in the Dungeons in the Fourth Year Dormitory. I want to ask you, what would Harry like? I'm trying to come up with a 'perfect date plan'. You know him better then I having been on the Quidditch team with him for three years." Draco asked while silently conjuring a comfortable chair.

Fred sat up, wandlessly causing the fire to leap to new life, filling the room with fresh warmth.

Draco's eyes narrowed, what other blood was in the Black line? He'd never seen anything like that and Fred was no Chuvash, despite his apparent affinity with flame. Then it struck him, Fred hadn't used fire... he'd used wind. Wind was the fire's breath and he was born to fly, he soared pulling some times dangerous stunts as a Beater. "What are you? You're no Chuvash or Veela. You received a Magical Creature inheritance as well, yet you keep it well hidden. Your own twin doesn't know."

Fred scoffed, "Not like George told me either. I'm more sexually driven then he is, he is the more motherly of the two of us. Don't get me wrong, I know he's not a weakling and we're about even in strength. The only physical different is the size of our package, I'm bigger then he is."

Draco snorted, "You're also about a centimetre and a half taller. You unlike George will no doubt continue growing. You won't reach Charlie's size; he's as large as he is due to his Chuvash inheritance."

Fred sighed; he'd hoped that the size difference wouldn't be noticeable. He'd lamented the loss of his total mirror image looks with George. It was actually his inheritance that caused the change in the size of his package, not his sexual prowess and experience that he teased his twin about. George had told him shyly after hearing that sex for submissive Chuvash with non-Chuvash caused infertility, he
felt guilty. Each of his brothers because of Molly, their purported mother craved more then anything a family that was close-knit and loving, the likes of which they never truly had despite outward appearances. If George had succumbed to his jibes and slept with anyone, he would have been indirectly responsible for his twin's inability to have children. That tore at his heart, he was glad George had waited and hoped that Viktor was the right person for him. He still couldn't understand why someone like his twin could like guys and be the 'Keeper' in the relationship. If George had been more like Charlie, then perhaps he might have understood. Blaise was a bit taller and lithely muscled compared to their little Harry but he could understand Harry and Blaise being 'submissives' but not George. It proved you couldn't judge a sweet by its looks...

"Fred! Focus. I need ideas for a date with Harry. What does he like best?"

Fred sighed, "I didn't know he liked cooking until he told us after the Quidditch match at dinner. I suppose the amount of time he spent watching Molly cook, I should have guessed but George and I were usually locked in our room inventing. He loves to play Quidditch. He's received Quidditch Through the Ages for Christmas one year. He loves Chocolate. We've watched him practically orgasm over chocolate fudge, Honeydukes chocolate bars and Mu…Molly's fudge. He only really knows how to cook the Muggle way; but looking back he seemed interested in Wizarding cooking. He would probably prefer to cook for you and your future kids rather then letting the house elves do that. He has this pained look when he gets asked to clean anything, so I think he really, really hates cleaning so I doubt he'd protest much about letting elves clean."

"So something to do with Quidditch, chocolate, or cooking. I think I can work with this." He summoned his personal elf Dreca.

She appeared at once. "Yes young master?"

Draco smirked, "I would like to ask a favour of you. My consort, Harry would like it if you would allow him use of the kitchens. He would like to cook. He knows that it is something you take pride in and would hate to upset you dreadfully but wishes that you would grant him a small space to cook."

"He being a wizard...he can't use magic out of school. How he be cooking young master?" the poor elf looked perplexed.

"Harry was raised by Muggles, he doesn't know magical cooking. He'd like to learn though. Perhaps, he could show you his way and you could teach him yours. If the other elves would be agreeable of course, I'd hate to hurt his feelings. He seemed quite upset when I told him he wouldn't have to cook again, he said he enjoyed it...I'd like to see if that was true." Draco said politely.

"If young master is certain of this...we would be quite dismayed to hurt Harry Potter's feelings. He won't be freeing anymore elves?"

Draco shook his head, "He understands though he freed Dobby from his mistress' service that he might have done Dobby a disservice since he had forgotten what his people cherish most."

His elf looked satisfied, "I'll relay your request. Manor kitchen large. Perhaps, we can find a small corner to let him cook. Our Lord and Master has no objection?"

Draco shook his head, "He seemed to be indulgent that Harry wished to cook despite his terrible experience."

The poor elf was stricken, "Terrible experience?"
"You remember how terrible your former mistress treated you all especially Dobby?" Draco asked gently.

His elf nodded shivering, "Most of us tried not to be near enough to call. Perhaps was cruel to leave Dobby to serve her alone."

"Harry was treated as bad if not worse then Dobby by his relations. He was forced to cook and clean, he was beaten and starved if he failed in his tasks."

Dreca was outraged, "Harry Potter wizard sir! Wizard not supposed to be treated or punished like a House Elf. We sure be finding some place for your consort to cook. Dreca promise young Master. When Harry Potter want to cook?"

"Why not dinner? I think he'll want to think what he wants to make. I'm sure he'll rely his wishes through Dobby. He isn't as familiar with you. That would be alright, won't it?"

Dreca sighed, "Dobby not get along well with other elves since he freed. He forget his place young master. He want paying. We House Elves not need such things. He forget his honour and his duty. If his new master wishes him to relay message, we will listen. Would be okay to still make dinner? Or let Harry Potter cook all?"

Draco wasn't sure how edible Muggle cooking was and hated to hurt Harry's feelings. "Perhaps, if Harry and the elves made the same meal we could see if there is a difference in taste between magical cooking and Muggle cooking. I am sure that your recipes are far more ancient and we're accustomed to its flavours." Draco was trying to avoid hurting either's feelings.

Fred would have laughed but knew that was disrespectful. He let Draco attempt to reassure his elf who functioned as a nurse, nanny and 'man' servant to Draco throughout his life.

Dreca nodded, "I'll see that all is arranged. We wait for instructions from Harry Potter sir."

The elf vanished.

Draco smirked, "I think we'll go into Honeydukes and Zonko's, I'll let Harry choose as much candy as he wants. He's already eaten through what you bought him." Then Draco realized something, "After being conned out of your lifesaving by Bagman, you spent all you earned since September 1st on chocolate for Harry?"

Fred looked sheepish, "Yeah. It seemed the honourable thing to do after we behaved so abominably."

"How much product did you give him? It looked like a far amount. You lost a lot of money."

Fred sighed, naming a sum.

Draco's eyes widened, he hadn't realized they'd parted with so much to prove their desire to make up for their small bout of disloyalty to Harry due to shock likely. He'd known the approximately cost of the chocolate having purchased some himself or watched Vince and Greg buy vast amounts of candy and sweets. He summoned a bag from his trunk that was refilled every week by Dreca from a sum that his father left out for him. He held it out, "A sum of twenty Galleons, eighty-five Sickles and three hundred Knuts."

Fred tried to protest.

"It's not charity. I'm investing in your shop- whatever it's called. You've hired on two of my fellow
snakes and one, a companion from childhood who apart from you would have little chance of a future career. Despite your joke about hiring them to work for free you could not allow them to sell your products in Slytherin without paying them something for their efforts. Besides, this is pocket money, a weekly allowance. As the son of a Lord, if your presumed mother didn't clear out your father's vaults and spend all his inheritance, you'll receive something upon your seventeenth birthday as will George. Although, his might be sooner considering that he will most likely be legally bonded before the end of the school year. He'll probably be moving out of the Tower and into one of the apartments that Hogwarts has for Bonded couples. Not sure how Viktor's Highmaster will feel about that but I'm sure that my fathers will have little to say against it. As for your Head of House, she'll be too distracted with Moody to pay attention."

"I wondered why she was so cold. Being legally separated from your Bondmate might do it. She must have really cared about Moody. It's a bit disturbing that a person we thought was rather cool was a Death Eater and one of the creeps who attacked Neville's parents. Poor bloke, that Crouch guy must have been crazy."

Draco shrugged, "Azkaban can do that to you I've heard." Again, he was grateful his father had gotten off. Contrary to some people's opinion, his dad hadn't joined the ranks of the Death Eaters of his own free will. Unlike Severus, his papa joined to try to safe guard his dad from people like his mad ex-Aunt Bellatrix.

"So you're taking Harry to Hogsmeade to buy sweets. Then what?" Fred was a bit curious."

"I think we'll try that new restaurant Orchid. See if it's as good as its review in the Daily Prophet. About time Hogmeade had a place more high class then The Three Broomsticks, The Hogshead, Brews and Stews, Madam Puddlefoot's and the like. Harry deserves better then Three Broomsticks or Brews and Stews. He maybe a submissive but I wouldn't insult him by taking him to Madam Puddlefoot's, the place is too frilly and pink. I wouldn't be caught in a place like that."

Fred sighed, "I did make my feelings for Angelina clear by introducing her to …Papa. But I'm a bit too broke to take her anywhere since I've never really had an allowance. The only pocket money we got was whatever dad slipped us or what we made selling 'Weasleys' Wizard Wheezes'."

Draco smirked, "Well if you want to buy her something nice you have my investment. I will turn a blind eye just this once. You'll have to make sure that when you get your first allowance that you repay the amount you borrowed from my investment. Now George maybe visiting Viktor's family but Harry still needs his protectors. You're welcome to join us in Hogsmeade. I have a mind to invite our newly Appointed Queen Sophronia Prewett to join us. It might be a date for Harry and I but she can keep Greg company. It would be a step up for him to Bond to her. I quite approve of her, especially since she has none of the airs that Parkinson gave herself. It would be more of a group date and with the enemies Harry and I have incurred, going unaccompanied would be unwise. So it would be wise to go as a group. Yourself, Greg and Vince would still be responsible for making sure no one proved to be a threat to any of us."

Fred chuckled, "I can use a bit of this for something nice. It is nearly Christmas and though we're not officially betrothed, she does deserve an appropriate gift."

"You should ask her the colour of her Dress robes. After all, she will be your date I assume. Why don't you let her pick you out new dress robes? You can pay for them out of my loan. She can chose something that goes well with yours. I suspect that Viktor will not let George be seen in his secondhand wardrobe much longer. Its despicable how your so-called mother short-changed you on what should have been your birthright. As a Prewett and a Weasley, you shouldn't have had to dress
in such things. 

"I'm sure Angelina would love to pick out my dress robes. Perhaps, she'll see something she'll like herself. Where would we go shopping?"

Draco looked at Fred in shock, "Why Rue de Lion of course. Someone of your lineage shouldn't wear anything less. I believe that Andre's would do fine. They are the best."

"Expensive aren't they?" Fred was a bit distressed.

"You wouldn't want to embarrass your fathers or grandparents by looking like something the Kneazel dragged in, do you?" Draco sighed, "I don't mean to be rude but you do wish to appear equal to the beauty you'll have on your arm?"

Fred sighed, "I'll trust your judgement. I just don't want to appear ponce…"

Draco clasped his shoulder in a friendly sort of manner, "Never. I just want to make sure you do yourself, your intended and your family honour at the Yule Ball. Appearance and first impressions are important. This is the first time she'll see you in finery. She'll be prompted to imagining your Bonding Ceremony, you'll want her to imagine yourself in proper attire, do you not?"

Fred nodded, a grin stealing across his face. "Of course." It was hard to really think about himself being bonded to one girl; after all he'd made quite a name for himself as a playboy. He was the bad boy, the delinquent who most witches secretly desired. He did feel a bit bad about stealing Lee Jordan's dream girl. He hoped that he could set him up with Alicia or Katie. Katie had sadly had carried a torch for Oliver despite him being three years older then her and couldn't have been interested in her sexually if she stripped in front of him. Since his type was Percy, the poor girl would probably made him ill or at least very uncomfortable.

Draco, his mind quite made up on the subject proceeded to bully Vince and Greg out of bed. Ordering them to get dressed, he wanted them to talk Tracy and Sophronia into going on a group date with them to Hogsmeade. It would do Mafalda some good, despite being a Third Year he had yet to see her leave the castle on Hogsmeade Weekends but he'd been a bit full of himself in September and as for October, he hadn't paid much attention due to the excitement over the possibilities of Hogwarts Champion. He'd hoped for a Slytherin, preferably Adrian Pucey but he'd have settled for Warrington sadly. Normally, Hogsmeade was only every two months but this year it was monthly due to their guests. Probably, an effort to make up for the lack of quidditch...

Greg shyly slipped out to go ask someone to see if their Lady Sophronia, Queen of Slytherin was awake and if she would allow him an audience.

Vince proceeded to track down Tracy.

Fred slipped out to go ask Angelina if she'd like to go on a real date, trusting Charlie to stick around for a bit. His brother better be careful, Blaise was a decent bloke but he seemed to have set his cap after his rugged dragon tamer brother.

Draco let Harry sleep some more; he'd wake him soon. Breakfast ran from eight to ten on Saturdays and Hogsmeade weekends began at half past ten anyway. It wasn't quite a quarter to nine so Harry had time. He went to have a possibly uncomfortable talk with Theo. With Greg ignoring Parkinson in favour of the Queen of Slytherin that left poor Theo without anyone. He couldn't allow a childhood friend to look foolish by not having a date to the Yule Ball. He'd know for sometime that Theo's father was abusive, he'd covered for Theo a time or two when he'd had a rather dreadful nightmare, he'd slip his friend healing and pain potions during the summer so no one would guess.
His father had promised to do something for Theo by New Year's.

How Old Nott could choose someone like Millicent who was more Beater then lady as the future Lady Nott was ridiculous. She'd make Theo epically miserable; besides, he was suspicious that Millicent was in a relationship with Greg's older sister Giselle. It was hard to tell since they were in different years but Greg and Giselle's father was good friends with Millicent's bearer Malcolm. They had been in the same year when they were students. If Greg didn't decide to bond with Millicent, a Bonding between Giselle and Millicent might not prove a poor match. After all, if Greg stated his future intention to bond with the only daughter of Lord Prewett, Queen of Slytherin; his sister's bonding might be approved but he was thinking ahead too much. Poor Theo so abused by his father, he fell for the only person who was truly kind to him.

Draco's patience could wear thin and as much as he valued Greg's friendship after a fashion, the constant help he needed to not fail could be tiresome. Theo's need for a shoulder to cry on and potions was also rather daunting. It was Blaise who noticed his withdrawn behaviour as well as his flinching and brought it to his attention. Investigation had proved that Theo's father actually beat his son. It wasn't until this summer at the Quidditch World Cup that Draco learned to his horror that Theo had been forced to his father's bed. He hadn't had a chance until a few weeks ago to tell his dad, he hadn't tried all that hard knowing that it would be some time before Theo's dad could have access to Theo. He opened Theo's curtains, politely knocking on Theo's bedpost and calling out softly, "Theo? You up?"

He'd been neglecting his childhood playmate, he had noticed how hurt Theo had been when Blaise nonchalantly announced he wasn't attracted to any person in Slytherin House but was attracted to boys. He'd jokingly claimed that George was his type and playfully asked him to consider being his date to the Yule Ball. Although, George who was obviously smitten with Viktor had accepted the Durmstrang Champion's invitation to be his date, Blaise hadn't said anything to discourage that.

Theo sat up quickly, shaking, "I'm awake!"

Draco sighed, "It's just me, Draco. I wanted us to talk."

Theo shifted nervously, "Oh…"

Draco gestured slowly at the foot of Theo's green velvet bedspread, "May I?"

Theo nodded slowly.

Draco cast a privacy charm so they couldn't be overheard. "First off, I want to apologize for not speaking before. Like I promised, despite your objections, I spoke to my fathers; about your home life. Papa, our Head of House was quite distraught that he hadn't realized things were so bad. He had hoped that his relationship with his snakes was that of a reliable adult. It seemed he had such a father when he was young. Dad promised that he should do his best to see that your father cannot hurt you again. I know how distraught you are that Blaise can't be attracted to you as you wish. He wouldn't like me to tell you this but because he is Chuvash and most likely a submissive if he were to pursue a relationship with you, he would be sacrificing his fertility. A Chuvash submissive can never sleep with a human without becoming infertile. His mother can never have children; following the death of her Chuvash mate, she reportedly claimed she would never have another Dominant. Blaise can never have another sibling because she takes wizard Bondmates that have no Chuvash blood."

Theo was shaken to the core, not only had Draco told about his disastrous home life, he had to hear that if his beloved Blaise was his, that Blaise could never have children? He seemed to deflate… a feat that should have been near impossible for he was a tall boy.
Tall boy Theo that was but he was also weak, his spirit had been nearly broken by his abuse.

Draco sighed, "I know Millicent is not your type and with good reason. I know it hurts to see Blaise trying to get Fred and George's older brother's attention but if he has to be with a Dominant Chuvash, could we find someone who is a better person then Charlie Weasley? He is a good, kind person who seems open-minded enough to put aside every bad thing he'd heard about Slytherins and get to know us. We want our friends to have decent people to Bond with. Pansy would be terrible for anyone but maybe Marcus Flint, I wouldn't really want her for Greg. She'd make him miserable. I don't want you to go to the Ball alone. Is there anyone else you'd consider going with?"

Heart-sore, Theo shook his head.

Draco had a thought so he summoned Dobby.

Dobby sighed, "How can Dobby serve Harry Potter sir's Draco?"

Draco rolled his eyes, "Can you do me a favour? I want you to go to Ravenclaw and find my cousin. Bring her here if you can. I'd like to ask her if she would consider something."

Dobby bowed and disappeared with a pop.

Theo looked confused, "You have a cousin? I didn't know that. A Ravenclaw cousin? I thought all Malfoys were Slytherins?"

Draco laughed, "They are however, her mother was a Ravenclaw. She is a Ravenclaw like her mother and a Veela like myself."

Before he finished speaking, Dobby had returned with Luna.

Draco sighed, "You can remove the Glamour cousin. My housemate won't break a confidence."

Luna gave a musical laugh; her flightily aura and normal appearance disappeared. Her appearance from the previous day at the First Task when she spoke as the Seer of the Veela Queen and the audience with her Queen appeared in its place. She held out her hand to Theo, "Luna Athena Lovegood. My father and Draco's father are cousins; unlike Lucius, my father was not a Veela. Yet he is a pure of heart as one could be."

Theo had never seen a girl so beautiful, blushing terribly as he took her hand.

Luna's eyes closed, tears fell down her cheeks, "Oh no..." she placed her hand on Theo's chest, "I can't take the memories away but I can do this for you." Light flowed from her hand, surrounding Theo's thin form.

Draco watched his first experience with Veela healing; he knew instinctively what she was doing.

It was a full seven minutes before Luna removed her hand from Theo's chest, "I healed the damage done to your soul. As well as other injuries." Too shy to embarrass the abused boy by explaining what she healed. "Despite your memories, it is as if you've never been injured."

Theo was a softhearted person despite his terrible upbringing; he'd fallen for Luna immediately.

Luna saw that and her heart ached for him, not because she shared his love but because her existence was a lonely one. Her Mate, her other half was not born. Her magic had sacrificed that so that she could have her Seer abilities and be an awakened Veela since birth. Upon her birth, the Veela Queen had been aware of her, tracking her growing into her powers. She was nearly eight when she entered
the Queen's service, with her mother perishing soon after. To protect her, her parents had chosen to set themselves apart from their neighbours; the Diggorys and the Weasleys.

Theo asked stammering, "Would you please come to the Yule Ball with me?"

Luna locked eyes with Draco, her Veela allowing her to communicate with him telepathically. 'Do you realize what you've done? You've only managed to exchange one heartache for another. He can't have Blaise because he's clearly meant for someone else. I'm not meant for anyone.'

"Tell me where is says that!" Draco smirked at her, 'Yes you're powerful, but who says you can't have love? You both lost your mothers young. You unlike him have a father who adores you enough to keep you away from the likes of Dumbledore. I can't see you being capable of doing better then Theo. You maybe the daughter of Xenos Malfoy, now known as Xeno Lovegood but I don't see why you can't let someone take care of you. Theo wouldn't truly bother you much. He'd try to make things as pleasant as possible for you. Besides, he never has to tell you about his past. You saw it. You already know. You are incapable of judging him. You healed his soul to prevent the damage from poisoning his spirit. Not just anyone would do that for someone whose father might have murdered his mother and who is clearly insane but somehow avoided Azkaban.'

Luna had empathy for the boy but wasn't sure that would be enough, she wasn't sure her gifts would allow her to even consider it.

Draco sighed, 'Give him a chance. Go to the Yule Ball with him. Come with us and let me buy you dress robes. I'm begging you cousin. He's never dared ask anyone out. Don't turn him down. Give him a chance.'

Luna broke the mental connection, the conversation taking less time then the time of three heartbeats. She smiled, "I would love to be your date to the Yule Ball. Being a Third Year I can't attend unless I go with an older student. I find I would like to attend but I would prefer to go as I normally appear but I promise not to wear my radish earrings or Butterbeer cork necklace."

Theo smiled at the slim girl who resembled Draco so much, it was a wonder he hadn't noticed they were cousins. Luna could be his childhood playmate's little sister…

Luna glanced at Draco, "So cousin, when are we going shopping? I expect you'll pick me out a flattering dress robe."

Draco laughed, "I'm treating you and Sophronia as well. I can't have her look less then her status at the Yule Ball. She is a cousin of a sort being a Black. You are a Malfoy cousin; if you are going with my friends, you must go with as much style as you can. I offer you the finest Dress robes at Celestine's to choose from."

Luna blushed, "Cousin you do know how to spoil a girl."

Draco laughed, "You're going with us on a group date. We're leaving at a quarter to eleven to head into Hogsmeade. I want to purchase Harry chocolate."

"A gift he will no doubt appreciate." Luna teased, summoning her own house elf, "Cici, I would like to return to Ravenclaw Tower. I'll see you. I may choose a different Glamour. Luna would be too recognizable. I think 'Thena would be an appropriate pseudonym. Look for a girl with strawberry blonde hair and silver eyes wearing a blue Ravenclaw muffler and silver gloves. Although I do like my ice blonde, I would hate to draw Dumbledore's attention." Luna bent to kiss Theo's cheek before her house elf disappeared with her.
Theo hugged Draco impulsively, "You're the best! I've got to get ready for my first date."

Draco waited for Theo to let go before leaving him, he was glad his vague impression that Theo wasn't really bent but flexible had been rather astute. His dormmate seemed rather attracted to his cousin, while not having a destined mate didn't mean she couldn't find happiness. He only hoped his nudge wouldn't bring them both heartache. At least Luna had seen fit to heal the damage to Theo's soul, Draco had planned to do that himself but he wouldn't come into his Inheritance for two summers. His plan for the day falling into place he was about to wake Harry when he spotted Blaise, with the sheer size of the group he suspected he'd need more then one chaperone, his father would no doubt be busy doing things he didn't want to know about. He turned to wake Charlie instead, Blaise better be grateful for this. He knocked on Blaise's bedpost, "Charlie?"

Charlie woke groggily, "Yeah?"

"It's Draco, I was hoping to ask you a favour."

Charlie opened the Slytherin green bed curtain, "Sure, I can at least listen."

"Well, I'm putting together a group date since it's not safe for Harry or I to go alone. Fred has gone to invite Angelina to join us. I thought you'd want to keep an eye on him considering he's still under the authority of your House despite being of age. Especially, since I'll be talking Remus into letting us out of the country. I'm sure your fathers won't be too upset if you accompanied us." Draco was discussing it as a favour but all the while 'shaming' Charlie to accept.

Charlie didn't realize he was being manipulated to chaperone, he'd guessed something of Fred's sexual exploits and despite his apparent new leaf, he wasn't sure he trusted Fred in Paris, the City of Love with a clearly besotted Angelina Johnson. As long as he'd known her, she'd been sweet on his brother. Although he was glad Fred had woken up and decided to be a man by admitting his feelings and intentions. "I suppose I can. I'll dress and go speak the Head of the Preserve. He'll understand wishing to keep an eye on an underage brother. I've told him that my father is unwell and being Chuvash, family is quite important to him. I will also retrieve appropriate garments from my bag in the tent."

Draco could hardly believe how easy it was to convince Charlie to join them, "I shall let you dress. I must inform Blaise, he'll be accompanying us. His usual role as second will be revised, he'll join us a guard since your younger brother is away." Actually, he'd be on a date with Charlie not that the rather oblivious Chuvash would know.

Charlie nodded, "When will you be leaving?"

"We'll be meeting Theo and Fred's dates prior to a quarter to eleven." Draco politely told the Dominant Chuvash.

"Very well. I shall meet you about that time in the Entrance Hall."

Draco withdrew to conspire with Blaise, who would not doubt wish to dress in his most flattering clothes to entice Charlie. As he approached the fire, his eyes fell on shy Neville Longbottom who was also Charlie's second cousin as was Sophronia. Perhaps, it wouldn't do to leave him behind since aside from Harry, he seemed friendless. Adrian would most likely prefer to leave Hogwarts and avoid most people due to the House's reaction to his new status. It wasn't every day that a King of Slytherin was revealed much less by a personage such as the King of the Chuvash. It would be like revealing to the Ravenclaw Tower that someone of Rowena's blood was present. Draco smirked, shaking Neville awake.
Neville woke at once and found himself in the now familiar Fourth Year Slytherin dorm, "Oh hi Draco." It was shocking how since Harry's return to Hogwarts, his former tormentor had become almost a protector and perhaps, an almost friend.

"I was wondering if you would do me a favour. It would be most rude of me to personally interrupt the King of Slytherin's rest but perhaps you would do me the service of delivering a message?" Draco asked, certain the boy who was unusually drawn to Adrian would jump at the opportunity.

Neville blushed and sputtered, "You...want me...to...deliver a message to your King?" he was pleased that he would be trusted. He was after all a Lion, a rival...

"A few of us are planning to head into Hogsmeade together and later do some shopping in Paris. Perhaps, if he had no plans he might consider joining us. If you would like to join us, I have no problem with it." Knowing Neville would no doubt agree at once, "If you are worried about your Gran disapproving, I'm sure she wouldn't. Considering that your cousin Charlie is chaperoning. His Grandmother and your great grandmother were sisters and the Longbottoms and the Weasleys have been friends time out of mind."

Neville jumped out of bed, hurrying to dress, "I'll tell him."

He was not the chubby, round-faced boy with two left feet that he'd been in first year when Draco had been young and immature so he'd enjoyed tormenting him. He'd grown some, gaining some muscle from trudging all over the castle and helping out Professor Sprout often. He'd grown into his looks and was almost cute but not in the same manner as his Harry. Draco turned to wake Blaise, since Charlie had left. Only Blaise and Harry were still sleeping. Theo was dressing for his date with Luna, while Fred, Greg and Vince were trying to convince their girls to go on a date with them.

Blaise was soon sleepily glancing around because he was in an unfamiliar bed.

"You gave your desired Dominant your bed." Draco said quickly, leaning close hoping Neville wouldn't hear. Not considering of course that Neville was distracted, Adrian was rather good looking and had Draco been more interested in the Keeper role he couldn't do worse then Adrian Pucey as his Chaser.

Blaise saw his curtains open and the bed empty, he moaned in dismay.

Draco tugged him to his feet, "I have no time for such behaviour. I have some matter of importance I wish to discuss with my second."

The seemingly harsh rebuke did its job and Blaise reluctantly composed himself, "My apologies my Prince."

Draco snorted, "I need a few minutes conference before I wake my consort who is still, thank Salazar sleeping soundly."

Blaise followed Draco towards his own bed, he sat cross-legged clutching a pillow to his chest and breathing in the scent the Dominant Chuvash had left behind.

"Oh please pay attention." Draco groaned, "Or I shall be quite annoyed."

Blaise pouted, "Oh very well. Speak."

Draco restrained himself from rolling his eyes; "I've decided to take Harry out on a date. Circumstances being what they are, we can't go on a date by ourselves. I would be remiss as your Prince and your friend to not notice how unusually attached you have become to Charlie Weasley. 
Although he seems to not notice or merely humours you, yet he seems unable to deny you much. I asked him since Fred is accompanying us first to Hogsmeade and then to Paris if he might consent to join us as a second chaperone. He agreed. I gave him the impression,”

Blaise's cry of joy interrupted Draco but he felt no shame. Paris? With Charlie? He owed Draco greatly. "My apologies, the thought of Paris with Charlie excites me."

"I can tell," Draco said dryly. "Perhaps, you ought to have Amry take you home and dress you appropriately for your date. Although he is unaware that he will prove to be your companion for the day. Do not monopolize his attentions. You are both coming as guards of sorts."

Blaise hugged him impulsively, "You're the bestest friend I've every had. I love you like a brother." He'd never had a brother but he hoped that if he had they would have been very much like Draco."

"Now go! You Keepers take forever to get ready!" Draco teased leaving his second to summon his House Elf as he headed to wake Harry. He sat beside his mate, kicking off his slippers and running the pad of his thumb over Harry's face, tracing the curve of his jaw and the adorable Cupid's bow lips. "Wake up love."

Harry woke losing himself in those silver eyes, "Dray?" he said sleepily.

Draco leaned over to kiss him, "Morning. It's a Hogsmeade Weekend. I thought perhaps, you'd like to go a date. I can't promise something small an intimate, considering our enemies so I invited our friends and their dates. I hope you don't mind. I decided our first stop would be Honeydukes and all the chocolate you want. Perhaps, Zonko's in cause you want some things there."

Harry wrapped his arms around Draco's neck and kissed him, clearly excited, "Date? You want to take me on a date? Honeydukes? Chocolate?" he didn't care what else Draco had planned, he was buying him chocolate! Yet another reason to love Draco! Having never been allowed sweets at the Dursleys, he'd fallen in love with Fortescue ice cream and Wizarding candy thinking it all quite exotic. The only sweets he remembered prior to his Eleventh birthday was the Knickerbocker Glory that Dudley once ordered but hadn't come with enough ice cream so Aunt Petunia ordered him another and let Harry have the unwanted Knickerbocker Glory.

Draco kissed him back, "We're also going shopping in Paris. I thought we might find a nice set of complimentary dress robes."

"Oh!" Harry said with a start, "I already have some. Mrs. Weas… I mean Ms. Prewett picked me up some while we were off at the World Cup. They're bottle green…"

Draco said haughtily, "I'm sure they wouldn't be as appropriate as the one's we'll find for you. I don't need another pair but choosing robes that would compliment my own, I will pick out for you I am sure that Remus wouldn't object. After all, he'd want to do his duty as guardian and pick up a robe for you. We might have to make a stop at Gringotts anyway. I'll want to withdraw money from my personal vault. Until you're of age, Remus is supposed to agree to money withdrawals unless he arranges for you have a single vault available for you like father has with me. I don't often need money from my vault but shopping in Paris would count as one."

Harry snuggled, a date? With the most handsome, richest boy in Hogwarts? How did he get so lucky? His mother must be looking out for him, surely she'd approve of the real Draco. After all Severus her best friend was his papa and they'd been good friends. No doubt she'd have liked that her son and his would become mates. He doubted his father would be pleased and neither would his godfather but being with Draco kept away the nightmares. Draco had ended the curse that brought on his nightmares at Hogwarts by rolling them out of bed and his mate's magic had in a fit of rage
burned the curse away.

Draco was content to hold Harry for a while; they'd get ready soon. It was just after nine now…they had a few minutes before needing to dress for the day.

Chapter End Notes

Chapter 24

Severus noticed the dark, decrepit look sneaking up on the Crouch residence as they had Apparated to the very edge of the wards. He sensed some powerful wards that would warn the inhabitants of visitors and silently weaved magic to 'remind' the wards that it remembered him and his companion. He locked down the wards to a point that it would allow none of the current inhabitants to leave peacefully. Until he released them anyone trying to leave would find themselves receiving a nasty shock for trying. He gestured for Lucius to stick close as possible as they made their way to the front entrance.

Wands leaping from their holsters to their hands.

Lucius wasn't keen on Severus' lead and gestured for him to move behind him.

Severus glared and vigorously shook his head.

Lucius sighed, gesturing that they would open the door and enter side-by side.

Severus shrugged and nodded.

The door opened slowly.

Inside the Crouch house was dusty, it remembered Severus sharply of Spinner's End.

Apparently, Crouch was worse off having freed Winky, having found his household comfort much less without her.

There was the sound of shuffling feet.

Severus thought it was familiar as he cast a notice-me-not charm.

Lucius followed suit, hiding himself.

Out of a dark dusty hallway came the familiar features of one Peter Pettigrew.

Severus' lips curled in hatred, his facial expression not unlike Sirius Black's when facing Pettigrew in Harry's memory.

Before Severus could do something he'd live to regret, Lucius absently spun a spell of his own swift creation that would prevent Pettigrew from escaping. He also cast a silent Incarcerous that would leave Pettigrew quite permanently restrained until he turned him over to Aurors.

Severus would have been furious at Lucius but he was also grateful, he hadn't quite been sure he'd be able to control himself if he truly raised his wand against the man responsible for betraying his friend Lily to her regrettable Death.

Lucius left Pettigrew tied up and stiff as a board under the full body bind curse. He reached for Severus' hand, squeezing it as they went looking for Crouch and their former lord.
They found a room whose door bore many locks though only one was in use.

Severus uses a weak spell that identified magical echoes. He mouthed the name Crouch to his Bondmate.

Lucius nodded.

Severus more in control now that Pettigrew was restrained and quite unable to escape used a rare spell to unlock the door.

They slowly entered the dark room.

Both silently lit the tips of their wands with Lumos.

Inside chained to a bed was Barty Crouch Sr. Head of the Ministry Department of Internal Relations. He was weak, ill and clearly suffering.

Lucius loosened his chains some, no keen on releasing him.

Severus conjured a cup and using a water spell filled it.

Lucius helped the man sit up.

Severus held the water to his lips, and the man drank greedily.

"Let me out. I'll reward you handsomely."

Severus shook his head, "I am sorry Crouch. I wish I could but the proper thing would be to turn you over to the Aurors. Someone must explain how your son escaped Azkaban."

"You know?" the man asked, his eyes a bit wild. He lunged for a wand.

Lucius in turn cast the Incarcerous on him. "Yes. We surmised you removed your son from Azkaban, switching him with your ill wife. You hid him here. Somehow Bertha Jorkins who worked for you a while back discovered your secret. You damaged her mind in an attempt to make her forget. You've been worried since she disappeared that someone might be able to uncover your secret. We'll only made a few guesses with the small amount of evidence we had. Pettigrew must have run into Jorkins who recognized him. He brought her to the Dark Lord who extracted both your secret as well other Ministry plans. Knowing a servant remained free enough not renounce him, he and Pettigrew showed up here. They subdued you and released your son. Hatching a plan that no doubt included Harry's name ending up in the Cup. Pettigrew stayed here to keep and eye on you and tend to the Dark Lord. Barty left late August 31st; he subdued Moody somehow leaving him alive to use his hair to the Polyjuice potion. Considering he'd made some noise he set of the dustbins to cause a greater commotion and to make Moody look as mad as ever so no one would suspect a switch had been made. He then took Moody's place as an instructor at Hogwarts. Am I right?"

Crouch looked almost murderous.

Severus nodded sadly, "You had the right idea but I'm afraid the wrong target. It is with great reluctance that we will have to have over Moody and both Bartimus Crouches for your son has already-been placed in a cell in the bowels of the Ministry. A great blow for the Wizarding World that a person such as yourself should be soon to join him."

Lucius unlocked the shackles having already used the Incarcerous to restrain Crouch and then levitated him out of the room and dumped beside Pettigrew.
Glancing at Lucius, Severus swallowed, now came the hard part: locating the Dark Lord and living to tell about it. No doubt their former master would be angry with them for not seeking him out sooner.

XoooooX

Despite her supposed vacation, Dora arrived early around nine at the Ministry, making her way to Head Auror Scrimmour's office to make a report of her arrests.

"Come in Tonks." Came the voice.

Dora had reluctantly chosen a less flamboyant appearance, copying her mother's raven tresses and her father's eyes. "Yes sir."

"I thought you were on vacation." The lion-hair man grumbled at her.

Dora resisted a smirk, "I was but when I realized that I had an escaped prisoner and a possibly kidnapped individual I was the only Auror present. I did the expedient thing I took Barty Crouch into custody. Delivering him to cells. Then I returned at once to Hogwarts where I discovered that the real Moody was being cared for by Healer Smythe and Mind Healer Tonks. It was their medical determination that Moody was quite ill and needed care. The very strong potion being used to combat his pneumonia if mixed with Veritaserum would convert to poison. He is currently in the Janus Thickey ward. I stood guard all night until Kingsley came to relieve me so I might report to you. You see sir he was under a powerful Imperious and though Crouch is not a reliable witness he claimed that Moody sometimes cried out about his hands being covered with innocent blood." she swallowed, "I know you would disapprove sir but I have under my mother's supervision been investigating how the abuse our Saviour suffered might have been overlooked. In the course of my investigation I discovered rather...unsettling things."

Scrimmour seemed torn at her admission of her investigations outside her duties as an Auror and her alluding to unsettling things. He attempted to appear bored, when he was quite interested.

"That Harry's name was indeed planted in the cup and the boy had nothing to do with it. Crouch did it while masquerading as Moody." Dora said quietly after casting spells that blindered all recording devices and spells, "Might I speak frankly sir?"

Scrimmour appraised her and then granted his consent with a nod.

Dora crossed her arms, "I need to know sire how loyal you are to Headmaster Dumbledore."

Scrimmour stared at her, "Why would that matter?"

"Because I have uncovered evidence so appalling that I can barely believe it, if Skeeter were to discover it Dumbledore's name would be mud."

Scrimmour scoffed, Skeeter was ridiculous. "How true was her article yesterday about Molly Weasley?"

"Prewett. Her Bonding to Arthur is invalid. I gave her that information. Not as myself of course but I have been quietly passing information as seemed appropriate to Auror Shacklebolt. Especially after Lord Weasley insisted that Shacklebolt investigate Ms. Prewett. I discovered what a manipulative
woman she was on Wednesday. Monday I was shocked to discover that one of her brothers Gideon was alive. He was imprisoned in his own home. He was previously held against his will to separate him from Arthur Weasley in the House that later was the home of the Potters in hiding. It was steeped in tragedy. Not only were Auror James Potter and his wife killed there so was Dumbledore's sister and mother. Fabian Prewett apparently discovered his brother's kidnapping and went to rescue him. Some time after their escape they ran into Dolohov and a duel ensued. Gideon was too weak to duel forcing Fabian to duel to protect them. Dumbledore admitted he sent Moody to retrieve Gideon and if necessary kill Fabian. Fabian saw a Fellow Order member and Auror thinking himself saved, didn't expect to be struck down by a spell when his guard was down. Dolohov escaped, Moody apparently killed one of the Death Eaters and transfigured his face to resemble Gideon's. Covering the man with his invisibility cloak he summoned Order members to remove the bodies. That is one crime Moody should be questioned eventually about."

"Moody? I know he'd a bit crazy but he's a hero to most." Scrimgour was shocked.

"Which is why at present he is being guarded because he's a former Auror. He was kidnapped and we're waiting for his health to improve so we can question him. If Moody the most cautious of us all can be kidnapped what chance to any of us have?" Dora asked almost defiantly.

"Very well. I'll leave the Dumbledore case to you. You are officially on vacation but I expect reports all the same." Scrimgour glowered.

"No problem. I would ask to be present when Molly Prewett is questioned under Veritaserum. I promise what she'll tell you will be most disturbing." Dora said drolly.

"How disturbing is this information you discovered regarding Dumbledore?" Scrimgour asked.

Dora snorted, "His father murdered at least three Muggle boys for attacking his sister who never recovered. His mother moved and hid her away. I met their cousin quite by chance, who admitted the sad tale. She believed I was a researcher working for a noted columnist who wished to write an in depth book about Dumbledore holding nothing back. I heavily implied it was Skeeter. Lord Malfoy agreed should I turn up anything interesting, that my files be given to Skeeter to write a book exposing the real Albus Dumbledore." She shivered, "I didn't expect to find a man so…evil…"

Scrimgour stared at her, "Evil?"

"He placed an orphaned wizard with Magic Hating Muggles who beat and staved him. They treated him worse then some people treat their house elves. I heard him admit it. I have the memory copied and labelled as well as memories of abuse suffered by Harry Potter at their hands. Dumbledore allowed danger to come to the students at Hogwarts. He kidnapped Gideon Prewett and ordered the death of Fabian. Assisted Molly Prewett into tricking Arthur into Bonding to her despite a soulbond to her own brother. He also attempted memory charms and Amortentia to force Arthur Weasley to fall in love with Molly Prewett rather then Gideon Prewett. Those mostly failed, Arthur couldn't sleep with her. Unknown to Arthur despite Molly's claim to be pregnant with his child it was really Gideon who was pregnant with Bill. Dumbledore with probably Poppy's help delivered Gideon's son, taking the baby boy away and pretending Molly had gone into labour. They named him William Weasley consulting neither father. When Arthur failed to sleep with Molly and get her pregnant they allowed him to see Gideon long enough to get him pregnant. The memory spells locking away the memories, Gideon carried Charlie to term and thus it happened that Molly continued filing false birth certificates listing herself as bearer when William, Charles, Percival, Frederick and George were truly the sons of Gideon Prewett rather then Molly." Dora said a bit peeved no one noticed some of the unscrupulous things Dumbledore had done.

"Anything else?"
Dora smirked, "Not only was his father a Muggle Killer, Dumbledore's first serious relationship was with the most unexpected person. I have three persons who would attest to this."

"Don't make me guess Auror Tonks." Scrimgour snarled.

"The Dark Lord Grindelwald." Dora said dramatically.

"You're…joking." Scrimgour could hardly believe his ears.

"You really believe that he would be able to waltz in and subdue him so easily?" Dora was surprised how naïve that some people could be.

"No...how did they even meet?"

Dora chuckled, "Apparently, the Dumbledores' neighbour Ms. Bagshot was his Aunt or at least some relation. She is still living and is rather sharp for her years but her housekeeping is dreadful. She has pictures of a young Albus Dumbledore with her nephew Gellert. She had such hopes for them. Had expected them to end up betrothed by the end of that summer. Unfortunately a duel occurred between Grindelwald, Albus and Aberforth. Their mad sister was dead, Albus was left nearly catatonic and Grindelwald fled. Aberforth blamed Albus for their sister's death. Their cousin believed Aberforth loved her more then was healthy. Even attacked Albus at the funeral, their sister died mere months from their mother's death. Their mother's sudden death prevented Albus from embarking on his 'Grand Tour' and left him ill-prepared to look after a crazy sister and a dim-witted brother."

"Merlin! Are you entirely sure of this Auror?"

Dora nodded, "Quite sure Head Auror. Dumbledore made rather pointed statements about various people who perished during the war. He even made threats regarding Madam Bones. He wanted her to die like the rest of her family. He was upset that her youngest brother had escaped the massacre due to his being across the pond studying. He made an odd statement about the circumstances regarding the McKinnons. He also claimed responsibility for the Longbottoms becoming a target. He hated them for not joining his precious Order and being proMinistry. He manufactured a memo that heavily implied that the Aurors had captured He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named and were holding him in secret. It felt into the expected hands and rogue…Death Eaters eliminated the Longbottoms. Although both my mother and Lord Malfoy claim that Bellatrix was mad since Hogwarts and perhaps, should have been admitted to St. Mungos rather then Hogwarts."

"Frank was attacked because of a memo Dumbledore created?" Scrimgour was furious, "Frank Longbottom was one of that last Aurors I personally mentored."

"I doubt that Dumbledore informed you of this, I will be including it in my final report but a highly illegal Dark Spell was somehow cast inside Hogwarts on Harry Potter's bed." Dora looked sheepish, "Would have told you sooner but it was late and the curse was destroyed."

"Auror!"

Dora winced, "It was the Night of Hell Curse!"

"What? That curse can't be just ended or destroyed. It must run its curse. Why curse the bed?"

Dora sighed, "I'm not as familiar with the curse, it was cast by someone quite adept at hiding their magical signature. Remus Lupin and Severus Snape discovered it. Harry Potter's mate summoned them when he was discovered to have a nightmare he couldn't be wakened from. Draco summoned his Head of House who was also his father and Harry's Guardian. They managed get to Harry after
removing the charms he had on his bed. The sheer sound of his screams woke his dormmates; Neville Longbottom likened them to his mother's. Severus discovered the curse was cast on the bed and ordered his son Draco to get Harry off the bed. The boy launched them from it. Harry woke gasping and clung to him, terrified. Draco in a quite understandable rage at the attack on his mate had a burst of magic attack the Curse and burned it. Considering that he is expected to come into his inheritance as a Veela his reaction was reasonable. The bed was undamaged. To my knowledge, Dean Thomas, Neville Longbottom, Harry Potter and Seamus Finnigan have not slept there since. Thomas has been staying in the Fifth Year Boys' Dormitory and Seamus with the Third Year Boys'. Longbottom and Potter have been staying in the Slytherin dungeons with the Fourth Year Boys."

"Longbottoms and Potters in the Slytherin Dungeons?" Scrimgour was a bit shocked that a Potter would have a Malfoy for a mate. How could a family as Dark as Malfoy have Veela blood? It made no sense.

"Perhaps, we should privately question our prisoner? I informed only you and Shacklebolt about his identity. If Severus and Remus hadn't known him I might not have realized who he was." Dora said quickly.

"How was he revealed?"

Dora laughed, "It was actually quite funny. Ron found out about the Article about his mother and made up his mind to attack Harry. Harry had a snake familiar who has the ability to make herself invisible. She is only a constrictor not poisonous at all. When Ron tried to attack Harry, she leapt at her master's attacker and subdued him. He claimed he was attacked without provocation and insisted Harry be punished. Dumbledore chose to threaten Harry with expulsion and the destruction of his familiar."

Scrimgour stared, "Harry Potter was attacked and his snake only restrained his attacker? The Headmaster wanted to expel our saviour?"

Dora nodded, "It was the second time in a week he'd attacked Harry. The previous time he'd actually assaulted him. Shishreyu, Harry's snake claimed that the boy smelled of murder, that he wished to do serious harm to her master and she couldn't let him. After severe protests Dumbledore refused to listen. A Slytherin Fourth Year stepped between Dumbledore and Harry, coolly informing him he had not authority to punish Harry or his familiar for their punishment was outside his authority."

"I'll bet he didn't like that. Cheeky brat, I'll give him guts for telling off the Headmaster too bad it's not true."

"But it was sir. If it had been Draco threatened with punishment Dumbledore couldn't punish Draco without the Consent of the Veela Queen despite him not coming into his inheritance yet She knows her children. Blaise summoned the King of his Race, the race he and Harry belong to. Who told Dumbledore where to get off and informed him he was not to harm one hair on Harry's head. The Chuvash King proceeded to bless the descendants of his brother and those who were Chuvash. First he summoned them though, all but Crouch came willingly. He noticed Crouch quickly who tried to escape, his magic informed him for it is great that Crouch was wearing a face not his own. He strengthened his summons, Crouch's Grandmother was his niece or something making him quite related. He managed to negate the effects of the Polyjuice Potion or at least reverse it. In the process Moody's wooden leg and eye fell out. He started raving, Longbottom almost attacked him after finding out he was one of those responsible for attacking his parents."

"I thought Crouch denied the attack." Scrimgour was more and more disturbed by this report.

"I overheard Dumbledore bragging about imperioing him to say that and telling his father that no one
not even his son should escape the law. Barty Jr. Crouch did in fact attack Francis and Alice Longbottom to get information regarding He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named's whereabouts. The information that the Lestranges and Crouch found was manufactured thus the Longbottoms especially Frank knew nothing." Dora hesitated to inform the Head Auror about the truth of Benjy Fenwick.

Scrimgour noticed, "What haven't you told me Auror!"

Dora winced, "Dumbledore claimed that Benjy Fenwick wasn't killed by Death Eaters. For what use or means do Death Eaters have for blowing a person to bits? He claimed that Benjy had a run in with a Muggle device that is called a land mine. He also had no clue as to the whereabouts of Caradoc Dearborn. He doubted that Death Eaters killed him and that he hadn't decided he was better off dead."

Scrimgour sighed, "So Pettigrew recipient of the Order of Merlin, Third class was really a Death Eater who betrayed the Potters. Auror Sirius Black was innocent. Fabian Prewett though killed by Dolohov Dumbledore ordered him to be killed by Auror Moody. Gideon Prewett is still alive but was imprisoned in his own home for years. Auror Arthur Weasley was separated from his mate, subjected to memory charms, Amortentia and his children were stolen from Gideon Prewett. A Muggle bomb killed Benjy Fenwick. The McKinnons and most of the Bones were killed possibly on Dumbledore's orders despite testimony that Death Eater Travers was there."

"I'm a bit concerned Head Auror. What if the Mass Muggle Killings weren't actually done by Death Eaters? What if Dumbledore was behind them somehow?"

Scrimgour paled, "That would make him the greatest mass murderer Britain has ever known."

"I have testimony that he aborted two infants without consent of the bearers or the sires. One was accompanied by a mindrape locking away all memories concerning the baby's sire and he was instructed while under the Imperious that he was to pursue a relationship with a pureblood heiress. The other abortion was accomplished by casting a spell that is illegal and only casted by skilled healers and with Ministry permission."

"Why would an abortion spell be illegal?"

Dora stared at Scrimgour, "When it rendered the victim infertile. The victim was young and scared a Fourth or Fifth Year at the time. The baby's sire was trying to convince his father to allow them to Bond and had no idea he was expecting or that his mate was ill. He kept that secret for nearly twenty years, a source of shame. He'd been forced to agree, he was a half-blood with an abusive Muggle father. He was threatened with expulsion when he couldn't name the sire. Badgered and humiliated the child was taken."

Scrimgour read the terrible truth in her face, "Tell me the sire wasn't a Lord."

Dora shook her head, "Both Bearer and Sire were heirs to titles, the Bearer through a grandfather he never met and the sire through his father. They will eventually be filing a case against Dumbledore using the archaic laws. A Muggle-raised half-blood was not aware that had the sire been informed of the pregnancy that they would immediately been allowed to bond despite any other prospective betrothals. A pureblood is never born a bastard if it can be helped. If it can't the child is quickly blood adopted."

"Who were the young couple in question?" Scrimgour asked.

"Lord Malfoy was it's sire and Lord Prince-Malfoy it's bearer who has been cursed barren."
"The Second couple?"

Dora sighed, "Until the Heads of their families file a complaint I cannot divulge the information."

"We should go question our prisoner." Scrimgour couldn't handle hearing another damning thing about Dumbledore despite his distrust for him…

XooooooX

Lucius and Severus explored the Crouch home, searching out their former Master when they heard a voice quite childlike that seemed out of place.

"No! Don't! Please Professor. I promise I be stealing nothing. I promised to be good. No stealing. No scaring. No magic out of school. Don't hurt me! I do nothing bad! NO!"

Then came sobbing and shrieks of pain…

They opened the door that would probably have led to Crouch's personal apartments.

Shivering and screaming in the bed was a tiny creature, its form indistinct.

Severus used a spell of his own creation that identified the voice as belonging to their master. He looked at Lucius in the dark, shock exploding across his features.

Before they speak the speaker woke, shaking, whispering, "Who is there?"

There was a slight hissing.

Severus understood but cast his created spell, "Compredis Serpentus."

There came a childlike voice, "Have you come to hurt me?"

Lucius was struck silent.

Sighing in his own head, Severus spoke gently, "We came seeking our Master. We stumbled upon a faithful servant at Hogwarts as he was revealed to be in your service."

"Oh…the servant imprisoned here. The scary one sent him. He's angry."

Lucius mouthed in shock, 'the scary one?'

Severus chose to ignore him, "We've come to see if we can serve our master is a small way. Perhaps, we can serve better then a mad servant who broke the ways of the Dark Lord and someone who dared betray his friends."

"I don't want servants."

Lucius spoke slowly, "Our Lord once called us family."

"My only family…for I can never have a family." The voice said breaking into sobs.

Severus moved closer, his wand returning to his holster, "I mean no harm. Tell me who hurt you."

"I was told never to tell but what can he do to me now? I am ruined…ugly…I lost everything…" the voice cried.
"Tell me, I'll find a way to protect you."

"No one can protect me! He…everyone thinks he's some great Messiah! He Defeated a Dark Lord."

Lucius gasped, "Dumbledore?"

The voice shook, "Don't say his name!"

Severus said quietly, "He murdered my child. My Muggle father hated me, beating and starving me. He once locked me in a closet for days."

"Then you know what it's like…to have no one to love you."

Severus nodded, "I did. My mother couldn't stand to look at me. She was once a great witch who fell. She later couldn't live with herself and killed him then took her own life."

"You lost one child. His rape took all my chance at children."

Severus whispered, "Slytherin's cauldron. You were a Chuvash Submissive?"

"I was twelve. I didn't know. I came into my inheritance at sixteen; I discovered what I was in the Library. The book said we were rare; I was slim and beautiful then. I had the described pure white scales but I was tainted. No Dominant would want a submissive that was infertile. My hatred boiled up, I tried to confront him and claim he ended an Ancient Line. He…"

The sobs stopped abruptly.

"Don't listen to Snivelling Tommy!"

The voice was louder, deeper and devoid of tears.

"Who are you?" Lucius demanded.

"Slughorn calls me Tom, I'm a prefect. I'm sixteen. So what if that thrice-accursed Professor raped me? Children were a foolish dream! Who would want some useless freak that grew up in a Muggle Orphanage during the London Blitz? I'm a thief and murderer. My hands will never be clean. He didn't rape me once he raped me many times. He liked Glamouring me so I was blonde. Never knew why. He put the Imperious on me, told me that I wanted to become a Dark Lord. That my greatest desire was to destroy him but I never could. That the only way I could be sure that I would be able to do that was to make Horcruxes he told me I was a descendant of Slytherin, I wasn't supposed to tell anyone but I did. God it was great being King, my every wish catered to. No one blinked an eye when I refused to take a consort; I ignored the Slytherin Queens and spent much time in the Bathes tended to by Neriads. I discovered quite by accident the lost Portrait of Salazar Slytherin; he knew I was his heir. He ordered me to use it to purify the school. I was told the location of the Entrance to the Chamber of Secrets. I discovered the Basilisk; it bonded to me, ignoring my tainted body. We attacked Muggleborns who sought to change us,"

The voice changed again going high-pitched, "Didn't want to kill Myrtle! She was bullied. Dumbledore didn't like her either."

"SHUT UP TOMMY! I killed Myrtle. I didn't like it much but it gave me a chance to test my ability make Horcruxes. The exact incantation wasn't written in any book regarding them but mine worked."

Lucius felt eyes on him and shivered slightly.
"I know you. You're a Malfoy. Always a bit sketchy. Hard to trust. I felt a part of me return."

Lucius swallowed, "My Bondmate Narcissa was a bit mad, she forced me to give the diary to a Muggle-loving wizard's young daughter. It possessed her and nearly killed her trying to assume corporeal form. Its encasement was destroyed with a fang from your Basilisk."

"Our mind is fractured, more then before. There are three now; Snivelling Tommy, Tom which is me and Voldemort. He's the one without a conscience. I do bad things because I have no choice."

"How many lives have you taken?" Severus asked unsure he wanted to hear the answer.

"Too many." Tommy was back. "We killed ten…no…twelve…first was Myrtle, then our Muggle relations, a Muggle tramp, Hepzibah Smith- she liked us, an Albanian peasant and the Potters. The Scary one wanted to kill the baby. I couldn't do it. His parents were good people, doing what our parents never did. They tried to protect him. The scary one cast the curse but couldn't hurt baby. Baby not hurt anyone; I put us in front of curse. It hurt us, ripped us apart more. We were weak, so weak. We just ran as far as we could." He cried, "Why couldn't I have nice mum like little baby? Shouldn't have hurt her. Man was mean, wanted to hurt us but no killer. We came to hurt them, scary one want him dead, he die. Forgot, that woman Bertha. Angry one hurt her to get information. Tom felt sorry for her and killed her. Tom make Nagini Horcrux. Then Tom was talking to Wormtail, Nagini come in. say old Muggle spying. Angry one kill him."

Severus was shocked, only twelve? Mostly only enough to make his Horcruxes? Well almost he knew Horcruxes were a Dark Object of extraordinary power. "Tell me, how many did you make?"

Tommy was quiet, "Diary, ring, locket, cup, crown thing and snake. When try to hurt baby felt same pain. Did I make baby one? Didn't want to hurt him."

Lucius was shocked; his image of his former master was very different.

"Seven? You made seven? Diary is destroyed. Your bit of soul came home after?" Severus was not surprised, multiple rapes, forced division of soul and murder could destroy a mind.

"Yes it hurt but we're stronger. Scary one want to be stronger. Think kidnapping the baby good idea. Baby's blood make stronger. Made plan, kidnap baby. Not want to hurt baby. Please don't let us hurt baby!"

Severus asked, "If Horcruxes destroyed, it make you strong?"

"Not strong enough to hurt people but why?"

Severus smiled, "You may have hurt Wizards and a handful of Muggles but as a Chuvash the Ministry can't have you tried before the Wizengamot or sentenced to Azkaban."

"Why?"

The voice was now Tom's.

Severus said quickly, "You're Chuvash. Only the King of the Chuvash can sentence you." He remembered Blaise's words from yesterday and knew his Parseltongue wasn't up to the task, he sighed, "I know how to summon him but I'm not Chuvash. Only a Chuvash can summon him."

"Is he scary?" Tommy.

"He can be but he hates Dumbledore as do we. Perhaps, he can help us heal you before he considers
what your sentence should be." Severus said gently.

"I can speak for you." Tom.

The two distinct personas inhabiting the shell of their former master worried Lucius but he didn't dare speak.

Severus said in English, "A child of thou in danger. I summon thee, Sirius Black, true Lord of the Ancient House of Black and King of the Chuvash! If you repeat those words in Parseltongue he'll come."

The words were repeated in Parseltongue.

There was a crack not unlike Apparation.

Standing there before them was the Chuvash King in all his glory.

"Who summons me?" Sirius I roared.

"I, thy week and humble servant." Severus spoke bowing. "I have found a lost child whose sins are great. They torment him. He suffered greatly at Dumbledore's hands, through his veins is the same blood that runs through Adrian's."

Sirius I knew what had happened to this submissive and understood how it could shatter his mind.

There came a great roar of anger, "NO! I WON'T BE JUDGED! I HAVEN'T HAD MY REVENGE!"

Lucius quivered slightly.

"BE SILENT! I have not come to judge my child. I have come to bring him home."

The power flung at the body buried in bedding broke into sobs, "Not come to kill us? Make Scary go away! Want to help us? We do bad things. We hurt people. Don't want to hurt anyone anymore. Tommy want to be good boy."

"Tommy?" Sirius I asked.

"It's short for Tom Marvolo Riddle, there three of us. Tommy, Tom and Voldemort. I don't like being bad. Tom does it because of the Imperious. He thinks wanting family and babies is stupid.

"What about Voldemort?" Sirius I asked, a bit angry that this Dark Lord was one of his own…

"He bad only because he want to destroy that bad man who hurt us. We don't like Muggles and we did kill some but only five. Three mean people and two just not in good place, killing people bad."

"Yes, Killing people very bad. Why kill them all?"

"Myrtle was a bit annoying, always crying. She was a Muggleborn, no one like her. The Riddles, they bad people, insult family. Insult mother. Sire abandon mother though pregnant. Never know mother, she died when I was born. I would never leave my child!"

"I can't condone the Murder of a student but I might be able to forgive the revenge for mother. You reclaimed your mother's honour; they shamed and abandoned your mother refusing to give you name nor acknowledgement." Sirius I was splitting hairs here.
"Hepzibah Smith had Mother's locket. She laughed, called my mother a thief and a fool who sold it for a pittance. It was Slytherin's; there was no right for her to have it. By Birthright it was mine."

That was Tom…

"You retrieved Chuvash Property from a human. Chuvash theft punishment can be death." Sirius I said plausibly.

"I made Horcruxes." Tom said his voice a mix of pride and shame.

"How many?"

"Five maybe six. Destroy one and get stronger. Please, I want to be whole again. Don't want to use scary one's way. He hurt baby."

Sirius I's eyes narrowed, "Hurt what baby?"

Severus said quietly, "He means Harry. His stepping in front of the curse caused the scar, he couldn't kill Harry. It couldn't kill him but left him grievously injured. He thinks Harry might have a shard of his soul."

Harry his descendant a Horcrux? The very idea revolted the Chuvash King but what could he do? He sighed, "Where would we find these soul shards?"


"We'll assemble pieces. I'll ask the Veela Queen if she'll help. Perhaps, she can heal his soul. If he hadn't been abandoned by his parents or attacked by Dumbledore then he might not have become this." Reluctantly Sirius I, levitated the body, swaddling the ugly thing in blankets. "I'll hide him. You know not where. May tell I have him. He is Chuvash and my right to punish. He will be punished when his soul is whole or at least more whole."

"Wait, I was bound. I am Veela creature of Light. Your Mark weakens me. Is there a way to remove mark?"

"Want to leave family?" came the tearful voice.

"Still family." Severus said gently, "Still believe Muggle Ideas dangerous, but he is my mate. I have injuries from my father he wishes to heal as long as he bears the Dark Mark he can't heal me."

"Fine." Tom said bored, "Sing. Must sing a Parseltongue song, only song of love sang by one who loves can break mark. Anyone who loves and knows love can free or be free. Only one free from Mark can sing."

Clutching bundled deformed Dark Lord Sirius, the Chuvash King disappeared in the same manner as before when he was summoned.

Severus kissed Lucius hard, "You think he means it?"

Lucius grinned, "I do. Let's deliver our captives to the Ministry or at least Dora."
Chapter End Notes

Chapter 24

Dora and Scrimgour entered a stone block cell, lit weakly with sputtering torches.

Manacled and wild-eyed Barty Crouch Jr. sat in a chair.

"Well, it seems your protests were untrue for it was you who helped torture the Longbottoms."
Scrimgour glowered menacingly.

Dora stayed behind the Head Auror.

"Do we need the Veritaserum or will you confess?"

"The Dark Lord LIVES! His Wrath is great! All shall tremble before him! He shall rise greater and more terrible than before. His servants will be ordered to attack as never before! He shall eliminate the boy after utilizing him. It was my Master's will that Harry Potter be entered into the tournament. I was to quietly, unobtrusively guide him through the tasks so that he remained first. Then Malfoy that cowardly traitor exposed a flaw in my Master's plans and Potter was disqualified as a Champion. I haven't been able to slip away to tell my Master that Potter is no longer in the Tournament. I hoped that our Daily Prophet didn't inform him." Barty laughed almost manically.

Scrimgour was furious, he slapped the prisoner, "Tell me how you were involved with the attack on Auror Longbottom and his wife?"

Still laughing Barty replied, "Found memo in dad's office. Said the Aurors had arrested someone who had information regarding my Master's whereabouts. That the person's identity had been classified. We, Lady Lestrange, Lord Lestrange and Mr. Lestrange followed Longbottom and captured him while he was meeting his wife. Pity the boy wasn't around or we'd have used him to force the Auror to talk like we did his wife. We,"

Scrimgour stiffened, his voice low but vibrating with barely restrained anger, "That's my godson you're talking about."

"Oh?" Barty sneered, "he's quite the coward. Couldn't take a little screaming. Mark my words, Longbottom Heir he might be but he'll never sire a child."

Scrimgour glared, "I've heard enough. You're to be sent back to Azkaban. You are a menace. How could you think about using the Cruciatus on a baby?"

Barty shrugged, "Same way my Master planned to use it on Potter. You do what must be done."

"I don't know where you went wrong. You should have grown up to be a decent person." Dora said to herself.

"I grew up torturing and killing animals. Joined the Death Eaters at eighteen. I was Lady Lestrange's favourite. I'd agree to anything."

Dora did not want to know what he meant by that.
Scrimgour was disgusted; he turned and stalked out, yelling at a passing Auror, "Whiteside! Get that worm out of my dungeon! I want him returned to Azkaban. I don't care if he'd been declared dead. His sentence stands."

"Sure, send me back! My Master will rise. He'll come free those who are loyal to him. I'll be rewarded! Just like the Lestranges!"

"And silence him! I don't want to hear his voice." He gestured for Dora to follow him. After she'd shut his office door, he glared at her, "Any chance he's not just crazy? Fudge would just want him Kissed. He'd want to pretend all is well."

"I've heard too much in the last few weeks to believe he is quite as gone as we'd like to believe. I don't believe he's very powerful at the moment. As far as I could guess he's only got one or two servants. Most of his Death Eaters are content to be good wizards as far as the Ministry can tell. I'll stake my career that Lucius and Severus aren't Death Eaters. They do worry that Dumbledore is a possible danger. They wanted me to investigate because as an Auror I have special training in investigation. I've told you what I've learned."

There came a loud voice from the Head Auror's secretary's desk or thereabouts.

"I demand to speak to the Head Auror. I wish to complain about the ludicrous charges against me. It's all lies. Its that stupid old man stirring up trouble."

Dora glanced at her boss, "That's Molly Prewett."

Scrimgour chuckled, "Send someone to relieve Kingsley. I'm sure he'd like to be present when we interview her. Go escort her to an interview room."

Dora slipped out, finding an Auror she deemed trustworthy she sent him to inform Kingsley Shacklebolt that he was needed at the Ministry and told him that he was to remain with Moody. Informing him that only Healers Smythe and Tonks were to attend him. Then advanced to Molly,

"Ms. Prewett? The Head Auror is quite busy at the moment,"

Molly's face was red with anger, "My name is Molly Weasley."

Dora shook her head, "It is not. Your bonding to Mr. Arthur Weasley is invalid. I'll address you as is proper. Now Ms. Prewett, the Head Auror and Auror Shacklebolt are being informed of your arrival. If you follow me I'll escort you to an interview room."

"I'm a lady. I'll not be treated like some common criminal." Molly glared.

If this woman were a lady then Dora'd eat one of Dobby's socks. "If you'll follow me," Dora said stiffly, her Auror robes trailing behind her.

Molly stalked off after her.

Dora realized this would be a VERY, very long day…

XoooooX

Draco had received favourable reports from his messengers Vince, Greg and Neville. His date plan
was proceeding as planned. He asked Neville to represent him and asked if he would march in his place to breakfast with the others. Some of the House had left earlier but most were late risers and had chosen to wait for their court.

Harry had been dressed in warm but flattering clothing inherited from Draco, a cloak lined with fur, its interior cast with permanent warming charms while the exterior was a kind of leather and was thick with impervious charms.

Blaise was wearing a dragon hide jacket with a fur lining over warm but fashionable clothing for his 'first date'.

Greg and Vince were properly dressed as well.

Theo was practically glowing and seemed to be in good humour, which was out of sorts with his usual behaviour.

Draco waited for the rest of the House to leave promising a nervous Greg and Vince they'd be along shortly. He laughed, "I doubt they'll eat everything. Besides, we're going to Honeydukes. You can pick up any number of snacks there."

Greg shifted nervously, he was more interested in planning out his future then stuffing his face like the immature boy he had been.

Vince was of a more indolent nature and did not perceive he was being reprimanded.

Draco led them first out of their dormitory and then out of the Slytherin Dungeon's proper. Making his way to his papa's private apartments, he knocked once and then let himself in.

Remus was lying in front of the fire surround by books, Severus' potions journals to be precise. He still hadn't manages to finish even one school year's worth of his mate's journals. He glanced up at the boys. "About time you made an appearance. I half thought your fathers would prove wrong and you wouldn't be going on some sort of date today."

Draco looked surprised, "So they did leave? I expected as much. I doubt they'll be back anytime soon. I take it you are supposed to chaperone us?"

Remus nodded standing and stretching before going to retrieve a worn jacket, "I might as well get used to supervising a group of hormonal teenagers. I just know Severus is going to put my name down for Hogsmeade's weekends."

"For all his protests he really doesn't mind them." Draco laughed.

Harry realized that Remus' jacket was a bit thin and threadbare. He decided then that his guardian needed a warm coat for Christmas.

Remus gestured at the door, "Have you eaten breakfast yet?"

Draco shook his head; "We're heading up to breakfast now. Thought we'd talk a bit and then meet with the rest of our companions."

Remus shrugged, "Might as well join you. I could do with a snack. I ate early, sometime after your fathers left." He tried not to appear worried, he was. Talented wizard and double agent Severus might be but 'Dark Lord Hunting' was not his idea of a good plan.

They made their way to the Slytherin table, Remus keeping an eye on their flank as well as warily
watching out for his back. He’d learned that even the supposedly safest places have hidden dangers.

Breakfast was a light-hearted affair of sorts with much excitement because it was a Hogsmeade weekend.

The Durmstrang students were still a bit lost without their leader but seemed to be still sure of their welcome. They had reacted with shock to be invited to eat with Slytherin by the King of the Snakes rather then their prince but most were silent not really understanding the complexities of Slytherin politics.

Then again who did understand such things? Even some snakes failed such as Parkinson, whose eyes glittered with hatred at Draco and malice towards Harry.

XooooooX

There were cries of shock and surprise when Severus and Lucius flooed into the Ministry.

To eliminate temptation Lucius had taken Pettigrew himself and left Crouch for his mate. He glared icily at the twittering crowds, "We have business with the Head Auror."

His tone brokered no objections at a path to the elevators emerged.

The two Lords and former Death Eaters had returned from their Dark Lord hunting expedition perhaps more victorious then any Auror. They were politicians, scholars and Philosophers not as a rule Battle Wizards.

Their reception at their destination was of shock.

Kingsley stared having just arrived moments ahead and was about to join the Head Auror and Tonks with Molly Prewett. He was nearly speechless, it was only thing to see Peter Pettigrew alive and well in Potter's memories and quite another to see him in person. "Lord Malfoy? Professor?"

Lucius smirked, "It is not usually a habit of mine to attempt to do the job of an Auror. I prefer duels of words and opinions rather then wands truth be told. I woke with a vague idea of where certain persons might be hiding. I found to my amusement the person truly responsible for the Potters' death." He dropped the bound body of Wormtail on the stone floor; "I have cast a spell that will prevent him from transforming. I cannot be sure how long it will last but I expect you'll take precautions."

Severus relinquished his burden, "This one should be questioned. He facilitated the escape of a Prisoner from Azkaban and kept them imprisoned for years. I'm sure if questioned both Crouch's would admit that the younger cast the Dark Mark during the riot. I suspect he most likely used the Imperious on his son to control him.

"You bring me two prisoners? Where did you find them?" Kingsley shocked and a bit embarrassed that such persons had outdone Aurors.

"At Crouch's home. We thought an early morning assault would catch them off guard. We considered the possibility that they might move after finding out Barty Jr. was arrested." Severus said with a shrug.
Lucius laughed, "We told our mate we were going "Dark Lord Hunting."

"It would seem you were unsuccessful."

Severus sneered, "Actually, we were quite successful. We had him in our grasp. Then we discovered he was a member of a race of Magical Creatures that has agreement with all Ministries to police their own. We informed their leader and he will be facing justice."

"That's convenient. He's got monster blood." Some Auror whispered to a companion.

"Probably get off easy."

"That's true."

Lucius' voice was cold, "I know this individual. He had disowned all members of his family who fought on the Dark Lord's side. He will be judging the Dark Lord on crimes he committed and those he ordered large and small. He has little reason to allow a person with such blood on his hands to walk free. I would not say at present the Dark Lord lacks a conscience. He knows the faces of everyone whose life he took. Only once did he hesitate. After cursing Potter he found he could not kill him. He took the curse for him and that is why he vanished. It was he not Harry who survived a killing curse. I am his follower no longer. I still believe in the old ways, I see no reason to allow our heritage to be sullied or to allow Muggleborns to treat our magical brethren ill because they aren't human and are therefore lesser beings."

"I'll have these to miscreants imprisoned in cells. We'll interview them later. I'm on my way to meet Tonks and Scrimgour. Molly Prewett showed up to have it out with me." Shacklebolt said glaring at the Aurors who'd spoken out of turn.

"We'll leave you to finish." Lucius said politely, his mask in place. The Dark Lord may have done monstrous things but to call him a monster because of a Creature inheritance was childish and pathetic. It was also indirectly calling him a monster, which he disagreed with. Although placing the Diary, a Horcrux in the possession of a child making her a vessel of Dark Deeds could be considered monstrous.

Severus glared at Pettigrew, "Knowing what you did, that you betrayed the sweetest, more forgiving woman I want to hate you. A part of me wished I could kill you. From the moment I heard it was you I wanted to kill you. It took great pains not to. Like Harry said, James wouldn't have wanted Remus and Black to become killers because of you. Likewise Lily would not have approved of me doing it either. I'd prefer not to have my hands stained with your blood."

Crouch still glared at them as if he wanted to see them fall over dead.

Pettigrew twitched, as if he knew that Severus Snape meant it when he said he wanted him dead. He looked furious that he had to be grateful to Malfoy for not giving the slimy dungeon bat a chance to kill him. It was odd to be 'saved' by the very people he was trying to hide from.

Lucius wanted nothing more then to wash the filth of Crouch and Pettigrew away. He turned knowing Severus would follow. "Tell the Head Auror we had no intent to imply that he couldn't dispatch Aurors to apprehend these two. We merely wished to prevent them from having a chance to escape. It was merely a 'citizens' arrest'. We did no harm to them nor did we question them. We felt those were better left to experts."

Before Shacklebolt could thank them properly, the two former Death Eaters were gone. He stared after them, had they really gone searching for He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named to turn him over to the
authorities? Though he hadn't read the transcripts of Barty Crouch Jr. interrogation yet no doubt his father had some hand in his escape so he would insist the man remain in custody. Until all the facts were in he would insist the man’s ‘arrest' remain within the Department. Trusting the prisoners would be taken to their cells made his way to the interrogation where Molly Prewett was being detained for questioning. Upon reaching the room in question he knocked twice and let himself in.

Inside Ms. Prewett and Auror Nymphadora Tonks were sitting on opposite sides of a table. Dora was tapping a file with her forefinger, a scroll of parchment, quill and inkpot beside her left hand. Ms. Prewett appeared defiant and angry.

Head Auror Scrimgour who was neither slinking in the shadows nor was he lounging against the wall but was present in the unique manner that made different from other Aurors.

Shacklebolt sighed, "Sorry to keep you waiting. I was detained on Auror business."

Ms. Prewett sniffed, "It's bad form to keep a lady waiting."

A lady was someone like Amelia Bones, Augusta Longbottom or Andromeda Tonks nee Black. Molly Prewett was no lady but out of courtesy, Shacklebolt said nothing, "I am here now so we may begin."

"A Report was filed against you by Lord Weasley on behalf of his son and grandsons. It called for the immediate annulment of your Bonding due to its invalid nature. You are also accused of filing false records of birth for children claimed to be born for the House of Weasley. You are accused of being an accomplice in kidnapping of six individuals. You are accused of use of illegal memory charms and use of Amortentia illegally."

"Lies, all of it." Molly glared, arms crossed, "That senile old man hates me. He turned his back on his own son and left his own grandchildren to starve."

"You would be willing to take Veritaserum to enter evidence in your own defense?" Shacklebolt asked politely.

Molly swallowed nervously and nodded.

Scrimgour smelled lies and treachery. "Examine her for the antidote to Veritaserum. I suspect she's taken it."

"Head Auror!" Molly protested, seemingly outraged.

Scrimgour gave her an insincere smile,"If you have done nothing wrong then it would merely be a slight inconvenience to prove your testimony and evidence would truthful."

"It's not even admissible in court!" Molly stammered.

"It's not as if you got anything to hide. Is it?" Dora asked sweetly, bile rising in her throat.

Molly swallowed, "Of…of course not."

"Then surely you wouldn't mind us verifying that you haven't taken anything that would make Veritaserum ineffective." Shacklebolt said politely, though he was disliking her more annoyed with her.

Molly bit her lip, uncertainty in her eyes.
"We have a fresh supply sent in from our potioneer." Dora smirked, knowing of course that Severus had sent a batch of very strong Veritaserum recently.

"Who would that be?" Molly asked through pursed lips.

"That Ms. Prewett is privileged information." Scrimgour said evenly.

"If it's Professor Snape I wouldn't trust him." Molly said sharply. "He is a Death Eater."

Kingsley glanced at his boss, "I object to such generalizations. Lord Malfoy and Lord Prince-Malfoy have down us a great service. They tracked down He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named. He will face judgment. They also delivered the person responsible for the murders of the Potters and someone responsible for an escape from Azkaban."

Scrimgour was momentarily speechless, "They did what? He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named is here?"

Molly looked frightened. "They betrayed their master?"

Shacklebolt shook his head, "He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named had magical creature status. As per our agreement with his race he was turned over to the Head of their people for Judgment. They assure me that this August Person will not judge him lightly."

"So they let him escape." Molly sneered.

"No, they were quite adamant that he was in the custody of someone capable of judging him for crimes he actively committed as well as those he ordered. He maybe held responsible for crimes done in his name such as the Torture of the Longbottom couple." Shacklebolt added knowing that Scrimgour had been close to Auror Longbottom having trained him.

Scrimgour was both embarrassed that two Death Eaters accomplished something his own Aurors couldn't. "So Pettigrew is alive as Potter's pensive evidence suggested?"

"Alive and sitting in one of our cells as we speak. As is Crouch."

"Of course Crouch is in our cells. Auror Tonks brought him in last night." Scrimgour said tightly.

"My apologies for not being clear," Shacklebolt said apologetically, "I was referring to the elder Crouch, who was discovered imprisoned in his own home I assume by Pettigrew and He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named."

"Well it saves us the trouble of tracking him down." Dora muttered, a bit annoyed that they hadn't taxed her to retrieve him.

"Well just because they said they captured He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named doesn't mean they did. They're Death Eaters!" Molly protested as if they'd lost their minds.

"They are apparently fine citizens, we would be proud to have more like them." Scrimgour said pleasantly.

"They'd make anyone embarrassed. Death eaters and homosexuals. I'm surprised anyone is willing to tolerate their disgusting behaviours. " Molly muttered."

"I supposed you had similar opinions regarding your own brother and Arthur." Dora said pleasantly.

"That person was an embarrassment. Arthur was supposed to be mine! He had no right to pervert him like that. Inciting him to unnatural behaviours."
"I suppose he deserved to be kidnapped." Dora said quietly.

"If it would get him away from Arthur long enough to learn how to be a real man. I don't know what sort of Dark Magic that person used on my Arthur. He is unable to sexually aroused or attracted to anyone else. The Curse also drained his magic."

Dora burst out laughing, "Dark Curse? Are you completely unintelligent or something? You just described a Soul Bond."

"Soul Bonds are lies. I have that on the best authority."

Dora snorted, "You mean Dumbledore?"

"You should treat him with more respect."

"I have no reason to." Dora flicked her wand and a sliver stream flowed from her mind into a vial. She handed it back to Shacklebolt, "I'm tired of nonsense."

Shacklebolt poured it into a pensieve with a screen and the memory began.

Molly turned whiter and whiter as it continued to play, "It's lies. All fabrication. That isn't me!"

"You admitted to numerous crimes, including passing off two children as Weasleys. Would you like to change your statement?" Scrimgour said pleasantly.

Molly looked faint and ill, "I…I refuse to speak. You've…obviously made up your minds already. I am not a criminal."

"Would you like to divulge who the father of your children are?"

Molly laughed, "Its someone you would least expect. I see no reason to divulge that information."

"You do realize you will be imprisoned for some period of time because of the charges. If not in Azkaban then in the prison beneath Gringotts." Shacklebolt said glaring at her, "The Weasley family as well as the Prewett refuse to take responsibility for your children."

"I took in that person's children and raised them like my own and they can't do the same for my poor innocent children."

Dora sorted, "Innocent? Your son in the course of a week assaulted two fellow Gryffindors."

"That lying cheater Harry Potter and that pathetic Muggle Granger. To think I was going to let that wench become betrothed to my Ronald. How dare she claim he hit her?" Molly snapped.

Dora rolled her eyes, "He physically assaulted Potter and Granger as well as attempting to hex Fred Weasley who wasn't even facing him."

"LIES!"

"The events were witnessed hundreds of students. George took the hex for Fred and never raised his wand. He is getting progressively more violent." Dora said shaking her head.

Molly muttered, "Should have considered that considering his blood relations. Too bad I had little choice. I wanted a child and Arthur wouldn't give me one. The father as you call him has no idea he has children."
"Are you admitting to rape?"

Molly snorted, "Of course not. He doesn't know whom he slept with. I don't even know if he remembers the incidents happened."

"Sounds like rape to me." Shacklebolt said thoughtfully.

"He's the freak. Seriously, only insisting on having sex with someone wearing a glamour of some dead girl!"

Dora blinked, she felt cold. "Ariana?"

"Yeah," Molly shivered, "that's what he kept calling me the whole time."

Dora snorted, "I would never have guessed. No wonder Ronald is violent. He's a Dumbledore."

Scrimgour looked vaguely ill, "They're the Headmaster's children?"

"No," Molly looked shocked, "I wouldn't sleep with him. Besides, he's incapable of fathering children."

"They're the children of a person imprisoned in Azkaban for inappropriate charms on goats and a grandfather who murdered three children." Dora a bit shocked, "Aberforth was in love with his sister. He sleeps with whores Glamoured to look like his dead crazy teenage sister?"

"I am no whore! I am the daughter of Lord Prewett!" Molly glared.

"No wonder Ronald hadn't been expelled for his brutish behaviour." Shacklebolt murmured, "I suppose he'd best be told while Molly's case is being fought over for who has more jurisdiction due to worse crimes."

"Too bad the Head of the Dumbledore Family is the Headmaster. I supposed I can pass the information to Lord Prewett and Lord Weasley. I am sure they'll be informing him that they are his responsibility." Dora said with a shrug, "Since Molly, Ronald and Ginevra Prewett have been disowned by the Prewett family."

"This is all that nosy old man's fault!" Molly muttered.

"Actually, its thanks to a nosy rat." Dora smirked, "They overheard your conversation with Dumbledore regarding Gideon and your supposed children. As if that rat hadn't already overheard that Gideon Prewett was possibly dying."

"You did it! You bitch! You've ruined my life!" Molly screamed and her wand leapt into her hand.

"Expelliarmus." Scrimgour said flatly. "Attacking an Auror is illegal."

Shacklebolt cast a series of spells to keep Molly restrained but not gagged.

"What did I ever do to you Tonks? Why couldn't you leave it alone?" Molly cursed at her.

"He was possibly dying, my honour as an Auror wouldn't allow me to turn a blind eye to injustice." Dora shrugged.

Rather productive weekend, Scrimgour mused; a Dark Lord captured, an escaped prisoner, the true betrayer of the Potters and one self-destructive Dark Arts hating former rising star all in custody.
Molly was escorted out by Shacklebolt.

Scrimgour glanced up, "My apologies for not believing you could pass the training. You are truly one of my best. I know that Shacklebolt's investigation into the Potters as well as Molly Prewett would not have gone as well. I suspect we'll be announcing that Black was unfairly treated. It wouldn't have gone so well without you." He chuckled, "Not bad…for a Hufflepuff."

Dora smirked, "I had a good mentor. I am sure that Auror Longbottom would have said the same about you."

Scrimgour nodded, "He did at that. He made me godfather to his firstborn son."

Dora nodded, "If Moody had been as honourable as you no doubt I might have offered him the same honour." She said stacking up the file, "I am sure you can have Shacklebolt write an adequate report. I'll go relieve the Auror watching Moody."

"Keep me posted on your investigation of Dumbledore." Scrimgour nodded taking the file.

Chapter End Notes

Chapter 24D- Honeydukes, Attack in Hogsmeade and Stolen moments of peace in Malfoy Malfoy

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Chapter 24

Charlie and Remus nodded at one another as their charges started congregating in the Entrance Hall.

When they were all present Draco grinned, “Shall we go?”

Luna chuckled, “Sorry I’m late Theo.”

Theo blinked, if she was gorgeous before... with that strawberry blonde hair and silver eyes she looked like George had a kid with Draco…

“Good morning Draco.” Luna smiled.

They all made their way out in the snow towards Hogsmeade.

They stopped a few of the various shops before an overly excited Harry dragged Draco into Honeydukes.

Draco, Vince, Theo, Fred and Greg bought candy for both them and their date. Vince mostly bought candy for himself.

Blaise’s nose twitched, he smelled rich chocolate and it was steaming. He squeezed his way through the crowd of patrons. His jaw dropped, “Sweet Merlin. I’ve died and passed through the Veil.”

There was a steaming chocolate fountain, with a tray of delights ranging from a Muggle item called marshmallow to various fruits as well as other things that taste good dipped in chocolate.
Charlie had followed the teen to keep an eye on him; now he saw the glowing, sensual look on Blaise’s face.

Blaise looked up at Charlie who towered over everyone, “Please? Please? Can I?” he wanted the dominant Chuvash to pay for it.

Charlie laughed, “Alright.”

“Alright what?” Fred asked curious.

“Blaise found a chocolate fountain.”

Harry’s eyes widened, “Chocolate fountain? You mean like in Charlie and the Chocolate Factory? This I’ve got to see.” He ran ahead skidding to a stop next to Blaise. “I’ve died and gone to heaven. It’s chocolate fountain fondue…”

“What’s a fondue?” Blaise asked curious.

“You melt chocolate or cheese till it’s liquid. Then you dip stuff in it. You dip bread and vegetables in a cheese fondue. You can dip fruits, other candy etc into chocolate.” He was literally drooling.

Draco could hear Harry’s awe and went to ask a Honeydukes employee how much a fountain would cost. Satisfied it wasn’t an outrageous price he told them to charge one to his Gringotts vault. He then made his way through the crowd, they parted for him naturally, so Draco walked up to the person taking payment, “Two sickles a piece?”

The employee nodded.

Draco placed two Galleons in their box, “Harry love, fourteen for you.”

The employee started to protest.

Draco smirked, “Consider it a tip. Besides, he doesn’t need more then that.”
Harry hugged Draco, “You’re the best.” He was too shy to kiss him in the middle of Honeydukes so he skipped off blushing.

Charlie handed the employee two Galleons as well, “Go on.” Nudging Blaise to follow in Harry’s wake.

Blaise started off and then turned back to grab Charlie’s hand dragging him along.

Smirking Fred decided to pay for Angelina to try it and fed her two strawberries dipping in warm chocolate.

The pleased moan she gave as she ate the chocolate covered strawberries was so sexy.

Blaise held out a piece of pineapple he’d dipped in chocolate holding it up to Charlie, but he was still a bit too short.

Charlie chuckled, bending down and taking the chocolate covered fruit gently from the dark skinned teen’s fingers. Unintentionally, sensually licking the slightly dripping chocolate. He reached for one of those unfamiliar sweet smelling round powdery things dipping it in the chocolate.

Shyly Blaise took the offered sweet from Charlie’s fingers, he didn’t know what the white thing was but it was gooey, the sweetness melting together. He dipped another piece of fruit in the flowing, steaming chocolate before offering it to the dominant Chuvash.

Draco had moved closer to Harry.

Harry turned to offer a cherry that was dripping with chocolate out to his blonde mate.

Draco leaned over taking the dripping fruit in his lips; it was good…if Harry wanted a fountain he was getting one.

Harry couldn’t suppress a giggle when Draco ate the cherry from his fingers.
Draco chuckled at the embarrassed lion, deftly tying the cherry stem in a bow with his tongue and withdrawing it from his lips. “Tada.”

Harry had vaguely heard that was possible but had never met anyone who could do it. He shivered wondering what else his boyfriend could do with his tongue...

Draco and Harry as well as Blaise and Charlie continuing to feed each other morsels dipping in steaming rich chocolate until they ran out of credits.

Angelina was leaning against Fred shyly, her cheeks tinted pink after eating chocolate dipped strawberries from his fingers.

A shy Theo and sweet treat loving Greg paid to try it.

Theo was paying for Luna while Greg reluctantly paid for both himself and Mal to try it.

Mafalda had never had chocolate fondue as Harry called in but she’d had chocolate covered things before. She had a bit of a sweet tooth herself.

Still a bit unsure about this Luna fed herself avoiding a more romantic or sensual scene the other couples were playing out.

Greg was always keen to try a new sweet but he was embarrassed that the byplay between his prince and his consort as well as his prince’s second and their second chaperone was making him very uncomfortable.

After they had all finished their experiencing of the delights of a fountain filled with Honeyduke’s finest melted chocolate as well as buying their own treats, they made their way a bit away from the centre of Hogsmeade heading closer to the Shrieking Shack. Where they were planning to discuss where or what they would all like to eat. Unless of course they wanted to shop in the Rue de Lion first…

The girls were more eager to shop.
They had just decided to portkey directly to the Rue de Lion district when a haughty voice called out. “Well if it isn’t the little princling, his whore, the wanna-be King and Queen of Slytherin and their precious court.”

Draco seethed internally, “Leave my presence wench.” Yet his face showed no sign of his intense dislike for the girl.

“That is not the way to talk to a lady, son. Much less the girl who is your fiancée.” Narcissa Black, his father’s former Bondmate and the woman who bore him slinked out of the shadows.

Draco sucked in a breath, he knew that voice, “I wouldn’t Bond with her if she was the last person of Wizarding blood left in the world. You have no say in my life woman. You never did.”

“That is not how you talk to your mother. Even someone who has your father’s weak blood should understand the concept of proper respect.”

“You are not my mother, you bore me yes but it was papa who cared for me and taught me. You bought me clothes yes but you had little to do with me until I misbehaved and you wanted to use the Cruciatus Curse on me to punish me for my disobedience.” Draco growled, “I want nothing to do with you.”

“I’ll teach you some respect. You and that pathetic Halfblood slut you fed chocolate.” Narcissa sneered.

“He acts like a Muggle; he was enticing you to have your way with him in front of Honeydukes. Whores moan like he did. He acts more like a girl then a boy, maybe you should put him in dresses and make him wear panties.” Pansy said in deadly cold voice and an icy smile.

No one noticed how quickly Blaise’s face changed from the flush of anger to embarrassment.

Two wands were raised.

“Cru,”
A deep growl was heard and then the sound of running.

Remus’ ears twitched, as did the one Veela and handful of Chuvash.

A large black dog had emerged from the shadows.

Remus was shocked; he’d been snuck up on. Both the mad women and the dog had been up wind so he hadn’t smelled them until they were nearly upon them. He recognized the dog as it got closer.” “Sir…Padfoot! Merlin.” Where the hell had he been since sending the Howler?

Harry gasped, hearing the name Padfoot, Sirius, his godfather was here?

Draco held Harry to his chest having spun around to take the brunt of the curses to protect his mate.

Harry shook, those two were crazy…Draco could not be that woman’s son. How could she want to hurt him? What had he ever done to her? They’d barely met once at the Quidditch World Cup.

The dog growled as he crashed into the two possibly mad females but not before they finished the incantation.

Draco was already biting back cries of pain; he couldn’t believe how much the Cruciatius hurt. He could see how the pain might drive you insane. Unlike Chuvash, Veela didn’t have spell resistance until they reached their inheritance and it was their wings that protected them.

The dog snapped the girl’s wand in his jaws when he tackled her; he cracked her with his tail knocking her out cold with a move that appeared second nature.

Narcissa barely had time to cry out when the bear-sized dog crashed into her.

The dog growled, pinning her to the ground his hot dirty breath in her face. There was a slight ripple of magic.
There came a large deep voice thick with anger, “Remus, get Harry out of here. I don’t care about the others but get Harry away. I’ll take care of this stupid woman.” The dog leaned his muzzle closer, “Hello cousin. I’m back. Maybe it’s time I remembered where my loyalties lie. You attempted to curse my godson! I should kill you!”

Harry had caught Draco when he crumpled; he rocked his protector who gasped in remembered pain. He yelled, “Don’t you dare Sirius! Damn it Remus, send for Dora.”

Remus stiffened; he shouldn’t have to be yelled at by his charge. He sighed, “I can’t let you do that Siri. I’m sorry about this but I have my reasons.” He held up his wand, “Incarcerous.”

Ropes sprang from Remus’ wand and soon Narcissa Black, Pansy Parkinson and former Auror Sirius Black were all restrained.

Remus sensed Sirius was both furious at him and about to shift, “Don’t. You’ll cause a panic. I’m turning you in only so your sentence can be thrown out. Pensive evidence regarding the traitor was recently reviewed by Magical Law Enforcement.”

The dog glared, “You traitor!”

Harry snapped, “Remus isn’t a traitor. He’s looking out for you. If you do anything more we can’t help you.”

“I can’t believe you’d touch a Malfoy.”

Remus strode over to Sirius, “Watch your tongue, else you’ll make an enemy of Harry. I’ll explain soon.” He called for Dobby, “I need you to quickly locate Auror Tonks. I believe she was spending the day at the Ministry unless she’s still at St. Mungos.”

“I’ll get you Remus.” Sirius III growled.

Blaise had finally recovered from shock, he summoned his elf Amry, curtly informing him, “Draco’s been attacked. Locate Healer Tonks and Healer Smythe.” He had to be sure the curse hadn’t injured his friend.
Neville was in awe of the Veela who had changed a lot from the boy who used to bully him. He took the Cruciatus without screaming? Either he had a high tolerance for pain or…there was something special about him. He wondered if that was how his dad took the Cruciatus Curse. He was the child of heroes; he just wished he’d been more like them.

Adrian reached out and lightly patted his shoulder absently as he sensed his emotional turmoil.

XooooooX

Dora was about to floo to St. Mungos when a slightly familiar house elf popped up in front of her before she reached the floo.

Dobby’s eyes were wide, “Missy Dora, Dobby be looking for you. Master Harry Potter, young master Malfoy. Your Aunt…”

Dora didn’t need to hear more, she could guess. “Take me.”

Dobby took her arm in his long fingers and they disappeared.

XooooooX

Amry reappeared with both Healers.

Ted and Healer Smythe saw Draco on the ground and hurried to attend to their patient.

Dora arrived to see Harry kneeling in front of Draco, the Malfoy heir being examined by her father. She walked towards her mother’s youngest sister, some raven-haired unconscious girl in a Slytherin uniform and a dog. It took a minute to realize that this bear-sized dog was not the Grim that haunted churchyards or prophesised death. It was her mother’s cousin Sirius. “Well this is a productive day
for the Ministry or at least for the Aurors. We have had a string of arrests recently. Last night an escaped prisoner was arrested. His father who facilitated his escape, Pettigrew and the Dark Lord were captured today. Many thanks Remus. I’m sure with Pettigrew and my cousin, fellow Auror Black the whole night of October 31st, 1981 will properly be understood. So what did these two women do?”

Harry glared, “Insulted me, upset Draco and then cast the Cruciatus curse on us.” He glanced at Draco who was lying down while he was examined, “Draco…took the curse for both of us…”

Sirius flinched.

Dora collected the two wands, conjured a set of stretchers levitating her three prisoners onto them. I shall do my best to see that you, Severus and Lucius are properly thanked for your efforts. We, the Wizarding world owe you a debt.” She activated her emergency portkey to the Auror department while retaining her grip on the three stretchers after tying them together and holding on tight to them.

Ted glanced at Remus; “The Cruciatus was a shock to his system, especially since he’s never been subject to it before. He needs rest and chocolate. I don’t recommend much activity today.”

Draco winced, “I’m no invalid. We need to go shopping for the Yule Ball. I promised.”

Harry said quietly, “Maybe you should do as they say.”

“I won’t let that woman spoil our first real date. It affected my nerves by inflicting pain. Just give me a pain-relieving potion that affects nerve pain. I can handle it.” Draco said standing after finally catching his breath.

Adrian stared at the former solo leader of their House, “Are you sure you should disregard the healers’ advice?”

“Please don’t order me to bed.” Draco said firmly, “I won’t let Harry down, I promised him a date. That woman won’t spoil it. Besides, I owe my cousins Thena and Sophronia lovely, expensive dress robes. Harry also needs a set that reflect his rank in the Wizarding World and our House.”

“Should we let him?” Charlie leaned over to ask Remus.
Remus sighed, “I know his fathers left me in charge. I understand why he wants to keep his original plans.”

“It’s ok.” Harry said reaching for Draco’s hand, “I don’t need,”

Draco moved, pulled him close and kissed him lightly, noting Harry still tasted like chocolate.

Harry couldn’t hold back the moan, the same type of moan he was called a whore for making.

Draco reluctantly broke the kiss, “Please? We’ll just shop and eat, I promise to sit most of the time.”

“Dobby not mean to speak out of turn. Maybe tell Master Lucius? Let him decide?”

Remus swallowed; if the Dark Lord was captured did that mean they were back? That had only taken a few hours…he was the adult in charge so he should make the decision. “Alright, we’ll go but the moment you seem tired we’re coming back.”

Harry frowned at Remus, he had been excited before but now he was just worried.

“We can’t be gone too long since we’re eating dinner as a family at the Manor. I convinced the house elves to let Harry cook.” Draco gave them both a small smile.

Harry’s jaw dropped, “Cook? You’ll let me cook?”

Draco chuckled, “Yes, anything you want.” He was still very sore, his whole body ached but he was not going to cancel or postpone his first date with Harry.

Reluctantly Remus decided to make the portkey but the only place in Rue de Leon that he knew was the doorstep of that fancy French restaurant they ate at on Sunday so that was where he decided to aim the portkey.
Severus and Lucius returned to the Manor having decided to return there rather than Hogwarts to give Remus and the boys some time together.

Upon exiting the floo Lucius closed it and smirked, “You were pretty sexy this morning. Weaving all that magic…”

Severus couldn’t suppress a shiver, “You were too when you told off those idiot Aurors.”

Lucius was definitely not ready to share yet; in fact he was in the mood to try to make his mate forget Remus existed for a while. He lifted up the skinny potioneer, “what do you say we go claim the Lord of the Manor’s bedroom now that we have the Manor to ourselves?”

Severus swallowed, the desire clear in Lucius’ eyes. “Yes.” Living with Remus had put a damper on their sex life. His arse didn’t like being so tight and dry, he much preferred it to be loose and wet. He wished he could have both…but he’d belonged to Lucius for so long that he couldn’t bear to hurt him. He was sexually attracted to the werewolf and they were supposed to be mates but that didn’t erase the guilt from his heart…

Lucius kissed him hard, “I think…” he smirked, “we need to shower…”

Severus felt his prick harden at the thought, Lucius looked like a god naked and dripping with water.

Lucius made his way to the room he’d been dreaming of having Severus in since the first day he saw the second year in the shower.

Severus was surprised, it was different then he expected.

Lucius had arranged to have the rooms stripped, scrubbed completely redecorated. There were silk silver curtains and velvet green draperies framing the windows tied back with silver sashes with green tassels. The floor had a jade green antique carpet, a bed large enough for two (or three) full-
grown men to fuck. The sheets were green silk edged with silver, Severus had sensitive skin and he once mentioned he found the feel of silk erotic.

There were tapestries of beautiful men engaged in different forms of sexual pleasure adorning the walls

Everything that had adorned this room before had been destroyed

The electric lights had been replaced with oil lamps and chandleries with slow but bright burning candles.

With a whispered spell, Lucius lit both lamps and candles driving away the shadows cast by the dim winter sunlight through the silver curtains.

Severus said quietly, “You did this?” it resembled the rooms Lucius had had first as a prefect and then as a Head Boy. It was in a room like this that Lucius had taken his virginity. The first time he had been treated gently and with care not long before he’d become pregnant, later as he became more vigorous during sex. He’d been fourteen and a half, it was just after Lucius returned from Spring Holidays that he’d agreed to do more then snogging, snuggling, mutual wanking and letting his seventh Year boyfriend suck his prick. Then came the lonely summer, it was that summer that his father locked him in a tiny closet for days. He’d hid out at Lily’s as much as he could, it would be his first year without Lucius in the Dungeon.

He would be lonelier then ever that year, he’d fight with Lily losing her when he called her a Mudblood that fall as well as discover Remus was a werewolf, accruing a life debt to that toerag Potter and discovering his pregnancy only to lose it. Lily had ignored him for weeks, almost until Christmas until she overheard a conversation between Slughorn and Nurse Pomfrey about the fact that Severus had been ill previously, she’d been so angry with him that she hadn’t noticed. When Pomfrey informed Slughorn that he’d been suffering morning sickness rather then the flu, she told him that she’d dropped her books. She’d been sent to give Slughorn a message from Flitwick. She’d lied and claimed she’d been carrying too many books and dropped them. They had been OWLS review books for potions so Slughorn believed her.

It had been a secret correspondence, which even Potter didn’t know about at first. Lily hadn’t wanted to cause him any more trouble by being friends so they’d kept pairing journals. Lily’s had been scarlet leather with a golden lion while his own had been a green leather with a silver serpent of course. They both apologized; Lily lectured him for not telling her about the baby. He’d been shocked that she knew, Lily was good at keeping secrets and never told. She begged him to tell Lucius but by then it was too late, the baby was gone and Lucius was officially engaged to Narcissa who paraded around as the Consort to the former Prince of Slytherin showing off her ring. Severus had told Lily that Abraxus had bought it and gave it to her after the papers were signed. She’d raged
that Lucius wouldn’t ‘pull an Andromeda’ and elope. She’d said handsome is as handsome does. She had choice words for Lucius for allowing himself to be tied to that loathsome git Sirius’ nauseating cousin Narcissa.

Lucius undressed him, kissing his neck, “Why are you so quiet?”

“How happy Lily would have been that you finally tossed that woman out on her arse. She had some choice words for you when she heard that you were engaged to that loathsome wench. She told me if you really were the right man for me you’d ‘pull an Andromeda’.”

Lucius winced, “I should have.”

“Perhaps, but we’re together now and Draco is ours.” Severus said, quite aware that he was naked and Lucius was not. He looked up at his Bondmate, “I know you’re my Dominant but if we’re going to shower you need a lot less clothes.”

Lucius smirked banishing their clothes to a small basket where the house elves could retrieve them later. He carried the naked man whose face and hands were streaked with dust to their refurbished bathroom.

Inside it was like walking into a different space...

There was a waterfall rather then a shower, the rock made from smoothed limestone. The water was not truly hot but not really warm either. It was the perfect temperature...

Lucius pinned Severus to the wall beneath the waterfall, it cascaded over them as he kissed him. He ground his prick against his mate’s.

Severus felt the natural caress of the water mix with Lucius’ grinding. His cock was hard, he could barely look at Lucius he was so gorgeous...this was beyond anything he dreamed.

Lucius summoned some fizzy cleansing potion that Severus adored; pouring it on his hands he
rubbed it all over the slim man’s body. The water washing it away, then he pulled Severus to his chest, pouring some wonderful hemp shampoo into his hand and massaging it into that soft hair, “I hate that fire-retardant potion. It smells and I hate what it does to your hair…”

Severus considering it a necessity but did his best to remember to wash it out if he was going to spend time with Lucius. He liked it when his Prince ran those long fingers through his hair or tugged it when he sucked him off.

After washing Severus’ hair, he smirked, “Your turn.”

Severus located Lucius’ favourite body wash on a rocky ledge nearby. Covering his hands he washed his mate’s body; circling his nipples, rubbing his thighs, stroking his cock, washing his bollocks gently. When he was done he looked up at Lucius, before leaning over to lap up a drop of pre-cum about to be washed away.

Lucius shook his head, “No.” he licked his lips, “Knees.”

Severus winced slightly but moved so he was on his hands and knees, not from pain but from the ache the absence of Remus seemed to bring.

Lucius sat behind him, spread those pale arse cheeks that bore faint scaring, his tongue darting out to tease the familiar hole.

Severus whimpered, Lucius had always been able to do this to him…rip away his defences. He was naturally a sensitive, sensual person who could come to care a lot about people he was drawn to. Lily was like a sister despite being his best friend, Lucius was his idol, his…lover, and then there was Draco the son of his heart. He ached for the child that he’d carried and despite the numerous sexual encounters since he’d never conceived because of what Dumbledore had done. He would have been sobbing but that dexterous tongue was delving in and out of his arse. He thrust back against it, eager for more, “Luc…please…”

“Tell me what you want Sev.” Lucius tease circling the entrance with the tip of his tongue.

Severus groaned wantonly, “Fuck me damn it. It’s been too long…”

“First you must do something for me…”
Severus moved taking Lucius’ cock in his mouth, licking and sucking on it. Lucius had always been very well endowed, at first it was the sight of him fully aroused that both excited him and made him fearful. After all how could something so large fit inside him? Lucius had been too big to wrap his hand around. He’s grown since then but Lucius was still larger then he was in many respects. Lucius was 182 centimetres and he was only 176, he pulled back, leaving his mate’s large cock dripping. “How do you want me?” he didn’t care about their size difference there, mostly because he adored how it felt to have Lucius inside him.

Lucius picked him up, carrying him over to the bath he’s had constructed. It was about waist high and hot, but in the water were aphrodisiac potions. He sat in one of the fashioned seats spreading Severus’ legs smirking, “Ride me.”

Severus groaned as he felt Lucius’ cock hard beneath him and he pushed down letting it delve deep into him until the large pulsing organ bottomed out. “Merlin…”

They kissed eagerly as Severus adjusted to a cock in his arse.

Lucius pinched, tugged and twisted Severus’ nipples enjoying the moans as they kissed.

Severus moaned wantonly as he rode Lucius, it had been far too long since they’d had sex. He loved his Bondmate, but he wasn’t girly enough to admit they made love even if it was true. He still felt all the love and lust he’d always felt for his prince but he did feel a bit lost, empty. They’d only made love once or twice since finding out Remus was supposed to be his mate too. He hated himself for wanting Remus but Remus was with the boys where he needed to be but he wished Remus were here too.

Lucius thrust up to met his mate’s arse as it rode him; he liked keeping his Severus on edge. He teased his Bondmate’s prick and bollocks with his fingers, stroking, caressing, and squeezing.

Severus came hard, he hated coming first but he had less control then Lucius and tired easier. He needed more then just this…

Lucius changed their positions, ploughing Sev’s arse wanting him to come from being fucked once before he let himself orgasm.

Severus was grateful the warmth of the water cleaned away most of his seed but he could still feel
Lucius’ deep inside him.

Lucius lifted his Bondmate up, casting drying charms on them both as they left the bathroom.

Severus found himself dozing off only to vaguely be aware that they’d ended up between the silk sheets. He sighed with contentment as he felt Lucius’ familiar body behind him.

Chapter End Notes

Chapter 24E- Celestine's and the Auror Department again

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Chapter 24

Upon portkeying into the Rue de Leon district in Paris, Draco chose to head for Gringotts to withdraw monies to pay for his cousins Sophronia and Luna as well as lunch most likely.

The party was large and mostly underage so they received odd looks from Parisian witches and wizards who expected students to be at school. The French Ministry for Magic was also in the Rue de Leon district unlike in London where the Ministry, Magical hospital and Gringotts were all in various parts of London, the Rue de Leon was the centre of all Wizarding business, politics and shopping housed in what would to French Muggles appear to be an untamed or unreclaimed swampland that was quite forbidding or so French Wizards and witches claimed.

Draco filled a large bag with money from his vault shrinking it to fit in a pocket in his robe, while Adrian and Charlie withdrew as well. Remus removed some from Harry’s vault in case his charge decided he wanted to buy something.

Celestine's Boutique since it was closest to Gringotts and he could spend most of the time sitting so that was where Draco led them next.

For a Muggle-raised girl like Mafalda Prewett now known as Sophronia who had watched the telly growing up unlike Harry, Celestine’s Boutique was more like one of those fancy stores most likely to be frequented by the upper-crust of British society.

It was a large store having about three floors, although the lower floor clearly dated the building to a far earlier era the upper floors had been added on as the both demand and supplies of pricey, well made clothing for the well-to-do witch increased. [For the Muggle think something like Forever 21 or something]

Unlike Luna and Mafalda, Angelina had been to Celestine’s a few times before since she came from a rather well off family.

Draco who had little knowledge of proper fashion for witches turned to her, “Ms. Johnson, I’m more familiar with wizard fashion rather then for wealthy witches, I would be extremely grateful if you and Tracey would help Miss Sophronia and Miss Thena with their shopping. They need appropriate
dress robes for the Yule Ball. If you notice anything else that would be appropriate for young heiresses that would expand their wardrobe I would appreciate that as well.

Blaise tried very hard not to notice the lingerie section located on the enchanted map that said it was on the third floor. He would not betray his private interest in such things.

Angelina blushed, stammering, “Of course.” She glanced at the map, “Under things come first. I hate to split us up but it would be best if we went up.”

Blaise noticed Fred’s smirk and interrupted, “I’ll go. I can be an impartial observer. I’m supposed to be here as a guardian.”

Draco nodded, “Very well. There is a lounge over there we can wait for you.”

Blaise followed the four girls; Angelina, Tracey, Sophronia and Luna.

Fred was jealous but considering that Blaise was like his twin attracted to wizards rather then pretty witches he didn’t care so much.

Harry curled up next to Draco, still worried about him. Draco looked paler then usual and weak; the double bout of Cruciatux Curse had affected his boyfriend more then the Slytherin wanted to admit.

Charlie wasn’t happy Blaise had left the group but was pleased that Fred hadn’t been allowed to go. His hopefully reformed playboy of a brother loose in a store selling lingerie with his girlfriend sounded like a very bad idea indeed.

Remus remembered helping his mother shop before she took ill. He was grateful that Draco had the foresight to send the girls to shop for private things alone.

Angelina returned in forty minutes, their selections wrapped in brown paper and twine. Her three charges carried their packages while she handed the receipt to Draco. “I know it looks expensive but they needed them. It’s just a total; I didn’t think you really wanted to know what we choose.” She had her own purchase clenched in her hand.
Blaise was just behind them trying to assume the role of a bodyguard, he’d been tempted to purchase a few items but he hadn’t had a chance trying to keep track of four females. Not that he was keen on anyone knowing about his vice…

Draco nodded, glancing at the total and gesturing for a shopkeeper to come over. He paid the sum and glanced at Angelina, “Dress robes now or are there other things they need?”

Angelina was thoughtful, “We’ll have to find proper shoes somewhere else. Celestine’s doesn’t have a wide enough selection. For now we can head to shop for their dress robes. For witches dress robes come in various styles. I have to decide what suits them best. Both are heiresses so their choice of dress has to reflect a certain elegance but it also has to suggest personal taste. Sophronia strikes me as a bit of a tomboy, I’m thinking fancy dress boots, flowing black silk trousers with a silver design and a long knee length tunic probably green with a slit on both sides.”

Mafalda was surprised, “That sounds like something I would wear.”

Draco nodded, “It sounds classy and would look ravishing I’m sure with her dark auburn hair.” Sophronia’s hair was a dark reddish brown, a mix of the Prewett thick red hair and the dark wavy hair of the Blacks.

Greg who had been dozing, had woken up and was dry mouthed at the thought of the Queen of Slytherin in such an unusual and most likely trend-setting outfit. If she wore it to the Yule Ball, quite a few Slytherin girls would attempt to wear a similar outfit at a later date.

“Now Thena is a difficult case…” Angelina mused circling her, “I don’t know enough about her other then she’s a Third Year Ravenclaw.”

Tracey Davis seemed to have an innate sense of fashion and she hadn’t needed any assistance. She had chin length straight brown hair, blue-green eyes and silver spectacles. Tracey had chosen a pine green woollen dress that came to her knees with silver cuffs and pearl buttons. She wore a green cloak lined with fur, leather boots lined with similar fur and black slacks that had a wool look to them as well.

Draco glanced up at his cousin, “Do her a favour, drag her into the loo over then and give her a look.”

Luna sighed, growing up with a rather imaginative father who lived for conspiracy theories and ran
his controversial paper, the Quibbler out of their home she had little access to female role models after her mother died. “Alright, if you think it’s necessary. You do know this could backfire.” Her true identity was important to keep to as few people as possible to keep it away from the odious Headmaster.

Draco shrugged, “If she betrays you, she betrays Fred. I seriously doubt she would be capable of that.” Especially since she obviously worshiped the ground he walked on…

Angelina was a bit upset that this Ravenclaw would be worried she’d tell anything to that louse the Headmaster after hearing how the situation regarding the cursed bedstead was handled as well as witnessing the incident when Harry returned. What was so important about this Ravenclaw that she would be so secretive?

Luna sighed, gently taking Angelina’s arm, “Let’s get this over with. I’d prefer not to do this but if you really must see.”

Angelina let the secretive girl led her off.

Charlie nudged Remus, “What’s up with her?”

Remus had guessed ‘Thena who was introduced, as Draco’s cousin was none other then the Seer of the Veela Queen. He shrugged, “Not my place to tell and it’s not safe to discuss in a place like this.”

Nodding Charlie had no choice but to accept it.

Angelina came back tongue-tied after three minutes in the loo with Luna, “I see…that makes sense now. I think a midnight blue long flowing Grecian like toga with silver accents would compliment her looks well.”

Draco laughed, “Ms. Johnson if you ever decide to give up Quidditch, I see a long and glorious career as a fashion consultant before you.”

Angelina blushed; she adored clothes and always dressed well. “I never considered that.” She had excellent marks, not like Bill or Percy but decent, plenty of O and EE on her assignments and OWLS. She did enjoy flying but the idea of being a fashion consultant intrigued her.
Mafalda grinned, “If I’m supposed to be a Queen of Slytherin of all things, I certainly can’t run around dressed like a Muggle. If I had money of my own I’d hire you.”

Angelina smirked, “You’ll end up breaking both hearts and ideas of fashion. I can see you running around in leather capes rather then robes. You’d wear tight slacks; have a large collection of boots in various styles. Plenty of flowing tops long like tunics and vests of different fabrics or leather.”

“What about me?” Luna asked, her mother died when she was nine so she had no one to advise her.

“You seem the type to wear flowing dresses. Perhaps,” Angelina said thoughtfully, “A Muggle thing called leggings and short dresses. I don’t see you as a robe kind of witch either. You’d probably suit a knee length velvet cape with white fur trim and heels in Wizarding public. All though for more formal events at court you’d probably favour golden sandals.”

Luna nodded, “Sounds like me.”

“Well cousin,” Draco began, “Why don’t we see if we can find some of those things? At least we need the dresses but I don’t see why we can’t expand your wardrobe. A person of your rank should dress appropriately.”

A rather reluctant group of boys stood up.

Draco sighed, “Charlie, why don’t you take Fred, Vince, Greg, Adrian and Neville to Quality Quidditch? It’s just around the corner. Blaise and Remus can stay with us to watch the girls try on their clothes since I’m paying for them.”

Charlie shrugged, he wasn’t keen on splitting up again but he saw the point. Most of their group was bored. Straight wizards don’t usually don’t enjoy shopping with witches, honestly he wondered exactly how many bent wizards would. So he chose to usher the boys in his charge out heading for the Paris branch of Quality Quidditch.

Angelina led Luna, Tracey, Sophronia, Harry, Draco, Blaise and Remus to the section on the second floor containing clothing in the style she saw for Sophronia. Knowing Draco needed to sit and that Harry wouldn’t leave his side she piled clothes in Sophronia and Tracey’s arms. After she was satisfied they had enough she dragged Sophronia over to one of the velvet curtained dressing room, “Try them on.”
Luna watched curious to this whole adventure knowing that it would in time be her turn.

Blaise had spent so little time with his mother; it was his adopted family the Goyles who took the most time for him. Although his deceased stepfather had no children he was treated as one of the family. It was Lady Gabrielle Goyle who took him shopping if Professor Snape didn’t. When he did see his mother nowadays she was too busy absentmindedly instructing him on how to be a good Dominant. He didn’t care about that…

Draco was pleased with many of the striking outfits that Angelina created, passing one in at a time for Sophronia to try on before making her model them.

Angelina gave each outfit a critical eye, shaking her head at a few of them before saying she didn’t like them. The last outfit she handed to the Slytherin Queen was quite similar to the one she’d envisioned for her to wear to the Yule ball.

Mafalda exited the dressing room, and turned in a circle while looking at herself in a mirrored alcove. She was surprised not only did they have an outfit just like the one the Gryffindor Prefect and Quidditch Captain described that it suited her well.

Remus who was in no way attracted to young Miss Prewett, the new Queen of Slytherin, was surprised how well the outfit suited her.

Draco was relaxing in a settee not far from the mirror, he clapped his hands, “Capital. That will do very fine. I agree, there will be many members of our illustrious circle who will be seeking our similar clothing.”

Harry didn’t miss the flicker of pain that crossed Draco’s face when he moved, he fretted. He blamed himself for not insisting that his boyfriend rest, he was worried that Severus and Lucius would be angry with him…

Blaise also noticed, as did Luna.

Luna sighed, inching away from the other three girls. Her power was hidden beneath her Glamour. With a whispered spell to cloak her Veela magic, she reached out with a light touch resting her hand on Draco’s arm.
Draco felt the warm embrace of golden light as it encompassed him, when it dissipated he found he could breathe without pain. He reached to cover his cousin’s hand with his own, he mouthed a silent apology, he knew using her powers could bring attention to her and he was loathed to put her in danger. Which was why he hadn’t asked her to heal the damage the Cruciatus Curse had done, he was also too proud to ask and had been determined to continue his plans for the day. He gestured for a shop girl to retrieve the outfits that Angelina had decided suited Sophronia best after his Queen emerged from the dressing room in her original attire.

Mafalda began to protest.

“It’s nothing my dear, think of it as a gift. You suffered over two years of indignation before your true rank was revealed. I was remiss in my duties for not truly discovering your relationship to Slytherin House. Consider it a gift, thirteen years worth of Christmas and Birthday gifts that you should have received my Queen.” Draco said waving his hand dismissively of her attempts to protest. He spoke to the shop girl in exquisite French, tell her to tally up quickly, if she hurried that there would a Galleon tip for her.

The girl disappeared post haste.

Angelina led the party off to shop for Luna whom she knew as Thena for she had only been introduced to the Veela Ravenclaw’s true appearance and not her name.

XoooooX

Ms.Molly Prewett had quickly found herself escorted despite her protests to a cell, which she shared with no one.

Although since Ministry Cells overseen by the Aurors were not segregated she was placed in the same cellblock as the rat-faced Peter Pettigrew, mad escaped Azkaban Prisoner Barty Crouch Jr. and Percy’s boss Bartimus Crouch, former Head of the Ministry for Magic Department. She railed how a lady should not be housed with male prisoners.

Where upon an Auror who she didn’t recognize from the days when Arthur was among their number sniffed, “You are no lady.” and left her protesting in a shrill voice.
“Be glad when that bint is off our hands.” The Auror said to his colleague in charge of the cellblock.

“I hope those goblins take her off our hands. With all the things I heard she did, Azkaban might not be a harsh enough sentence. Last lady who went in to a Goblin Prison came out and promptly burnt to death. The one before that never came out. Musta died there.”

XoooooX

Delivering yet another prisoner or three to the Ministry was not Dora’s idea of a ‘relaxing vacation’, which is what she was on officially. She felt bad having to take her cousin Sirius Black but summoned her mother’s aging house elf Draper insisting she inform her mistress that her cousin Sirius was in custody and that she would expect to meet her in the Auror Department.

Annoyed Dora located an empty interview room, leaving her prisoners and going to locate Shacklebolt who also had the Potters’ case as well as the case against Molly Prewett. She rapped on his office door.

“Come in.”

Dora opened the door and entered.

“Auror Tonks? I thought you were returning to St. Mungos?”

“I was. Until of course I was Summoned by Remus Lupin. Draco Malfoy and Harry Potter were attacked in Hogsmeade. He managed to restrain Narcissa Black, a Miss Parkinson and a large dog he claimed is my mother’s cousin Sirius. I informed Mother, as she is the defacto Head of the Black Family regarding Sirius. I’m not sure what her reaction to her youngest sister’s arrest will be. She did little with Bellatrix, I doubt she with budge much for Narcissa.”

“How was the Boy Who Lived attacked?”

“My cousin Draco shielded Harry, taking the Cruciatus Curse twice.” Dora reported swiftly.
"Young Mister Malfoy is only fourteen, being hit twice with the Cruciatux Curse...by his own mother?" Kingsley Shacklebolt’s face was grim, "It’s an automatic prison sentence to cast an Unforgivable if caught. How old is Miss Parkinson?"

"I believe she is in the same year and house as my cousin. I know that Sirius has been on the run but he was reportedly in the defense of his godson." Dora replied.

"I see. They are?"

"In an interview room waiting for you." Dora handed over Parkinson and her aunt’s wand, retrieving them from her Auror’s robe, "I expect you’ll want to have them tested and stored in evidence."

"To attack to heirs of ancient blood lines, is not only illegal but it is a death sentence under the archaic laws. I wonder how their Guardians will insist we handle it."

"I should have summoned Lord Malfoy."

"Why don’t you go firecall him while I put these away and meet you in the interview room. Which one?"

"Number four, the others were in use." Dora said disappearing to inform her patron that his only child had been attacked.

XoooooX

Lucius was napping when a faint tap on his bare shoulder woke him.

"Treca sorry to wake Master. Master be having fire call form Ministry. It be Missy Dora."

Lucius kissed Severus’ hair, “Be right there.” He slipped out of bed and dressed in appropriate robes, if Dora was calling from the Ministry, most likely the Auror department something was up. He made his way to his study.
Dora heard his familiar footstep, “Lord Malfoy.”

Lucius noted her tone and responded in kind, “Auror.”

“I regret to inform you that your son was attacked this afternoon in Hogsmeade. Thanks to the quick reaction of Mr. Lupin his attackers were apprehended.”

Lucius was livid, “Draco? Attacked? Who dared lay a hand on my son?” he thundered, his Veela was outraged.

“Your former Bondmate Narcissa Black and a fellow student Miss Parkinson. They attempted to curse both Draco and Harry with the Crucius. Your son in an effort to protect Harry took both curses. Healers Smythe and Tonks who were summoned immediately and have seen him. Though restrained by Mr. Lupin, they were actually prevented from another attack by escaped prisoner Sirius Black. All three of which are currently in custody. Mistress Tonks has been summoned on Sirius’ behalf and may have some input as to her sister’s presence here. The punishment is up to you who speak for the persons attacked.” Dora said quickly.

“That woman attacked my son? Under the archaic laws her life is forfeit. Parkinson is young but clearly wrongfully influenced; I will accept a life-sentence for her. As for that Woman I’ll demand the rite of Blood Vengeance. Draco stands at present heir to two Ancient Houses as does Harry, I want that woman’s life, her worldly assets to be split between both victims. I’ll sue the Parkinsons for their heiress’ inheritance; if Andromeda joins me in that suit we’ll split that as well.” Lucius was out for blood, Veela he maybe but even creatures of light have a desire for vengeance. As a Veela defending his offspring, killing either female would not merit him any punishment. The act would be condoned under Veela law and the Ministry could not charge him for it.

“Very well my Lord, we shall expect you soon. The prisoners will be questioned and then you are welcome to file while they are in custody.” Dora said before her head disappeared from the fire and the green fire disappeared.

Lucius summoned Treca informing her to tell Severus upon rising that he had been called to the Ministry and would return as soon as he could. He knew that Malfoy elves were no doubt aware of Draco’s attack. He informed her sharply that Severus was not to be informed of Draco’s attack.

The poor elf had no choice but to promise.
It was a vengeful Lucius that stepped into the floo tossing floo powder and snapping, “Ministry of Magic, London.”

XoooooX

Andromeda encountered Lucius at the entrance to the Auror Department on the floor housing the Department of Magical Law Enforcement.

They nodded at one another, their faces wearing identical grim expressions.

Dora was pacing and gestured for them to follow her.

The three entered the interview room where Dora showed them to comfortable chairs, which two lesser skilled Aurors who were accepted prior to herself had placed them.

“Thank you for coming Mistress Tonks and Lord Malfoy, your presence is both a pleasure and a courtesy.” Shacklebolt said politely, reminding them that they were not allowed to question. He nodded at Lord Malfoy, “Our most sincere thanks for your little hunting expedition this morning, I apologize that you felt the need to do as you did but we are in fact grateful for your assistance.”

Dora chuckled, “Between Lord Malfoy and myself we’ve arrested no less then six persons, while retrieving two escapees from Azkaban. Rest assured your lordship we’ll take care that similar escapes cannot be attempted.”

Shacklebolt nodded, “Perhaps, since Auror Black has been treated most dreadfully, that we should deal with him first.”

Dora shrugged, while her mother nodded, “I may not think much of my cousin but he does after all this time deserve justice.”

Sirius III was presentably ungagged. “Justice? Hah!” he said scornfully, “The Ministry doesn’t know the meaning of the word.”
“Perhaps we didn’t. However evidence has come to light from both young Mr. Potter and Pettigrew that prove your innocence. However we would like you to submit for the record your memories regarding the night the Potters died.”

Sirius’ eyes widened, “Does that mean I’ll be freed?”

Andromeda chose to speak, “As Harry’s voice in political matters and considering that our Minister for Magic saw fit to have your case re-investigated I will be quite insistent on your immediate release and an apology. However, before I consider stepping down and allowing you to assume the mantle of Lord Black there will be certain things you’ll have to be informed of. Harry has been removed from Lily’s sister’s care. He is currently under the care of a mind healer and a well respected healer.”

Sirius III was outraged, “What did that horse-faced Muggle bitch do to my godson?” he growled, “and what is Malfoy doing here? He’s a Death Eater! I never understood why he didn’t get tossed into Azkaban and the key forgotten. If anyone deserved it, its him.”

Lucius had no love for this Sirius Black yet went on in a silky voice, “Auror Black,” deciding that such address would be more likely to get the man to keep his temper, “You know the type of woman you had the misfortune to have as a mother. I had a similar father, for they were of one mind. Which is why when you were disowned and your betrothal to your cousin torn up and Andromeda who had the sense to leave before being trapped in a loveless Bonding with the likes of myself and elope with her Ted, our parents conspired me to be forced into Bonding with that woman.”

“What the hell does that have to do with anything?” Sirius III growled, not falling prey to the odious man’s attempt at blatant flattery.

Lucius continued, “My father and your mother were of one mind like I said, believing our two families must be united. My father was insistent despite my feelings to not only force me to Bond with your cousin but wanted to do away with my Veela nature. Between my father and your cousin they forced me to be Bonded and to take the Dark Mark. I am taking steps to rebuild my life and to have the Mark removed. I have since had my Bonding with your cousin annulled and have been Bonded to the person of my own choosing who is my Mate.”

Sirius III turned to Kingsley Shacklebolt, who had as luck would have it been his mentor when he was accepted into Auror Training. “You actually believe this nonsense?”

Shacklebolt nodded, “This very morning he undertook a dangerous task, he managed to subdue and
deliver into custody He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named,”

At which point Narcissa Black proceeded to thrash in her bonds and scream against her gag.

Shacklebolt continued on, “the gentleman who had you unjustly sentenced, most likely on Dumbledore’s insistence who as it is, is currently inhabiting a cell himself for assisting in the escape from Azkaban of his own son. Both of whom are now soon to be neighbours for a long time, for both have used Unforgivables. Which we both know is a life sentence in Azkaban. The third prisoner to come in, you have a score to settle with. A man of dubious loyalty, one Peter Pettigrew.”

Sirius’ face was flushed with anger, “That good for nothing traitor is here?”

“Yes, Severus and I brought the loathsome worm in. Severus would have killed him for the same reasons as yourself Auror Black. I restrained him, Lily would not want him to bloody his hands even for her sake.”

“That greasy Snivellus? What right does he have for vengeance?” Sirius III snapped

“Lily Potter, formerly Evans as you well know was his best friend growing up. Whether you took your head out of your arse long enough Auror Black to notice they made up after his disastrous lapse in judgment and temper when he fatefully called her that derogatory name regarding her origins. A memory that shames him to this day, he took Harry into his custody when he fell ill and begged me to see that he received proper attention from a real Healer. Since you were on the run, he decided despite Lily’s probable approving of his guardianship, that it would be best for Remus to take charge of him.”

“Snivellus got Remus guardianship of Harry? Why?”

“Because he felt he had done them both a disservice considering his previous treatment of them. He also pushed for your case to be re-examined. Remus has custody of Harry at present, he is doing his duty as executor of his inheritance and since he is not of the proper standing to hold Harry’s votes he graciously asked Andromeda if she would, as a Daughter of the House of Black she can vote on Harry’s behalf though she cannot inherit as you can.” Lucius said getting a bit of a headache from having to be in the presence of two of his least favourite people, Narcissa and Sirius Black.

“So that was why Remus was with Harry. Why the hell was Harry hanging around with your bastard son?” Sirius III knew that if a Bonding was annulled, all progeny sired during the course of
that Bonding became bastards.

“My son,” Lucius said icily, “is no bastard. He was immediately following my Bonding to my Mate, blood adopted and thus he is the blood heir at present to both the lines of Malfoy through myself and Prince through his papa Severus.”

Sirius III’s eyes widened, “You are Bonded to Snivellus? Why? You could have anyone and you choose that greasy git?”

Lucius glared, “I love him and when I came into my inheritance as a Veela that was who my Veela choose. As for Remus I trust him with my son, not just because he is a trustworthy man but also because he like me is drawn to Severus as a mate. He would allow no harm to come to Severus’ son without consequence. Which is why he had these two arrested. I suspect he merely turned you over to Auror Tonks so the final preparations could be made for your pardon.”

Sirius snarled, “I don’t believe my friend could be attracted to Snivellus.”

Lucius shrugged, “Believe what you will. Now I believe you owe Senior Auror Shacklebolt a memory. “

Shacklebolt banished the ropes restraining his former colleague, “Now I hope you will keep your temper Black. I would like to one day see you return to our ranks.” He pulled out a vial for the memory and his former apprentice’s own wand, “We already ascertained it wasn’t your wand that blew up the street. When you leave you may take that with you.”

Sirius took up his own wand in his thin hand covered in pale, parchment-like skin, muttering the incantation and retrieving the silver thread of memory. “There. So when shall I be receiving an apology?”

Shacklebolt sighed, “As soon as Fudge is informed of your capture, questioning, the retrieval of Pettigrew’s Order of Merlin, Third Class and he can make a public announcement that new evidence has come to light proving your innocence.”

“I will be insisting on a monetary compensation on his behalf.”

Lucius smirked, “My dear Andromeda, I just had a thought. Crouch has Black Blood.”
Andromeda nodded, “Yes, what of it?”

“With both Crouches in custody for life term sentences, I believe they have no other relations. Do their estates and vaults revert to their nearest relation or to the control of the Lord of the House of Black?”

Andromeda thought about it, “I believe it depends on the circumstances. However in this case due to the entails that reverted the majority of Black Holdings to Sirius Black III, I believe we can claim them. In lieu of paying a hefty sum in reparation I believe the Wizengamot would see fit to grant control of the Crouch Assets to his care.”

Sirius III smirked, “Oh I’d love that. I’m freed, that bastard the pompous Lord Crouch in Azkaban and I get everything he owns? There is justice I suppose.”

“Since all evidence regarding the Death of the Potters is currently under review, I shall release you to the custody of Mistress Tonks. I expect she will ensure when your case finally comes before the Council of Magical Law that you will be present.”

Sirius III snorted, “I won’t miss my day in court. After all, I was denied one prior and I deserve to prove my innocence.”

Andromeda nodded sharply, “I will ensure he attends.”

“Lord Malfoy, would it be possible to see if a memory of the person who informed He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named of the Potters’ hiding place could be removed?”

Lucius sighed, “I’ll ask. I’m sure the King of the Chuvash might be agreeable if you would pass along records of substance and reliable evidence regarding provable actions by the Dark Lord and his servants. Not hearsay but actual proof such as the Torturing of the Longbottoms or the Murder of the Potters.”

Shacklebolt nodded, “I’m sure in the interest of justice I can copy and pass of such files with the consent of my superiors of course.”
“Of course.” Lucius nodded.

“How would we give them to King Sirius?” Shacklebolt asked.

Andromeda spoke, “I have a way of contacting him. Since he has granted me the ability to visit Black Manor that is.”

“Black Manor?” Sirius stammered, “but that’s been lost.”

Andromeda sighed, “The King of the Chuvash is our ancestor Phineas Nigellus Black’s elder brother. He was Bonded to a Submissive Chuvash and closed the Manor deciding to live apart from Wizarding society. His title passed to his brother and in due course to you. If of course he deems you worthy of succeeding him. He has reinstated myself and other persons blasted off by your mother. In return he disowned her and my sisters. He dislikes Narcissa already and when he hears that she tried to attack Harry he maybe out for Blood.”

“Her blood is mine.” Lucius said silkily, “She attacked my son, I am Veela and I will be enacting the rite of Blood Vengeance. I have no desire for requesting a Blood Feud, I know too many Blacks that whose company I do not despise.”

Narcissa shivered against her will it seemed.

“Now I believe you Auror Black maybe excused. May I ask where he will be?”

Andromeda glanced at her cousin, “As much as I dislike him, it would be cruel and unfeeling of me to put him in the house of his birth, Grimmauld Place. However, I choose to be gracious and will allow him to return to his own home at Baskerville Hall. There I will have him remain under house arrest until he is brought before the Council of Magical Law and all charges against him are summarily dropped for lack of evidence.”

“That shall be sufficient.” Shacklebolt nodded, “You are free to go Auror Black. Now Sirius please try to stay out of trouble. No rowdy parties with lots of pretty ladies. Your last girlfriend Miss Charity Burbage was quite upset when I didn’t seem to defend you. She insisted you were innocent and would not, could not betray James. She said you would never be a Death Eater and that it all had to be a misunderstanding. I do hope you contact her, I am sure she would be pleased to hear from you.”
Lucius knew that Charity Burbage was still single and was now a Professor of Muggle Studies at Hogwarts.

Andromeda led her cousin who could still be considered a disgrace away.

Shacklebolt turned to the teenage girl, ungagging her, “Now tell me Miss Parkinson, why in Merlin’s name you would believe that casting the Cruciatius at the Boy Who Lived and your own Housemate Draco Malfoy was the thing to do.”

“That whore stole my Draco! He was betrothed to me from the cradle his mother said so. We were to be Bonded when we both came of age, in time I would become Lady Malfoy. I should be Draco’s consort not that disgusting Halfblood whore!” Pansy ranted.

“Miss Parkinson, you and Draco have not and never would be betrothed. That choice rested with me, I knew the day he was born that he was Veela. I would not betrothed my child from birth and subject him to the same trauma of being forced to Bond with someone not your mate. I know my son and he would never have wanted you.” Lucius said icily.

“Why right have you to lie and say you aren’t Bonded to Lady Narcissa? She’s a wonderful woman.” Pansy snarled.

“Narcissa Black and my Bonding was annulled with the consent of the Minister for Magic. I never wanted to be Bonded to her, I hated her, for the simple fact that she made my Mate’s life miserable. He was a Halfblood with the misfortune of being raised Muggle. He was the grandson of Lord Prince and should have been treated as such. Instead he was tortured and bullied both inside his House and without. I should have despite his protests placed him under my protection. He was my Consort though unofficially. I did him a disservice by not making that plain. He wished to not cause me trouble. He was willing to live with me under terms other then Bonding. I should have done the honourable thing as did Andromeda and eloped with him. Instead after she eloped I foolishly attempted to convince my father to allow me choose my own Bondmate. That failed and I was trapped with Narcissa and forced to take the Mark.”

“Your traitor! When the Dark Lord returns,”

“The Dark Lord will never return. He is done with being the Dark Lord. He is currently in the custody of the one man who has right to judge him. He will face judgement but a few things must happen first. You will not be able to serve him for he shall need no servants. You will because of my charity and your years will be allowed out live out your years in Azkaban. If Lady Longbottom were of a vengeful mind, then she would file for the Rite of Blood Feud against the Lestranges. I think that
Lord Prewett should file one against Dolohov for killing his twin.”

“You are just as much of a fool as your son!” Pansy snapped.

“I think I’ve heard enough. Auror Tonks escort this girl to the cells. If they are crowded, I believe she and Ms. Prewett deserve each other.”

Dora tossed her violet hair, “A pity that they aren’t. I hope they enjoy one another’s company regardless.”

Shacklebolt turned to Narcissa as his colleague dragged out the Parkinson girl, “Now Miss Black, your actions are heinous. You attempted to cast the Cruciatus Curse, which is illegal, as you no doubt know for your sister was imprisoned for the same crime. Why in Merlin’s name would you try to curse your own child?”

“That little bastard is no child of mine. Lucius allowed him to be spoilt by that dirty Halfblood he kept as his lover. He should have allowed me to teach that ungrateful wretch some manners before he became insufferable, like my cousin Sirius who was a disgrace to the family.” Narcissa glared.

“Draco was always more Severus’ son then yours, he should have been Severus’ from the beginning. Severus loved him, something you are incapable of. You would have beaten him or used the Cruciatus curse on him as punishment. I could not, would not allow such a thing, which is why I kept you away from him. You never cared one wit for him, even when his cauldron exploded and he was injured. Even then you wanted to Crucio him for it and he was already in pain. That was when I decided you were beyond help, you were mad through and through. I should have gotten annullled from you then but I was too cowardly. I am most grateful that we are no longer Bonded. Your attack on Draco by Wizarding standards requires an immediate life sentence to Azkaban. Being a Veela, I have the right and duty to kill you.” Lucius said moving within spitting distance of her. “I will kill you and it will be legal, it will have no mark on my conscience if I do. However due to the injuries you have done to both of us, it will harm my conscience if I do not. I have not told Severus what you have done to our son, he will want to kill you himself that is not something I will allow. If he bloodies his hands he will be punished. If I do I will walk free as you never shall. I want you to consider that. I will come when you least expect it, for now I want you to suffer and Azkaban is the place for that.”

“If you are quite done Lord Malfoy I shall take her to the cells myself. I do hope you are sure that killing her is the right choice. If you truly have kept your hands clean I would hate for you to bloody them on scum like her.”
Lucius spun on his heel; “I’m through with her for now. Now I must break the news to my Bondmate that our son was attacked.” He was still quite angry that Remus had see fit not to tell them. He left Shacklebolt to deal with that loathsome Black woman.

Chapter End Notes

Chapter 25- Wand thefts, unexpected talent revealed and wand shopping

After finishing at Celestine's Boutique, Draco who was no longer in pain decided to retrieve his companions from Quality Quidditch where he sent them. He was quite hungry now that he thought about it despite the late breakfast and sweets at Honeydukes. He sent Blaise inside to fetch Charlie, Vince, Greg, Fred, Adrian and Neville. He'd sent Dreca back to the Manor with Sophronia and Luna's purchases. Angelina had summoned her own elf to take her things back to Gryffindor Tower. They would once more dine at Savoir Faire before proceeding to Andre's for proper dress robes to wear to the Yule Ball. He hoped if Adrian had no date as of yet he would choose to attend with Neville, he sensed something brewing between them even if they didn't.

He requested a private room for his party; Malfoy though unwelcome in some British Wizarding circles was well known and respected on the continent.

With a trademark Malfoy smirk and to the waiter's astonishment he told him to inform the chef they would be wanting the entirety of the menu along with over a dozen extra plate. He poured an appropriate amount of galleons into a small velvet bag. "This should be enough to start a tab." He informed the man in French, requesting the choicest wines to arrive chilled with their complimentary dish; as well as Butterbeer and pitchers of a variety of juices. They would like tea and coffee while they waited for their appetizers.

Blaise laughed, addressing his friend in French, "You must think this is a sort of party to order the entire menu."

Draco winked, "Only the best for my Harry. After all, he hasn't had the opportunity to explore exotic cuisine the way we have."

Both through his mother and stepfamily, the Goyles, Blaise had plenty of experience with French Cuisine.

The tea and coffee arrived quickly; it didn't take much longer for the appetizers to arrive.

Draco pointed out each dish to Harry, "That is 'Crevettes Sauce Boursin'; it's shrimp sautéed with sun-dried tomatoes, corn and leeks in a garlic and herb cream sauce. Then there is 'Champignon Portabella aux Quatre Fromages'; grilled mushroom stuffed with Swiss, brie and parmesan cheeses, over a blue cheese sauce. You tried escargot before but this is 'Escargots Bourguignon' snails in garlic, parsley and butter. This is 'Saumon Fumé'; you see its smoked salmon garnished with field greens, capers and shallots. This last dish is 'Bruschetta de Flageolets'; grilled French bread with mashed flageolet beans, tomatoes, thyme, garlic and balsamic vinegar."

"That doesn't seem like a lot of food..." Harry said after considering everyone here. Except for the snails, which he didn't especially care for, everything looked and smelled yummy.

Draco laughed, "This is just the appetizer course. Then comes of the soup and salad course. Finally we'll have the entrée course. Since this isn't a restaurant we are all familiar with I've ordered everything so we might try it. Then the next time we come we'll know what we like."

Harry thought that was a really cool plan, "Is it expensive?"
Draco poked his cheek, "It's a date, don't worry about cost. Besides, I've barely touched my bag of Galleons yet. I've got loads in my vault." One date wouldn't make his fathers poorer. Besides, if he ended up Bonded to Harry, they'd add the double inheritance of the Potters and Blacks to the Malfoy's dozen vaults and infinite rental properties. He wasn't in it for the money; he was genuinely attracted to the shy, abused Gryffindor. He really wanted to give the slightly younger teen a life he should have had if his parents had raised Harry.

The group all had tasters from the variety of appetizers.

Draco summoned the waiter with bell-like sounding charm, asking for a second serving of the favourites Bruschetta de Flageolets, Saumon Fumé and Crevettes Sauce Boursin. It seemed that only himself and Luna enjoyed the Escargots Bourguignon and Champignon Portabella aux Quatre Fromages. Veela were more fond of escargot and mushrooms apparently then wizards and witches with no creatures inheritances and the Chuvashes.

So when the second serving of Draco's favourites arrived he was surprised when Fred took over a third.

Fred shrugged, "I felt a craving for them."

Angelina and Charlie gave him a disgusted look.

Fred snorted, "Don't look at me like that. You ate pretty rare meat last time Charlie. I thought that was," he wrinkled his nose in distaste, "odd."

Draco wondered against just what Fred's creature inheritance was. He was no Chuvash or Veela that was certain. What other creature inheritance was found in Black, Prewett and Weasley lines?

Remus enjoyed the dishes that weren't snail and mushroom, happily nibbling on the Bruschetta.

A large silver soup tureen was placed on the table with small ceramic bowls stacked.

The bowls were ordered from Japan where they were made by hand so not one was identical to the next. There was an opalescent or was it metallic sheen to them?

Their server dished out French Onion soup covered with a thick layer of Swiss cheese and a large basket of toasted French bread.

A few large salads also joined the soup on the table; and the dishes were passed from hand to hand.

The group held pleasant conversations as they enjoyed their meal.

Gideon was finally feeling well, getting up to read in the library for a few hours. He nearly dropped his book when he realized something was off, missing… his wand? Where was his wand? Had that odious old man destroyed it? He snapped his fingers, summoning his elf in residence.

Arthur looked up at him, wondering what he wanted.

Jocy stood there, wringing his pillowcase, "Yes my Lord?"

"Where is my wand? Did my sister have it buried with me?" Gideon asked.

Jocy's eyes widened, "Why no master. Miss Molly thought it foolish to bury perfectly useful wands with Fabian, yourself and your father. Even stole Bilius and her mother's wands."
"Where is my wand? Why would she break a time honoured tradition?" Gideon was furious that his sister desecrated wands. It was custom to bury a wand with its master with the exception of the family wand that many old families had.

"Master Fabian's wand is with Young Master Bill. Lord Dathan's wand original wand went to Charles. Your wand Master…is in Master Fred's hand. It sort of likes him. The Prewett wand is in Master Percy's hand."

Gideon blinked, "What?" the wand carried by the Head of the Prewett line was in the hand of his third son? "That shouldn't be…when did it chose him?"

"On Master Percy's eleventh birthday…Miss Molly made them choose a wand. When Master Charles was eleven she gave him Master Dathan's original wand. When he became Quidditch Captain, Lord Weasley bought him a wand. Now Master Dathan's wand is broken. Miss Molly interred it with Master Dathan then. Master Fred need good wand, wand not like him much." Jocy said nervously. "Bilius' wand went to Ginevra and Lady Danau's wand to Master George."

"How could you let her do this?" Gideon asked Arthur.

Arthur was dumbfounded, "I didn't know. I assumed she bought them wands."

Gideon was very annoyed. He wanted his wand back. He wanted his life back. "I guess it's time for my first appearance in public. I'm getting my wand back. I suppose that means that our sons at least the twins need new wands."

Arthur was not about to tell his soulmate he couldn't have his wand. "Alright. We'll need warm clothes."

"Jocy get right way."

"You think Fred's in Hogsmeade or at Hogwarts?"

Arthur chuckled, "Probably Hogsmeade, he's usually spending all his money on Zonko's."

Jocy returned quickly with warm cloaks and boots as well as gloves and mufflers. "Here Masters."

"Jocy, do you know where Fred is?" Arthur asked absently.

"Master Fred be in Paris."

"What?" Arthur coughed.

"Master Fred be in Paris with Master Charles."

Gideon could breathe better, "At least he's being looked after."

"Jocy bring you there?"

Arthur laughed, "That would be interesting."

"Saves time searching for them. I want my wand." Gideon said firmly.

Jocy took a forearm in each of his long fingered hands and they disappeared with a pop.

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Luna glanced up at Draco mid bite of salad, "Someone's coming to retrieve something that belongs to them."

Draco nearly choked on a snail, "What?"

There was a soft pop.

Charlie spun around wand in hand, before blinking at the newcomers, "Dad? Papa?"

Gideon spotted Fred, "I want something that belongs to me." He held out his hand, "Wand."

Before Fred could react, his wand zoomed out of his pocket and into his bearer's hand. "What?"

"That Knut-pinching wench who purported to be your mother broke tradition not burying wands with their deceased owners. You ended up with my wand. I'm afraid you'll be needing your own." Gideon said with a dramatic sigh.

Charlie took a bit to process this, "Papa is it safe for you to be out of the Hall?"

"Perhaps, perhaps not. What is a wizard without a wand?" Gideon said trying to give off the appearance of being bored rather then annoyed.

No one really had the unfeeling nature to reply to that and give the crude response: a Muggle

Remus was curious, "What is your wand Gideon?"

Gideon grinned, "Alligator Juniper and Unicorn Hair. Unicorn Hair is said to be the strongest wand core for healing. Alligator Juniper is considered one of the best woods for talented healers. I wanted to be a healer since I was young."

Remus nodded, "I believe Unicorn Hair it is also known for reversing the effects of poisons. As well strong for Charms and Transfiguration."

Draco was surprised, "You know wandlore?"

Remus nodded, "I was once quite interested in it as a field of study. Until someone discovered I… never mind."

"What sort of a wand do you possess Remus? I would have thought you'd have made a decent Auror like James and Sirius." Arthur asked.

"Black Laurel and Hippogriff Feather. Hippogriff Feathers result in wands that are strong for Charm work. It can be a very versatile wand, renowned for adaptability. It demands respect from wielders. Black Laurel wands are excellent for Defense Against the Dark Arts, as well as spells of absorption, reversal and destruction of negative spells"

"That would explain your marks." Arthur mused, "I still believe you would have made an excellent Auror even with such a wand, or perhaps because of it."

"What is wandlore?" Harry asked curious.

"In a book written by Garrick Ollivander he put it, 'Wandlore is a complex and mysterious branch of magic.' Rightly so, you see each wand is a little different, just as each and every witch and wizard is unique. Some magic users are very adept at casting magic without the use of a wand, but it has been noted that the results are generally less-than-effective, and that it is a course better left to races other than humans. The length of the wand, the type and flexibility of the wood involved in it's crafting
and the core all contribute to the overall power and effectiveness of the wand. It is important to note that just as not two wands are identical, neither can any wand be simply picked up and used with ease by someone that is not its owner. It will be a foreign object, not 'alive' to the touch in the same manner as the wand that 'chooses' the witch or wizard as its partner in magic. It is believed that a truly gifted wandmakers can see a wand within a piece of wood; a wandmaker is an artist as well as a creator. Wandmaking can be a dangerous occupation; one often handles dangerous or temperamental cores."

"You wanted to enter a dangerous field of study?" Draco was interested.

"It fascinated me, I stumbled upon it quite accidentally. A book on wandlore ended up in my books while I was on prefect duty in the library. I had hopes of apprenticing to Ollivander who is reputed to be one of the best, though he's a bit set in his ways about wandcores. If I'd had the money, I'd have also wanted to study under Gregorovitch who is also a famed wandmaker. Wands are considered quasi-sentient; they choose their masters to some extent. A good witch or wizard can use any wand but if it isn't a good fit there could be problems.

"Can a wand refuse a master?" Neville asked shyly.

"Yes, like I said a wizard can't just pick up any wand. If it isn't meant to be yours it won't work as well or at all." Remus said gently.

"What is this wand? Gran never told me and it's not easy to use." Neville handed over his wand nervously.

Remus examined it closely, "I believe this is Black Willow." He tested it, "Springy, fourteen inches. Ah! Phoenix Feather. That would prove a temperamental mix. I suspect it needs a firm hand, would I be right in assuming it was your father's? I suspect it would be decent for Transfiguration in the right hands."

"It was my father's." Neville said quietly.

Remus nodded, "Frank was a confident man on the pitch and off. He was an excellent Keeper and a keen duellist. Would have suited this wand. However, it is not suited to you. Far be from me it to be tell a woman like your grandmother how to raise a child but a wand like this could adversely affect your marks as well as learning. You haven't the confidence to wield it yet. Perhaps, when you are older and more confident but not now." Remus turned thoughtful, "I'd recommend something of a more willing wand, one that instills confidence. A wood with ties to Earth magic, you are exceptionally talented in Herbology as well as having a natural gift for Defense. I heard your Transfiguration Marks weren't dreadful. Definitely not an Apple wand, they aren't reliable. They tend to lose duels for their masters because they are easily overwhelmed. Definitely a fruit wood though, so maybe a Cherry or Peach, they would suit you best."

Fred sipped his pumpkin juice, "What about me? Since I'm wandless at the moment." Another reason to dislike his 'mother'…

"You?" Remus burst out laughing, "If anyone deserved a wand with a Billywig stinger core it's you!"

"What!" Fred choked.

"Main ingredient in Fizzing Wizzbees. They are good for Charms. They tend to bond to happy-go-lucky individuals and pranksters. That is if my memory serves me correctly, but they can be temperamental." He muttered, "Far better then Padfoot's wand."
"Padfoot? Wasn't he one of the Marauders?" Fred asked.

"Moony at your service." Remus gave a comical bow.

"What was Padfoot's wand?" Fred was really, really curious.

"Blood Wood and Leprechaun Hair, not the smartest mixture Ollivander came up with. Suited Siri just fine though. Blood Wood wands create the strongest bonds with passionate, fiery people. Wands with Leprechaun Hair cores can bring wielder great luck or cause them a lot of trouble. Users are often considered to be divided between cheerful and good-natured folk, or thoughtless pranksters. That was Siri alright." Remus shook his head.

Harry thought that was a rather honest description of his godfather. "What were my parents?"

"James' wand was Mahogany and Dragon Heartstring. Mahogany is well suited to protection magic like wards and shields, which would benefit an Auror. It is believed to be more likely to bond with someone of considerable energy. Which is probably why James was an excellent Chaser, always in motion. Might also have explained his Patronus being a stag, the combination made it excellent at Transfiguration. While Dragon Heartstring specializes in hexes, lacks subtlety but can be very powerful. They were a good match." Remus said thoughtfully, "As for Lily, her wand was a swishy Willow and Hippogriff Feather. It was a very versatile wand, renowned for adaptability. It demanded respect, excellent for Charms that is why she worked in the Department for Experimental Charms as a researcher. She had some skill at healing magic and divination, probably augmented by her wand. Lily was also an excellent judge of character."

"We're not in Diagon Alley, where would be best to get a wand for Fred?" Arthur asked.

"Ollivander's of course. A cousin of Garrick's Louis has an excellent reputation here in Paris. He claims to be able to match the perfect wand to any witch or wizard. I've never met him though. He is known to make a wand special if he hasn't the proper wand. Louis and Garrick though trained by the same man part ways over cores. Garrick refuses to use anything but unicorn hair, dragon heartstring and phoenix feathers." Remus said with a shrug. "It might be prudent to try here. Not sure how safe Diagon Alley would be at present."

"How far would his establishment be?" Gideon asked.

"I saw it near Quality Quidditch I think." Charlie offered.

"We've got some time." Draco said quickly.

"We'll just pop over with Fred." Arthur said, "Can't have my son at Hogwarts wandless."

Fred grinned, his own wand? Wouldn't George be jealous? "What about George?"

"Is his wand giving him trouble? I know he's using my mother's." Gideon said worried.

"They get alone better then me and yours. Despite being a Beater, he has a gentler personality." Fred shrugged, George would not be please to find out he was using a woman's wand bent wizard or not.

Neville asked nervously, "I'd like to come..." maybe, he'd use his pocket money for a real wand. Maybe he wasn't an almost Squib...could his poor marks because of his wand?

"Since they'll be staying here and I've always wanted to meet Louis Ollivander, I'd like to come." Remus was clearly excited.
Harry had never really seen Remus that intense, not even when he was 'bonding' with Sirius after discovering that Pettigrew was a conniving useless traitor. He was clearly passionate about wandlore…

"Go ahead. You can tell us about the adventure later. Hurry back or we'll eat all the food." Draco teased, "Besides, we still have clothes shopping."

"Shopping?" Gideon asked.

"Oh dear, where are my manners?" Draco said giving off the impression that he was quite displeased with himself, "Lord Gideon Prewett, meet Sophronia Prewett. Previously known as Mafalda or Mal by Fred and George. Sophronia is Queen of Slytherin due to her Black blood from her grandmother. She's been invited to attend the Yule Ball by Gregory Goyle, heir to the House of Goyle. Sophronia, this would be your father's cousin Gideon. I took Sophronia and my cousin 'Thena shopping. They were Third Years who didn't begin the year with dress robes because they were too young to go on their own. We picked out tasteful, striking outfits I'm sure you'll approve"

"Thank you Malfoy, you must allow me to compensate you." Gideon began.

Draco waved his hand dismissively, "Consider is a gift. Our Queen should have clothing that reflects her status as a Daughter of the Houses of Prewett and Black."

"When I have fully recovered I'll be speaking to your father. I have plans to adopt you." Gideon announced holding her hand and bowing over it.

Sophronia blushed, "Thank you sir." She knew enough about the Wizarding World due to her being placed in Slytherin House that her Squib father and Muggle mother would impede her. They weren't really close anyway…

Arthur smiled, "Be nice to have a blood daughter."

"Mal's really smart, conniving too. She's got prank ideas and she's agreed to help us with the shop." Fred grinned, "So has Greg. He's a decent bloke, certainly not a brainless muscle head snake like Derrick and Bole."

Greg choked on his last bite of French bread, bit weird to be complimented by his tutors the Gryffindor Beaters.

Gideon went to sort him out, hovering like the concerned healer he was even though he hadn't finished his training.

Arthur clasped his shoulder gently when his mate was convinced the teen would be fine. "Better go."

The group mostly were in their own little conversations when they left.

XoooooX

An excitable Remus led Arthur Weasley, Gideon Prewett, Fred Weasley, Neville Longbottom and for some inexplicable reason Adrian Pucey, King of Slytherin. He opened the door to Ollivander's wands- Paris branch.

"Welcome! How might I assist you?" a man younger looking then Garrick Ollivander was expected to be met them.

"Louis Ollivander?" Remus asked.
"Yes, who might you be?"

"Just someone keenly interested in wandlore. I once hoped to apprentice…" Remus admitted shamefaced. "I was particularly aware of your reputation on the continent. As well as your different methodology regarding wandcores compared to your cousin."

"Garrick!" the man snorted, "Makes a fine wand, but wands must be a perfect match to both magical ability and personality. Can't get that using only three cores. Just 'cause his dad didn't do business with the right people to get decent core materials is no reason to not use other cores. Takes a special type of wandmaker to work with volatile cores. Got to choose the right wood. Ya didn't come to discuss wandlore as interesting as it is didja?"

Arthur pointed at Fred, "I just got out of a bad relationship. My ex decided to force my sons to use wands of deceased family members rather then allowing them to get their own. It turns out she stole his bearer's wand, made my son use it. Now that Gideon's well, he'll be needing his wand back. Didn't take to one another, Gideon's a born healer and Fred here is a born prankster."

"Prankster? Hmm…" He pulled out a measuring tape, "Wand arm?"

Fred held it out.

"I think he'd do well with fourteen inch wand. Prankster? Not the type for a Leprechaun hair. Too grounded. Hogwarts?"

Fred nodded, "Gryffindor. Sixth Year."

"I taught him for a year. Keen at Defense Against the Dark Arts. Highly imaginative. Creative sort, inventor. Wants to open his own establishment selling pranks and trick items. From what I've read I thought a Billywig stinger core might suit him."

"Inventive sort? Imaginative? I might have just the wand. Wouldn't let it go to just anyone. Temperamental bugger. Bored easily in wrong hands."

Neville was just looking about, hands in his cloak when a wand seemed to call out to him. He reached out as if to touch it but paused as if thinking better of it.

Adrian and Remus were barely able to catch sight of it.

A wand threw itself into Neville's hand.

Neville barely managed to wrap his fingers around it; it felt alive, like it sang in his hand. Giving off red sparks, it seemed to connect with him.

"You, young man. Name?"

"N…Neville Longbottom."

"Frank's son." Arthur supplied.

"I've almost never seen a wand choose a master that way. Age? House?"

"Fourteen…Fourth Year…Gryffindor."

"Would of picked you for a Hufflepuff with a stuttering problem like that. Don't you have a wand?"

"Just…dad's…" Neville admitted.
"What is it?"

"Black Willow and Phoenix Feather. It's springy, fourteen inches and temperamental. Needs a firm hand due to its nature. Served Auror Longbottom well, was excellent at Transformation." Remus interjected for his shy former student.

"For you wandlore is not a hobby." Louis said glancing at Remus, "It's a gift. If you were a Ollivander you would have been trained from a young age." He held out his hand for the wand that clearly chose the Longbottom boy, "Ah yes, 13" Cherry and unicorn hair. Not an especially fine wand. Was experimenting with Gerrick's techniques.'

"Wouldn't that prove a contradictory mix for him? Unicorn hair is strong for Charms and Transfiguration. Associated with the pure of heart, virtue, courage and strength of character. It is symbolic of elegance and charisma. Better for gentle, thoughtful and insightful users, which Neville is. Cherry on the other hand, easy to use aids rather than hinders casting. Good all-round wandwood, except for Dark magic. While particularly good for Healing and Divination, Neville however excels at Herbology and Defense."

"He may find that subjects that were previously difficult are easier. It is possible he was so talented at Herbology and Defense that his less then useful wand couldn't hinder him. I might not have picked this wand for him, like my uncle always said; 'It's the wand that chooses the wizard'. Although, I've found that a truly talented wandmaker had a feel for both wandmaking and pairing wands to their masters. One of mine, if it isn't broken need never be replaced. I don't make or sell wands with flaws." Louis said airily, "You mentioned this boy's character and considered Billywig. I might have just the wand." He summoned a box and removed the lid, "Wouldn't give this to just anyone like I said. Needs a firm imaginative hand, I'd say it likes learning. It's Sycamore and Billywig, fourteen inches and springy."

Fred reached for it, sensing it hum and it seemed to strike him curious as it regarded him before letting off red sparks.

"The sycamore makes a questing wand, eager for new experience and losing brilliance if engaged in mundane activities. As may be deduced, the sycamore's ideal owner is curious, vital and adventurous, and when paired with such an owner, it demonstrates a capacity to learn and adapt that earns it a rightful place among the world's most highly prized wand wood." Remus said thoughtfully.

"Indeed, we really must discuss wandmaking and lore. You have a talent, choosing a wand core for an individual is a gift." Louis said, clearly struck by Remus' intuition.

"Professor Lupin recommended a fruit wand wood, he mentioned peach or cherry as being more appropriate for Neville. He may just need confidence which his wand will give him as well as a useful wand." Arthur said pleasantly

"How much?" Neville asked.

"For you? Since it was a prototype I never expected to sell, I'll give it to you for one Galleon and seven Sickles. Young mister Weasley's wand is more expensive. Sycamore is a rare wood wand, new and harder to obtain. Billywig stingers are harder for wandmakers to acquire due to the near monopoly that sweet making companies such as Honeydukes have due the popularity of Fizzing Wizzbees. I'll let you have it for fourteen Galleons."

Arthur was a bit speechless, glancing at Remus.

Remus shrugged, "Being that both wood and core are rare I would have expected a higher price.
Fourteen Galleons is a deal, I was expecting over twenty." Especially considering the cost of importing, paying off sometimes unscrupulous individuals who were locators of rare potion and wand core ingredients. Sometimes wood was difficult to import as well.

"I keep costs down myself by obtaining the wood and cores myself. That's what Garrick and I have in common. Rather then blame the cores for their inadequacy I discovered that hiring someone was a waste of money. Not all obtainers of magical items understand the fine art wandmaking is. What might be an acceptable quality for potion making would be an utter disaster to attempt to make a wand with."

Remus nodded, "Makes sense."

Neville was one sickle short and certainly didn't have enough. He really wanted the wand though.

Adrian dropped a sickle in his hand, "There."

Neville stammered, "You can't...shouldn't..."

"I'm the King of Slytherin. One Sickle is to me like glittery-black beetle eyes. Got too many. You need a wand; I don't have a use for one Sickle. Just buy the wand lion cub."

Neville nervously paid.

After being paid for the wands, Louis Ollivander asked, "Wand?" glancing at Remus.

"Black Laurel and Hippogriff Feather, one of your uncle's early creations I believe. I acquired it when I was accepted to Hogwarts, back in 1971. Your cousin didn't want me to have it; he didn't trust it because it wasn't a recent creation. He trusted wands of his own making more. Hippogriff Feathers result in wands that are strong for Charm work. It can be a very versatile wand, renowned for adaptability. It demands respect from wielders. Black Laurel wands are excellent for Defense Against the Dark Arts, as well as spells of absorption, reversal and destruction of negative spells. Wasn't the only odd wand in our year; had a Leprechaun Hair and two hippogriff feathers wands."

"Both are notoriously hard to work with. I'm the only wandmaker who trusts Leprechaun and Veela hair wand cores to my knowledge. Have to be careful. I only sell Veela hair to Veelas preferably Veela witches. I made one for Mademoiselle Delacour, Rosewood and Veela hair. She was just the right sort for a Veela hair core; her grandmother donated a hair. Veela and Leprechaun hair must be freely given or the wands can be dangerous. Rosewood works well with Veela hair and Leprechaun hair since it tempers their more volatile aspects."

"We should hurry back, I'm hungry." Fred announced.

"Yes," Remus said absently, his new 'interest' in Potion-making forgotten. "Write to me. I'll be at Hogwarts. I'm retaking my post as Professor of Defense Against the Dark Arts. Not really my field but I know enough to teach."

"Wasting your talent, I'll say. Don't know what someone like you is doing teaching. Garrick should have snapped you up. You'd be miserable though with only three core choices. You've got talent. Do more research. I'll send you copies of my notes. I can't wait to see the wands you'll come up with."

"We've got Hippogriffs, Thestrals, unicorns and centaurs at Hogwarts." Remus mused.

"And the Whomping Willow. The magic in that tree...always wanted to experiment with it. Dumbledore wouldn't allow it."
"I wonder what happened to the pieces that were broken off when Ron crashed my car into it. Perhaps, there is some residual magic in them." Arthur offered.

"I'll see if Severus or Pomona will tell me about that." A wand made from a branch of the Whomping Willow would be very powerful indeed. It would need a strong hand, considering that the tree was sentient and violent, nearly taking a schoolmate's eye out. Besides Snivellius-baiting and Quidditch, Padfoot enjoyed Willow dodging.

"Severus Snape? I remember him. Ask him sometime what his wand is. You'll be surprised. Garrick used to brag about his Phoenix and Yew creation He Who Must Not Be Named used. He was ill and I was watching the Diagon Alley shop when Professor Slughorn escorted him in. The wand Snape left with was infinitely more powerful…”

Chapter End Notes

Chapter 26- George wakes, Lucius tells Severus about attack and wand shopping for George

George woke late; it had to be late afternoon…

The bedchamber was large and warm, not that he’d noticed it much the previous night. He flushed, thinking about his night of wild, passionate and utterly abandoned sexual pleasure with Viktor.

“Good afternoon, dragule. I thought you’d awaken earlier. Perhaps, our physical union was too much for you.” Viktor hissed in Parseltongue, from his place near the fire where he’d been reading.

George blushed, chewing his lip as he responded stammeringly in a soft hiss, “It was…nice…” he had nothing to compare it to...

Unlike Fred whose sexual prowess and experience bordered on legendary by comparison.

Viktor laughed heartily, “With the way you were begging and yelling for me to give it to you harder, I’d say it was more than nice.” After all, they’d woken twice before dawn for a few more rounds. He himself had woken earlier and taken a late breakfast. His father no doubt remembered his first brushes with pleasure when he was a recently mated Chuvash, hadn’t attempted to contact them at all...

George was tempted to bury his red face in the pillows; he’d never slept in a more comfortable bed. The bed at Hogwarts were only slightly more comfortable then his cot at the Burrow. He realized that he’d brought nothing with him aside from his uniform, which had all but been ripped off him last night.

"I had my personal elf adjust an outfit of mine for you. You slept through breakfast as I did. You also missed lunch. It’s about teatime in Britain dragule. You must be famished.”
To George’s embarrassment, his stomach chose to growl loudly.

Viktor sighed, "If only I could transform like Otec I would fly into the forest and bring a sheep for you to feast on."

A part of George wanted to purr almost at the thought, his mate wished to provide for him is such a way?

“However since I cannot, I can ask for an elf to bring you a light meal to hold you over until dinner. We eat quite late.” Viktor tilted his head, “I remember, your brother Bill firecalled earlier. He wished to pass on a message. Apparently the memorial is to be tomorrow afternoon?” his mouth was set in a grim line, “Memorial?”

Percy said quietly, “For Percy’s baby. He lost a child when he was my age. Yet it was murdered you see. He was mentally assaulted, forced to forget both child and lover. He recently was freed from an Imperious Curse, he and Oliver who used to be Gryffindor’s team captain and Keeper was his lover. I don’t know if they’ve been intimate yet, not that I really want to know. I feel so sorry for them. I would hate to have that happen to me.”

Viktor growled, his soon-to-be brother had a child murdered? How was this allowed? What sort of a man allowed a child of theirs to be killed? "His fiancé let this happen?"

George shook his head, “He would never! They didn’t know. Wizard pregnancies are often unplanned. Percy’s always been a bit sickly, so he could have ignored a bit of nausea you see. Plus, we’d suffered a dreadful shock just a few days prior. Ginny, the girl we believe to be our sister had fallen under the control of a Dark Artefact. It caused her to do dreadful things. It’s all been hushed up you know, but Percy being a prefect was called into the Headmaster’s office. He was questioned about how we were taking the news, how Ginny was after her brush with danger, that sort of thing. He’d been given tea with Truth serum in it. He told the Headmaster about Oliver, that they were in love and moving in together. Planning a future. He was imperioed, told to forget all about Oliver, instructed to hate Quidditch and everyone who played it. The pregnancy was discovered. An imperioed person can’t consent to an abortion and Percy never would, the child was conceived in love and he couldn’t fight. He has to bear the burden of knowing he didn’t fight for his child or his lover. Oliver was told that Percy had accused him of forcing him to do sexual acts and begged the Headmaster to help. He’d been instructed to stay away from Percy. Percy turned into a rotten person after that. He yelled at everyone, he’s like me…a Keeper in bed you see, but he was told under the Imperious to Court this terrible girl.”

Viktor calmed down some, he growled, “You’re not finishing your education there if that horrible
George swallowed, “I expect my grandfather will see to it that he’s removed. It’s Dumbledore…he did it.” He was happy that Viktor wanted to protect him but could he truly leave Hogwarts and his friends? He’d miss everyone dreadfully. “How would I graduate?”

“I’d catch you up with the students at Durmstrang. Shouldn’t be too difficult. I won’t have you spending nights in the castle, not if he’s about. You’ll sleep on the ship with me. Karkaroff wouldn’t dare refuse me. Otec is too powerful.”

“Powerful? How?”

“Ours is an ancient line, Chuvash who only bond to other Chuvash. The Krum name is known for its ability to retrieve hard to acquire Potions ingredients. We also known to fetch commissions from Gregorovich for wand cores. We have a contract with our cousin Dragomir for first dibs on Dragon hide, blood and heartstrings.”

“You’re a procurer? Merlin! I’m a lucky wizard. That will make obtaining ingredients for my potions and inventions easier.” George grew quite animated now.

Viktor summoned his elf asking for tea and light sandwiches for George and a beer for himself. “Tell me about your inventions.”

George began to relate the entire list of completed Wizard Wheezes and works in progress including their potion to swim in the Black Lake to play tag and hide and seek with the giant squid.

Viktor was intrigued; his father would enjoy his new son all the more. His mother however, would no doubt lament that he’d chosen someone unsuitable. There was nothing his father liked more then a wizard with a head on his shoulders.

George slipped away to dress and bathe leaving his wand in the middle of the floor where it’d fallen last night.

Viktor picked it up, discovering it was old. It didn’t seem to flicker with the same vibration as his mate’s magic. Why did George carry a wand not his own? His grandfather seemed rich enough to buy a proper wand…
George came back, dressed in Viktor’s clothes and shy. “That’s my wand.”

“It can’t be. For it doesn’t feel like you.”

George’s eyes brows furrowed, “What do you mean?”

Viktor tossed him his, “Hornbeam and Dragon heartstring. A temperamental mix, suited only to a strong willed wizard. It required a lot of practice to get my wand to adjust to me, though it liked me well enough.”

George caught it; the magic it hummed with what was undoubtedly that of his mate. He shifted nervously, “Well… on our eleventh birthday Mum… I mean Molly pulled out these dusty old wands and told us to pick one. This was the only that would even work for me. I was jealous when they bought Charlie a wand when he became Quidditch captain. Ron got Charlie’s old one when he turned eleven, but it broke. Ickly Ronnikins that rotten brat got a new wand that next summer.”

Viktor gaped, “You’ve never had a wand of your own? That’s ridiculous! I’ve never heard something that heinous. We’ll fix that. We’ve got to pick up a suit for a funeral anyway. We’ll head to Gregorovich after you eat. My mate deserves a wand made for him. I don’t care how expensive it is, you’ll have a proper wand.”

“Mine works,”

“It may, but it doesn’t suit you. Your wand work will be far superior when you have a wand that suits you. It’s like a bonding, it only works if both are suited to one another.”

George was in awe; Viktor was going to buy him a wand? His family were rare ingredient procurers? How did he get so lucky?

XoooooX

Lucius arrived at the Manor, in jangled spirits to encounter to his slight annoyance a pacing, clearly distraught Severus.
“What is going on? I woke to find you gone! You didn’t even wake me to say goodbye! The elves won’t even look at me. They answer no questions but that you were summoned the Ministry. They seemed upset.” Severus was worried, frustrated and he missed Lucius. They’d only been Bonded for a short time, he liked to know where his Bondmate was. Being away from both Remus and Lucius made him anxious.

“Severé sit. You’ll wear out the rug.” Lucius said, he was emotionally drained, he still hadn’t recovered from the double shock of finding out that his ex had attacked their son only to be saved by that odious Sirius Black. He hated the man for what he’d put Severus through. If he were honest with himself, he hated himself for not being man enough to stand up to his father or to protect his mate from their schoolmate.

Severus stumbled back into the settee; it had been a long time since Lucius used that pet name for him. “What did you call me?”

Lucius sat next to Severus, “Remus took the boys and their friends to Hogsmeade. Charlie went with them as a second chaperone.”

Severus was getting impatient, “Tell me what happened!”

Lucius took his hand squeezing it, “I was summoned to the Ministry by Dora. Remus called for her. Draco and Harry were attacked…”

Severus stiffened, Draco…hurt? And Harry? Why hadn’t he been told? “Who did it? Where are they? St. Mungos? Here? No, if they were here I’d know it…”

“It was the woman and Parkinson’s daughter.”

“Nar…that miserable wench! I’ll kill her. I’ll kill them both!” Severus said, his heart in his throat.

“You’ll do no such thing. Harry is fine. Remus had them seen by Smythe and Ted. Black was in Hogsmeade, he’d come to check on Harry. He tried to stop the attack but ended up barrelling the two insufferable witches over. Remus used the Incarcerous on the three of them and turned them over to Dora. Shacklebolt questioned them; Auror Black was released into Andromeda’s custody and placed on House Arrest. He’ll be called before the Council on Magical Law at some point. The woman and Parkinson’s girl are going to stew in Azkaban. I’ll take care of the woman, she harmed my child,”
“Our child.” Severus said fiercely.

“Yes Severé ours. Being Veela it is my right and duty to punish her for using the Cruciatous on Draco.”

Severus was faint, “The Cruci…where is he? I have to know he’s alright.”

“He’s with Remus. If he was badly injured, he would have brought him home.” Lucius tried to calm him.

“What about Harry?”

“He’s fine.” Lucius said hugging him, “Draco could never let him be harmed.”

Severus closed his eyes; “You mean he took the Cruciatous for Harry…”

“He’ll be fine, Severé. I’m sure of it.” He began singing in French softly; it always soothed Severus when he did. He’d grown up listening to French tunes on the Wizarding Wireless as a youth and had enjoyed teasing his mate in French after learning Severus had an aptitude for languages. The studious young wizard was a relatively ignored genius, though he was skilled at multiple subjects and had been a member of the infamous Slug Club with him: at Hogwarts he’d taken Arithmancy, Numerology and Ancient Runes as electives. Care of Magical Creatures would have put him with the Marauders more. They’d also taken Divination but Severus had never been inclined to look too far into the future. Lily Evans had taken Twelve OWLS and so had Remus but both soon narrowed their focus taking fewer classes during their NEWT years.

Severus wanted to hold his son and see for himself the boy was okay. Narcissa Black may have given birth to Draco but she was no mother. He loved that boy from the day he was born; he’d look so much like his Lucius that it had been impossible not to love him. He’d ached for the child he’d lost but he’d never wish Draco away…

They sat there comforting one another.

Lucius had hated to tell Severus what had happened but he couldn’t bear to mar their fragile new
happiness now that they were Bonded with secrets…

XoooooX

Viktor chose to Apparate them to the supposedly ruined and lost castle of Hammaburg in Hamburg, Germany.

“Where are we?” George asked in soft Parseltongue a bit awed, this place felt older and more Magically grounded than Hogwarts.

“Hamburg.”

“Germany?”

“Precisely, Hamburg is located on the southern point of the Jutland Peninsula and the center of the German Wizarding culture. It lies directly between Continental Europe to its south and Scandinavia to its north. The North Sea is west and the Baltic Sea is east of Hamburg. Hamburg is located on the River Elbe at its confluence with the Alster and Bille. It really is too bad, that Mr. Gregorovitch, the one who sold me my wand retired see. Mine was the last he sold.”

They made their way towards the wand shop.

It was a small colourfully painted shop that bore the name, Gregorovitch Zauberstäbe.

“It’s farther from my home but a more pleasant visit. This is the primary entrance to his shop. Being formerly instructed at Durmstrang, he learned magic I don’t believe is taught at Hogwarts. One being a spell that is cast on two doors, it calls the two-points spell for it brings two distant points together. He has what seems to be shops in Russia, Croatia and Bulgaria but those shops lead here. One opens the door in the shop in Samobor Castle on hill Tepec in Samobar, Croatia or Vladimir, Russia. He is said to have retired to Gagra, which used to be a famous Muggle resort but terrible things happened there. It is now a retirement community for Russian Wizarding folk.” Viktor said quietly.

They opened the door of Gregorovitch Zauberstäbe.
There was no slight discomfort as if they’d been simultaneously transported as they walked through the door. Therefore the nature of the supposed four shops hadn’t been changed since he was last here in the summer of 1986 following his eleventh birthday.

A voice called out in German and Russian, “Coming!”

A younger man came in, a bit dirty, a smell of singed hair around him. The man couldn’t be less then forty or fifty, “Mr. Krum? What a pleasure. How might I serve you? Our families have always been on excellent terms. Tell your father that heartstring he sent works perfectly.” The man looked concerned, “Is anything wrong with your wand?”

Viktor shook his head, “My wand is excellent. It’s my fiancé I’m here for. He was sent with a wand not his own to school. I’d like this handled quietly.” He said quietly, “George Weasley, Eugen Gregorovitch.” Making polite introductions in German and Parseltongue.

George bowed slightly; he’d never learned another tongue to his embarrassment. His mate clearly spoke English, Parseltongue, German, Russian and Croatian at least. How did he manage to keep them all straight?

“Nice to meet you. Let me see it.” The man replied.

Viktor turned to George speaking in Parseltongue “Herr Gregorovitch would like to see your wand. He is the son of the man who sold me mine. Inherited the shop as his son will from him.”

George shyly removed his wand, “Alright.”

Gregorovitch took the wand and examined it before replying in German, “Unicorn Hair I believe. The wood is Peach? Never used that myself, though its especially strong for Transfiguration, Herbology and Alchemy. It’s more of an Asian wood wand. This is a witch’s wand, what is it doing in the hand of a wizard?”

Viktor stiffened, “The woman who raised him gave him a previously bonded wand. It doesn’t suit him as you can imagine.”

“Indeed, it would be a pleasure to serve the fiancé of Mr. Viktor Krum. I only wish my father were here to serve you. You were his last wand. He said you’d go far with it. Are the stories true? You
“‘Yes, it serves me well.’ Viktor said a bit pleased with it.

The tall imposing wizard of Eastern European descent handed George wand after wand until one began to sing in George’s hand.

The Gryffindor stopped to stare at it, “That’s different…”

“Sings with your magic I’ll say. Let me see it.” The wand was plucked from the young wizard’s grasp, “Hm, Bowtruckle Skin? That was a lucky find that day when examining my wand cores options, I remember. Yes, yes, made from Fir. It’s 15 inches and quite sturdy. It would be powerful for Transfiguration, Herbology, and Care of Magical Creatures. Sometimes this combination is seen in wands specialising in Herbology and Care of Magical Creatures- particularly for those in your father’s profession Mr. Krum. It would also strong for Healing Magic and Potions, though it is believed to have some associations with Divination. I never believed in the Divination bit. That’s a Romany thing; they tend to be more skilled with Divination, used to make money fleecing Muggles until the Eastern European Ministries forbid it.”

Viktor paid the man for the wand; it looked well made but didn’t seem to be quite the same thing as one of Isaak Gregorovitch’s. Then they went on their way to find a fashionable shop for a proper suit for a funeral. He would allow for no protests, his future Bondmate would have only the best.

Chapter End Notes

Chapter 27– Dress robe shopping Andre's

There was still some food left when Arthur and Gideon returned with Remus, Fred, Adrian and Neville.

Draco noticed that Neville's 'hero worship' of Adrian had managed to increase. That was interesting. Instead he laughed, "We were about to leave without you."

"We wouldn't have." Harry protested.

"Of course we wouldn't. I was just teasing." Draco reassured him.

"So you were going shopping for dress robes for the Yule Ball?" Gideon said joining them and requesting coffee for himself and Arthur. They had already ate…

"Yes, it would be unseemingly for George and Fred to have dress robes that were unsuitable for them at an event such as the Yule Ball. Especially, since they are the sons of the firstborn of Lord Weasley and Lord Prewett."

Gideon felt an ache for his twin, he'd never wanted or expected in the darkest days of the war that his amiable, protective twin older by at least an hour would die leaving him title, vault and seat. "It would be disgraceful for me to allow that. Especially since he is escorting a young lady such as Ms. Johnson."

Angelina blushed, "I agreed to come because Fred wanted me to help him choose dress robes that would do well with my own. Not that I would let him see them…"

Fred smirked, "I have honoured that request."

Angelina pinched him, "Behave Frederick!"

"Ooh! She told you!" Harry giggled.

Fred took her hand and kissed it, "I have been behaving. I haven't attempted anything unseemingly such as whisking you off to one of those hotel d'amour." Not that he hadn't considered what fun it might be to whisk her off to one of those famous hotel d'amour that were in the Rue de Leon. Besides, he very much doubted that Draco would turn a blind eye to such a use of his investment.

Angelina smacked the back on his head, "I wouldn't go." Her face crimson with embarrassment at the implication...

Charlie snorted, "Like I would let you sneak off to a place like that." He glared at him, "Dad would kill me if I did."

Blaise choked on his wine, hotel d'amour? Charlie? Sweet Merlin and Devious Morganna! He almost couldn't breathe…

Draco looked at his oldest friend; Blaise had it bad for the older Chuvash. Despite Charlie's acquiesce in paying for the chocolate treat at Honeydukes' the Dragon Tamer didn't seem to be
paying much attention to Blaise at present. Blaise had a flirtatious personality that he had been exposed to for the first time when he and Harry returned from London to Hogwarts. Not that he'd been surprised that Blaise was bent but he had been shocked to find that Blaise didn't have a crush on him. He was good looking but he could understand not being his friend's 'type'.

Presently the last of their meal had be partaken of, Draco settled the bill and his group with the addition of Lord Prewett and former Auror Arthur Weasley set off for Andre's.

Andre's was a more masculine version of Celestine's Boutique; it had a smell of whiskey and tobacco. There was an almost gentleman's club feel to the store, young ladies such as Luna, Sophronia, Angelina and Tracey were out of place.

There was a grouping of leather armchairs near a brick hearth, nearby was a sort of bar. It was a well-respected establishment. While Madam Malkin's was alright for uniforms, a place like Andre's for the well-dressed wizard. Draco let them to the more appropriate clothing choices for events such as the Yule Ball.

Draco expected that most would know how to dress: Blaise, Vince, Greg and no doubt Adrian had already purchased their Yule Ball attire. Neville may have been sent with something as well. He nudged Remus, "Why don't we see if we can find something for Harry? Charlie? Entertain Blaise. Adrian is welcome to do as he pleases of course. Neville, keep him company will you? I'm sure Sophronia, Thena and Tracy can keep Theo, Greg and Vince out of trouble. Between Miss Johnson and his fathers I'm sure Fred can be found something suitable. Being that George is of similar measurements for now something might be appropriate. Viktor will no doubt be wearing the Durmstrang dress robes. I am sure between Miss Johnson and one of the attendants you'll find something suitable." A dress robe for George was not quite as difficult to find a wand without him present.

"What do the Durmstrang dress robes look like Malfoy?"

Draco drew a picture in the air, his father had at one time wanted him to attend Durmstrang not because of the less strict view of the Dark Arts but because they had a more rounded education. Their curriculum was less curtailed then Hogwarts, which only taught, so called White Magic. Durmstrang taught a lot of Neutral and Grey Magic along with some Dark Magic that didn't necessarily make it Dark Arts. Papa had put his foot down and said that he could teach him better. Perhaps, perhaps not, he had learned more under Severus Snape then any other professor he'd ever studied under except perhaps, Remus who came close.

Angelina went off muttering something about green and silver, though Slytherin colours would look quite wonderful with the red dress robes and trousers with the fur trimmed half cape.

Draco chuckled, "You mentioned green Harry, as well as that would look I think something more silver would be appropriate what do you think Remus?"

"Fashion is not something I have a good eye for, when Lily was alive she chose clothes for us Marauders. Though Padfoot had a decent sense of style that bordered on the rakish. He had the lost puppy 'I need someone to love and care for me' as well as the dangerous brand of passion some girls find exciting in their first flush of youth." Remus said thoughtfully, "That is what Lily said…"

Draco could hardly resist a bit of sneer, "I don't see what anyone could see in a man like that."

"You saw a different picture of him in the Daily Prophet, I'm sure I can stir up a picture of the Marauders when we were in school or perhaps, a picture of the Order."
"The Order?" Harry asked, having never heard of it.

"The Order of the Phoenix, Dumbledore's little private Army whose sole purposes were to battle the threat of He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named and to follow his every Order."

Draco dug through the neatly folded dress shirt, ties, trousers, vests, suit coats and the like as well as actual robes and capes. He finally settled after much muttering on a pair of smart black woollen trousers, a green bow tie to match Harry's eyes, a silver dress shirt with a vest that matched his trousers as well as a cape that would most definitely have to be shortened. The cape was black with green and silver leaves. It would compliment his own outfit with more green then silver. He had a silver tie like Harry's green one, his shirt was a deeper rich green rather then silver and his cape was a deep grey with silver and ebony dragons.

Draco spotted a set of black robes with red and gold phoenixes, smirking he shoved them into Remus' arms. "Do try that on." Gesturing for the man assisting them, "a black linen suit with a crisp white silk shirt and a red tie if you please for Mr. Lupin."

Remus began to protest. "Draco,"

Draco out of carefully mastered restraint managed to avoid rolling his eyes, "Oh please Remus you must have something suitable to wear if you are going to attend the Ball. Surely you don't think that my fathers would allow you to skip after going to so much trouble to get you your position back as a Professor. Now go try that on. I'll be requiring you to try on a set for Severus. For being as close to my dad as he has been, the man hasn't a set of decent robes."

Remus gave up protesting and did as he was told.

After their assistant handed the suit into the dressing room for Remus, Harry gestured for him to come over. "You measured him?"

The man nodded, "Of course. Should I open an account for him?"

Draco nodded, "Yes, he'll be shopping here from now on. I'll see to it that he gives you his vault number so you can charge it."

"I want a nice, warm winter cloak for him. His coat is so old and worn. It's a wonder he doesn't get sick." Harry said quietly.

"Well, I suppose warming and repairing charms can only work for so long. He'll need something more appropriate if he's going to be a part of my family. He can't wear something like that if he'll be on Hogwarts Weekend duties."

Their assistant brought a variety of winter cloaks and coats.

Harry chose one, a grey one that resembled a sort of coat worn by sailors that he'd briefly seen on the telly while cleaning. A pea coat? It was lined with a type of fur he didn't recognize. Harry turned to Draco, "That one."

"Adjust it to Mr. Lupin's measurements. Add it to Potter's bill but send it to Professor Remus Lupin, Hogwarts along with the gentleman's other purchases." Draco said airily but low as Remus was emerging from the changing room.

"This is a bit ex,"

"Oh do be quiet Remus." Draco said waving his hand dismissively. "It will do just fine. You can
cover it with your vault from Black returned to you. You'll be depositing your Hogwarts income into that vault anyway."

Draco spotted the perfect robes for Severus, "Try those on. You're close enough to papa's size. We'll just have them put on automatic resizing charms on for him."

For Severus were there a set of black robes with green and silver serpents, Lucius had plenty of suits.

XoooooX

Blaise had every intention of Charlie being his date to Yule Ball, not that he had any idea how to get that through the Dominant Chuvash's head. His own dress robes included a green cloak with silver vines over a charcoal grey Italian three-piece suit, a green shirt and silver tie. A striking outfit his step aunt Lady Goyle picked out for him. He leaned over to Charlie, "Being the son of Lord Prewett, you must have at least one set of decent dress robes."

Charlie shook his head. "I don't."

"Well we'll have to remedy that." Blaise said dragging him into the formal attire section. Holding suit coats, vests, shirts, ties and the like to Charlie, "Blue would do well with those eyes. It wouldn't clash with your hair; a colour with too much red in it would look disastrous. However, blues and silvers would be all right." He spotted a navy blue cape with a large silver dragon on it. "Perfect!" he grinned, that would look nice with his own attire for the evening. "Now should the suit be grey or blue?" Blue! With that choice, he matched the cloak to the suit, picking out a silver shirt and a blue tie. Giving Charlie his most adorable begging face, "Please? Try these on? You'll be amazed how good they'll suit you. A man with your status needs a perfect outfit." Charlie was going to be his date he had too. There was no one else he wanted…

Charlie couldn't say no, this teen was way too persuasive. He couldn't even deny him chocolate much less to try on a set of dress robes.

Blaise gripped the edge of a table covered in neatly pressed and folded dress shirts when Charlie emerged. The Dominant Chuvash was bloody gorgeous. He almost couldn't breathe. He had to get the man to agree to be his date…surely it didn't say he couldn't invite a non-student. If he had to he'd beg Lady Goyle for permission. She was like a mother to him. He just hoped the Goyles and his mother approved of Charlie…

How could they not? On a Wizarding stand point; Charlie was the second born son of Lord Prewett, an Ancient and powerful Family previously thought to be extinct in the male line. Which made him a good catch. On a Chuvash social view, Charlie worked for Dragomir who ran the Dragon Preserve in Romania and he was a descendant/relation of the King of the Chuvash.

Charlie was forced to agree that the dress robes Blaise picked suited him. If the kid were Chuvash, he'd make someone an excellent mate someday. Too bad he didn't have something to wear them to, well besides, his brothers upcoming Bondings. He asked Blaise quietly what one wore the funeral of a child, a nephew. He'd been raised out of the circle that his birth had ensured, it rankled that Molly had left himself and his four brothers so ill prepared. There were gentlemen of varying ranks and social status, he was alarmed at his own foolishness for not wondering if as grandchildren of a Lord and the apparent sons of the daughter of another being raised in a 'barmy barn' as some of the priggish Slytherins once called their home. Well that was what Fred and George said after they'd returned Hogwarts following their trip to Egypt after wining the Daily Prophet's Galleon drawing.

Blaise hadn't heard about a death in Charlie's family and wondered which brother lost a child. No
one had saw fit to tell him, he was a bit annoyed. Surely Draco knew, trust that boy to keep all the juicy information to himself. Stingy that what his best friend was, stingy! He picked out a proper suit, instructing the young man assisting to be sure it was properly fitted and sent to, he turned to Charlie, "Do you want it sent to you direct? Or to your Grandfather's residence?"

Charlie mulled over it, "To me. I'm staying in the encampment in the Forbidden Forest but we keep a post box in Hogsmeade. You can address it there, care of Harvey Ridgebit's Dragon Preserve. I'll check it regular. When might I expect it?"

"When you need the lot sir?" the young man asked.

"I need the suit no later then eleven London time. I have to wear it to an event." Preferring not to state it was to the memorial of his nephew who'd been murdered.

"We'll see to it that it's ready. We have ways of quick delivery and the others sir?"

"No later then the 23 of December." Blaise said imperiously, he'd find some way to get Charlie to agree to accompany him. He wasn't going with anyone else, how could any man compare to this dominant?

Angelina's dress for the Yule Ball was an elegantly cut shimmering violet silk and velvet frothy item that clung to her every curve and showed off her rarely seen cleavage. Being a Quidditch player and no boyfriend she didn't have much cause to dress up. Her mother had been thrilled that she'd needed dress robes.

She'd hoped Fred would ask her, and was only too pleased when he did. Before that he told her about the impromptu Quidditch match against players and Viktor Krum. It'd been fun to play Quidditch again, although it was nice to not have to beg the Head Boy and Head Girl to arrange her prefect duties to accommodate her Quidditch Practices and matches. Lee was upset when she politely refused his invitation, she knew he had a crush on her but she didn't return it. She'd politely asked him to invite Alicia who was most distraught about George being bent and attending with Viktor Krum of all people. Her friend was dating a professional Quidditch player?

She'd learned to her dismay when she became a Prefect under the Head ship of Penelope and Percy that Percy was more awful then she'd thought. He yelled at her when she asked to have her prefect duties scheduled around her Quidditch responsibilities. It had been odd, she would have sworn that Percy was nicer then that. It wasn't common knowledge but she'd known that they, Percy and Oliver had been going out. Fred confided in her recently that Percy hadn't been at fault for his actions last year and that he'd never meant to hurt Oliver. Everyone who flew with Oliver was protective of him. Percy'd been imperioed of all things so he had a personality replacement practically. No wonder Oliver had been so Quidditch focused, poor dear she should never have been so hard on him. Here and she'd thought Percy had played around with Oliver's heart before dumping him for Penelope. For Oliver's sake she was glad that wasn't the case, poor Percy to have his child murdered the second he heard about it. She could imagine his feelings, if she'd been pregnant and hadn't known it only to be attacked like that she'd be devastated. It would break her heart to loose Fred's child.

Shaking the depressing thought from her head, she dug through the finery. Finally choosing a grey dress cloak for George with hints of silver and green which she paired with a grey suit, a green
bowtie and silver shirt. For Fred was a cape of midnight blue with violet and lavender flowers, a blue suit, purple shirt and silver tie.

Fred glanced at George's outfit that Angelina picked out, "He's a bit slimmer than me and his hips are wider, not that anyone notices. I noticed it after he resized his clothes. Mu...Molly tried to get our uniforms in the same size until Madam Malkin told her that it wouldn't work."

Gideon was surprised, "Those are really stylish. Perhaps I should hire you to buy my wardrobe. I've lost a lot of weight since I was last shopping." Not wishing to rehash his lonely years in captivity in his own home that he once hoped to live at with Arthur. It had been customary for the Prewetts to live together if they got along. It had always been his and Fabian's desire to live at the Eerie together. He hoped at least one son would consent to do so. At least that way he might see them. Perhaps, Fred who reminded him so much of his deceased, no murdered brother.

Angelina gave him a piercing look, "I know you must complete your training at St. Mungos as a Healer but that neon green is so not your colour."

"I had planned to be a private Healer." Gideon admitted shyly.

"Well you can tend to your children's needs." Arthur said quietly, considering he expected George and Percy to be pregnant soon anyway.

Considering that Percy and Oliver's Bonding would be coming up soon it was probable that both Fred's father's hadn't proper clothes. She hastily took their measure and pulled out dress robes shoving them into their hands. Insisting they try them on, as well as telling their shop boy to measure them for suits. They would need four black suits; it wouldn't be proper to wear Ball finery to a funeral.

Fred squeezed her shoulder; he knew the suits were for the memorial. He was grateful she didn't mention it aloud. If he knew Oliver, their former captain wouldn't mind her attending. Being former teammates and future in-laws it wouldn't be wrong for her to attend. Being a Prefect, Angelina had a good head on her shoulders, she was trustworthy and knew when he told her about what had happened to Oliver that she would be wrathful. When he and George mentioned their plan for a Prank War, she'd do her best to turn a blind eye to it. Though he hoped she'd join in a bit.

XoooooX

With all the purchases minus shoes made Draco led them out of Andre's they paused briefly to purchase shoes for the Yule Ball. They then portkeyed back to Hogwarts but not before sending house elves ahead with their purchases.

Draco mentioned wanting to take Harry back to the Manor where he could show Harry the kitchens or at least have Dreca do so. He did not even know where they were located. Having never truly explored the Manor. He'd been more keen on flying and brewing to consider it.

Charlie offered to make sure that the others returned to their House.

Luna asked stammeringly, "I hate to ask for favours but might my clothes for the ball be kept elsewhere for safe keeping?"

Angelina's eyes narrowed in worry, "Why?" that was an unusual request...
"Well you see prefect…my Housemates think it great fun to hide my things. Being that I'm always wandering around with my head in clouds they think I won't notice if my books, quills or shoes go missing." Luna said quietly.

"Rodger allows this?" she was incredulous.

"I didn't know that happened in other houses…" Sophronia admitted shame-faced, "Before Draco declared me a Halfblood sometimes I had similar acts purportrated against me."

Draco was seething.

"Peace cousin. There is nothing you can do about it." Luna said politely to calm him. "You can't influence another House's politics." She said catching his eye and communicating with his mentally.

'You're a Malfoy!' Draco grumbled, 'You're a descendant of Ravenclaw herself aren't you?'

'That is neither here nor there.' Luna chided him, though pleased he'd come to her defense. He was a good person at heart despite his previous attempts to act pompous. Convinced he'd gotten that out of his system, she broke the connection.

Angelina was thoughtful, "Why don't I keep them? You and Sophronia are welcome to get ready with Alicia, Katie and I. I can do your hair and make up."

Luna smiled, she was so radiant that one could almost glimpse her true self through the Glamour. "I'd like that. Thank you."

"‘Thena? If you'd like to come down to the dungeons after class sometime we could study together. If you can't find a book, you can always use mine. They're used but serviceable."

Luna impetuously hugged Sophronia, "I think you are a wonderful person. I'm quite glad we're kin."

Well with Sophronia being a Black and a Prewett Sophronia would be kin through Harry who was her cousin's mate. "I'm sure we'll be good friends.

Sophronia had never been an affectionate child, but there was something special about this 'Thena. She shyly hugged the tiny Ravenclaw back. Friends? She'd like that…Thena was a far nicer girl then the other Slytherin girl who'd accompanied them on their date, Tracey.

Draco, Harry and Remus left the other heading for the apartment Severus shared with his two mates.

Draco planned to floo to the Manor, after showing Harry around a bit he'd let the tiny lion decide what was for dinner.

Chapter End Notes

Chapter 28- Relaxing at Malfoy Manor

Severus started as the floo’s green flames leapt and crackles.

Draco looking extremely nonchalant stepped through first turning to pull Harry through.

Severus hurried from the settee falling to his knees and examining his son, “I heard. Are you alright? Why didn’t you come home?” that was twice in a matter of weeks that Draco had been injured. First by that fake Moody who transfigured Draco into a white ferret and slammed him repeatedly against a stone ceiling and floor. In the privacy of his own chamber’s he’d practically drowned his then godson in pain relieving potions, dreamless sleep droughts, and Skele-grow. He’d fretted and fumed, how dare they make Draco a laughing stalk like that? How could they allow a professor to mistreat any student in such a heinous way? Looking at his lover’s son it was hard to consider a punishment for ‘attempting’ to curse Harry when his back was turned. This was beyond punishment, it was beyond any sort of magical brutality he’d ever suffered at the hands of Black and Potter. To hear that Parkinson and that woman had attacked Draco, he was no weak ‘woman’ but this was his son, the son of his heart and now blood.

Draco sighed, “I’m fine papa, I was examined by Healers Smythe and Tonks. They recommended I rest. We went first to Celestine’s, I spent most of our time their sitting. Until Luna took pity on me, she healed the nerve damage the double bout of Crucius Curse I’d sustained. It was nothing too awful.”

Harry snorted, “Don’t lie Draco. As manly a face as you wished to put on, you were in pain. You don’t think I’d recognize trying to ignore pain?”

Severus could understand what Harry meant easily enough. “So you’re alright?”

“Yes papa. I’m fine. We picked up suitable attire for Sophronia and Luna at Celestine’s. Then we lunched at that same restaurant as last week. Then something interesting happened.”
“Oh?” Lucius asked eyebrow raised.

“Mr. Weasley showed up with Mr. Prewett!” Harry said excited, “Then Remus got all intense.”

“Intense?” Severus was curious.

Remus coughed embarrassed, “Gideon merely showed up to retrieve his wand, that odious woman had taken his, Fabian, their mother, their father and Bilius’ wands holding them over and giving them to the children rather then burying the wands with their masters and buying wands for them when they came of age. I might have revealed a rather passionate interest in wandlore. Following graduation I had once hoped to apprentice to study beneath Mr. Ollivander who has no children to continue his work. Although I don’t agree with him that only unicorn hair, dragon heartstring and phoenix feathers make good wandcores. I had to pleasure to met his cousin due to Fred needing his own wand.” Remus’ eyes sparkled with pleasure.

“Remus said that Fred should have a Billywig stinger for a core. He said it would suit him. We discussed wandlore, he analysed our wands, even telling me about my parents! It was so cool!” Harry said bouncing in excitement.

Remus coughed, “Louis Ollivander said I had a talent. That teaching Defense was a waste. Wanted to discuss my thoughts on lore. He had just the sort of wand I mentioned for Fred, a Sycamore and Billywig stinger. It would do well with an inventive person.”

“Talent? I’d say you were intuitive. I’d love to see the kind of wands you’d create Remus if an Ollivander spoke highly of you.” Draco said pleasantly.

Remus glanced at Severus nervously, “Before I left his shop, Mr. Ollivander mentioned something odd. He said I must ask you about your wand. That I’d be surprised. He mentioned his cousin Garrick used to brag about his Phoenix and Yew creation He Who Must Not Be Named used. Apparently Louis was watching the Diagon Alley shop when Professor Slughorn escorted you in. he said the wand you left with was infinitely more powerful then the Dark Lord’s.”

Severus coughed, “My wand? I’ve only made a brief study of wandlore. All quite intriguing stuff I’ll warrant but I’ll stick to my dusty tomes and scrolls of potions, draughts, poisons and antidotes.”

“Please papa? I’d love to see what Remus said your wand tells us about you.”
“Yes please Severus?” Harry’s plea was accompanied by a begging look that reminded one of those Chesapeake Bay retrievers that Lucius started raising after his father died to Narcissa’s horror.

Lucius was curious, “I’ve forgot what your wand is. Do please remind me Sèvere.”

Severus sighed, “Oh very well since I’m besieged on all sides. My wand is an inflexible, 15” Acacia wood with an Abraxan Feather.”

Remus was so shocked, he swayed visibly looking faint, he stumbled towards a nearby chair and collapsed into it. He opened his mouth a few times before he could bring himself to speak, “Merlin’s staff! Severus, do you have any idea what…of course you do. As vast as your magical talents are you must.”

Lucius was intrigued, what was so special about his Bondmate’s wand that would cause that sort of a reaction in Remus.

“Remus!” Harry whinged “Tell us…please…”

Remus swallowed gaining control of his shock, “Acacia wood…” he paused briefly “Acacia wands generally refused to produce magic for anyone but their owners, but conversely, seemed to withhold their full power from all but the most gifted wizards. Owners of Acacia wands were generally subtle wizards, which I dare say Severus is.” He meant that in a complimentary manner of course.

Severus didn’t remember coming across that in his cursory reading into wandlore, he was pleased, “My wand seemed to take to me from the start. It quite refused to work for anyone else even Professor Flitwick I remember. I was shocked that Professor Slughorn invited me to attend his Slug Club meetings my first year. It must have been because of my wand. He never seemed to regard me as much to court because of my looks and Muggle father. I think only Lucius and Lily looked beyond mere surface appearance.”

“He was jealous of you.” Remus said quietly. “Your brewing was clearing in a league of its own from the first day of term our first year. He’d compliment you to your face but glare at you in jealousy behind your back. One or twice I was sure he’d muck up your potion to mark you down.”

Severus smirked, “Oh he tried. Too bad for him I was keen enough at brewing to fix any little mishaps of accidentally knocking too much of something into my cauldron.”
“What about his wandcore?” Lucius asked this was interesting. Perhaps, he’d see if he could use some of his influence to help Remus find his place in the wandmaking profession.

“Abraxan hair and feathers may take some time to master, but will produce very rewarding results. It is well balanced between speed of casting and power. Strong ties to air element. Wielders often have an excellent constitution for alcohol consumption.”

Lucius snorted, “I’ve never known him to be drunk. He can and did drink many Death Eaters under the table or even into unconsciousness trying to get them to spill secrets.”

Severus glared, “You are fond of liquor yourself Luce”

Lucius bowed, “Indeed but I’ve never lost my temper under its influence or devilged privileged information.”

“What about your wand Dad? What is it?” Draco asked this was all interesting.

“Yes Luce, let Remus dissect your wand for us.” Severus said dryly.

Lucius’ eyes twinkled, “Which one? For I bear two, one I have full mastery of and the other sometimes I wonder.”

“A family wand? One carried by all Heads of the House of Malfoy?” Remus asked.

“True, the Malfoy wand is over a thousand years old. Family legend maintains an ancestor of the Ollivanders once crafted it for the Head of the Family. It was created to serve multiple masters, rather then most wands created to cleave to one unless it’s loyalty was won away “

“Many ancient families purchased such wands,” Remus said thoughtfully, “What is this wand?”

“A sturdy, 18” Elm and Dragon Heartstring wand.” Lucius said with an air of feigned boredom.

“Hm, there are ten common varieties of heartstring used for wand worldwide, although there are
many more dragon species. Specialises in hexes, sometimes especially for poisoning spells. It lacks subtlety, very powerful. Very good for any form of Elemental Magic and is considered by Garrick Ollivander to be most common among Slytherins. Some consider Dragons to be of a dual nature, with some providing benevolent and lucky, and others malevolent and a sign of death.” Remus closed his eyes searching through his mind for his memories regarding Elm as a wandwood. “Ah yes Elm, according to Muggles it is associated with Mother and Earth Goddesses, said to be where fairies dwell. Sturdy, adds stability and grounding to a spell. I wonder Lucius if there is Fae in your blood as well as Veela.”

“Interesting, what do you make of a flexible 12 ¾” Ivy and Centaur hair.” Lucius was far more interested then he let on, although Severus claimed Draco never complained about his wand. The boy never did as well as one expected one of his intelligence to do. Perhaps, Draco’s reasonably springy 10” Hawthorn and Dragon heartstring wasn’t as suitable as Ollivander believed. Perhaps, Remus could as Draco’s former and soon to be current professor could recommend a better wand.

“Let me see, Ivy is a strong all-around wandwood. It is associated with ambition and personal drive, which makes it especially well suited to Slytherin users. Particularly you Lucius with your ingratiating way.” Remus teased good-naturedly, “It holds meanings of attachment and eternal friendship, fidelity, and wedded love. ‘I die where I cling.’ Is a saying associated with Ivy, I dare say it suits you well. As for Centaur hair, its very strong for Astronomy and Divination, more often found with Ravenclaws rather then Slytherin. Given its ties to seers I’d believe it would be more likely to be found in Luna’s hand rather then yours. It is associated with aloofness, intelligence and wisdom. However it has a more negative association of a tendency to watch rather than take action. Not a fast caster but a powerful one.”

Severus chuckled, “Sounds an awful lot like Luce.”

Lucius muttered, it did; for he was more of a watcher, stepping in when he felt it was warranted but mostly staying to the sides unless he had no choice. There were some who had crueler words to describe his relations with high placed persons. Longing to change the subject from himself, “Draco has a reasonably springy 10” Hawthorn and Dragon heartstring. As much as Ollivander praised it, I don’t think it suits him.”

“Suiting the boy I thought I was instructing I’m sure it didn’t for he was an arrogant, cruel boy who was disrespectful to his instructors and bullied fellow students unmercifully so I’d heard. However the nature I’d observed in Draco recently has caused me to reexamine my interpretations of his character. I’ll not repeat my views on Dragon Heartstring again for I’m sure I’ve thoroughly bored you on it. Hawthorn symbolises protection, so it is associated with protection and love. It is considered very strong for Defense Against the Dark Arts. Which is good since you’ve both sought to avoid teaching him Dark Arts. It is a good wandwood for Transfiguration.”

Draco schooled his face to avoid the blush he’d known was sure to erupt on his features, a Veela
was known for their protection and love for their mate. He felt a rush of attraction for Harry and a desire to protect him from all who wished him harm. “Interesting,” he said calmly, “As good as I am at Transfiguration, I find it interests me little. Just as wandlore is not to papa’s taste. Blaise is as passionate about the subject as you are about wandlore.”

“Perhaps, it doesn’t suit you as your father claims. It does reflect a part of your character though, however though a wand chooses a wizard it is not truly sentient and merely was attracted to a tiny bit of your personality. So, Transfiguration is not where your talents lie?”

“Indeed not as his first teacher, I ought to know his talents are similar to my own. He excels at Charms, Potions, Ancient Runes, Occlumency and Legilimency as do I.” Severus said a look of pride coupled with an almost preening air.

“He was clearly meant to be your son, Severus. In intellect he resembles you but as to his better character traits he takes after Lucius.’” Remus said thoughtfully, “He’s got too strong a character to suit Unicorn hair. Veela hair might work but it’s dangerous to work with and I’m not sure it would suit him any better then Dragon Heartstring. His wand works for him but it not a perfect fit. Perhaps, he should have gone to Louis rather then Garrick for his wand. I wonder, perhaps Rowan would do for him. Don’t know where I might find some.”

Draco was interested, “Rowan? It has a saying about I heard.”

“There are superstitions with some wand woods. Such as, ‘When his wand's oak and hers is holly, then to marry would be folly.’ Garrick Ollivander holds that to be nonsense. Another is regarding Rowan as you mentioned, ‘Rowan gossips, chestnut drones, ash is stubborn, hazel moans’. Not sure I buy into that either. Rowan is a dense wood, sometimes difficult to work with. Like Hawthorn it is associated with protection, especially against enchantments and beguiling. Which would suit a wizard skilled in Mental Arts to protect oneself. It’s strong for Charms, Divination and Transfiguration. It’s said to have an affinity for Ancient Runes, but strong all-around in various magical fields. It’s said to be an excellent dueling wand. Users are often highly intelligent, visionaries or highly intuitive.”

“Being Veela and our son, he’s clearly highly intelligent.” Severus proudly, “Being Veela and his sense that all wasn’t right with Harry as well as knowing instinctively despite their past history that Harry had had nothing to do with his name coming out of the Goblet of Fire.”

Lucius smirked, of course their son privately tutored from his early years by a wizard of Severus’ talents and knowledge. He chided himself for missing out on Draco’s formative years not having a hand in his son and heir’s grooming. As it was, he had his mate to thank for Draco’s good breeding he supposed. His own father would be appalled that his son had been raised, cosseted and taught above his years by ‘a lowly, dirty little Halfblood’ who had the audacity to fancy himself in love with
such a personage as someone of the Malfoy family who had years of breeding and money as to be beyond his reach despite Severus’ bearer being a daughter of the Prince line.

“Harry claims to enjoy cooking and wanted to do so for us. I arranged with Dreca for him to be able to use our kitchens though she’ll have to show us the way for I have no idea where they lie in a House such as this.” For the Manor was a Quadrangle, built around a square courtyard of a garden with corridor windows that overlooked it. It used to be quite the thing for members of the Malfoy family to live here. The South rooms were home to the Nurseries where the children of the Family lived. Their parents living in appropriate wings, with the Head’s family living to the North. Draco had due to whatever reason grown up in the nurseries alone. Watched by Dreca and begrudgingly a selection of witch nurses that for some reason or another papa found fault with and dismissed. They’d haughtily at first claimed he was a nobody who had no say. He’d snark right back in that way of his, that the Master, Lord Malfoy put him in charge of his son’s care and that if he said she was to pack up and leave she better. Not to let the wards clasp shut on her before she exited them.

“The kitchen is in the basement over the cellar, one floor above your lab Draco.” Severus said smoothly. “I got lost once and wandered in. Thank Salazar that woman rarely left her wing except when you had guests.”

“She was rather put out we wouldn’t share rooms. Not that I cared much, since I took the rooms that had a passage from the mistress’ room. There we stayed happy as a lark in a tree.” Lucius said smiling at Severus, who’d calmed once Draco assured him that he was quite well despite his double bout of Cruciatus Curse.

“So you don’t mind if he makes supper?” Draco asked.

Remus smiled to himself, “No, I’d quite like it. Lily was a brilliant cook. I’m decent having to take over for mother when she took ill. James and Siri were a disaster in the kitchen. Siri you see, he chased off his house elf, never liked them much. Siri burned water and James broke cheese if you understand my meaning. Either Lily invited them over to her parents’ house, brought by meals or had to cook for them. Although they often dined late after cases in the Leaky Cauldron or Brews and Stews. I cooked when I was around. Siri wanted James and Lily to stay with him after they were Bonded but Lily wanted a place of their own. She was starting to see Siri was a bad influence on James. James had his good points but with Siri around he could be a utter toerag. As we three know well.” Briefly avoiding mentioning the hell their Hogwarts years had been to Severus. As good of a woman Lily was and as gentle and forgiving her nature how in the world did she fall in love with someone like James? Who bullied her best friend and practically her brother to within an inch of his sanity to the point where Severus lost his temper and call her a, Godric and Salazar forgive his mate, a ‘Mudblood’.

“It’s getting late. Had I the time I’d make a nice pot-roast. It’s too last for a proper one, perhaps a nice salad, roasted potatoes and chicken with lemon and thyme.”
Remus could hardly prevent a groan, “Sounds just like your mother. All though it’s a bit late in the year for salad.”

“Oh dear, I hadn’t thought of that. It’s not like I’m at Number Four Private Drive. Mrs. Dursley would hit up the Markets for fresh vegetables and then groan about the cost.” Harry said quietly.

“You’ll just have to see what the house elves have.” Draco said trying to comfort him a bit.

“Perhaps, they’ve got something nice. The Manor is a nice estate we manage quite well, the house elves rarely have to go to market you see. We’ve kept goats, sheep, and cows and farmed here for generations. We don’t keep witches and wizards in service nowadays. In the ages past we did but numbers dwindled too much and it became far too unseemly to have Muggles about. Squibs are alright I suppose but they always have like Muggle a bit of a jealousy against their ‘betters’ for we have magic and they don’t.” Lucius said blandly.

Severus winced slightly; to distract his mate he swiftly changed the subject. “Luce why don’t we head to the Music room? It’s been some time since we played together. I taught Draco some but he could use better instruction from a more adapt musician.”

Draco’s eyes shone, Dad? Teach him to play? Papa always said that his father was a far more superior musician and that he made his own playing seem like a mere trifle.

Remus took the subtle hint, “I’ll show Harry to the kitchen then. We’ll send an elf to summon you to supper. Where shall we dine then?” He’d never been here or indeed to a house such as Malfoy Manor.

“If it were a grand party it’s be the formal dining room off the ball room. There is the formal parlour opposite the dining room. Connecting to the formal parlour is the gentlemen’s parlour of course.” Lucius said thoughtfully, he snapped his fingers.

An elf appeared, “Yes what Master be wanting?”

“Treca, make sure the family dining room is ready.”
Treca bowed, “Treca and Dippy already see to it. All dusted and polished. Nice crisp linen and family silver set. Treca be deciding which china she ought to set the table with.”

“Oh, the Malfoy china will do.”

“Yes Master. Treca do. Wine and coffee be served?”

“Yes. Port and scotch decantered in the green parlour.”

“Of course Master. Milk for the young Masters?”

“Yes, port and scotch be a bit strong of those of formative years.” Lucius said pleasantly.

“Dippy off to put the music room to rights. We so happy to see that Master wishes to play. Manor should ring with laughter and music like before. We elves tell stories of when this was joyful place.” Then she looked as if she thought she’d said too much.

“It’s quite alright.” Severus said kindly, he’d learn to appreciate house elves. Treca’d half served him for years out of duty to her master Lucius whom she seemed to worship. Lucius never had a harsh word for her and often relied on her.

“We’d best see to dinner hadn’t we Harry?” Remus said standing and stretching, trying to distract himself from his thoughts on Draco’s possible Rowan wand. That is if he could find a Rowan tree.

XoooooX

Lucius’ fingers were entwined with Severus as he led the way to the Music room. It was spacious with high vaulted ceilings painted with nymphs and satyrs.

There was a violin, a harp and harpsichord...

Instruments that Severus knew besides those were the viola, a cello, what Muggles would call a grand piano, a glass harp and a lute. There were also horns and flutes.
Lucius had learned music when he was younger having been under the care of excellent tutors. He’d been taught first the piano, then finding a flair for classical instruments such as the Viola and Harp. He’d taught Severus piano wanting to play duets together. Severus had introduced him to Muggle composers such as Vivaldi, Mozart, and Beethoven. His favourite pieces besides the old Wizarding tunes such as the Founders Ode or the French songs he learned to play by ear.

The summer section of Vivaldi’s Seasons was among Severus’ favourite pieces. He couldn’t play it well but he summoned both the Viola and Piano music. Draco had his father’s flair for music.

Lucius nodded, “You adore Vivaldi.” Tuning the viola he gestured with the bow for Draco to test the tuning of the piano, “Show me what you can do.” Vivaldi was good but he did enjoy The Planets, by a Muggle named Gustav Holst who was too talented conjuring the evocative feelings of the planets. His Veela nature was drawn to its cathartic nature. Mars, the Bringer of War he played when that woman put him in a temper. Severus could make him more partial to the movement of Venus, the Bringer of Joy or the movement attributed to Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity. Back to Vivaldi, the Four Seasons was written for the Violin, though he himself painstakingly transposed a simple accompaniment for Severus to play on the piano. It better suited the harpsichord but Severus insisted that the piano was the best he could do. He wanted his mate to play along, he pulled out a simplified version of The Summer moment for Violin he’d made for Severus, giving Draco a quick lesson on the violin. Showing him how to make it sing.

Draco had tried to teach himself the violin and thanks to his early music lessons could read music. He caught on quickly and was soon playing the first bars.

Lucius nudged a protesting Severus to the piano, “I do wish to play together.”

Severus couldn’t resist, it had been too long since he’d played with either of them.

Lucius tapped out the beat.

Soon the voices of the piano, violin and viola soared, Lucius’ viola was the more difficult and proved an magnificent background to Severus’ shy piano. The piece often called the storm gain majesty as Draco and Severus gained confidence.

XooooooX
Remus led Harry down to the kitchen.

There were large deep brick ovens, heated by hot fires. There was a stove but a type of which Harry’d never seen. He groaned, he knew how to cook the Muggle way and he was lost.

Remus noticed his panic, he remembered with an ache Lily having the same when faced with Siri’s kitchen. “It’s not so bad.” He called out, “Dreca? Harry be needing chicken, thyme, lemon juice and pepper.”

Dreca hurried do as she was bid, “be Dreca to wash chicken legs? Thighs? Breasts? Wings?”

Harry swallowed, “Um…thighs?”

Dreca grinned, “Yes Master Harry. Right away Master Harry.”

Remus squeezed Harry’s shoulder gently, “You wanted baked potatoes? Either I or the house elves can show you how best to cook them.”

Harry wrung his hands, “When I said I wanted to cook I never dreamed I’d be attempting in…a picturesque, old-fashioned kitchen like this.”

“Magic and electricity don’t always mesh well. Not many Muggle devices have been made to work well in magical environments. Too much of the Wizarding world has little respect for Muggle inventions and discoveries.”

“So much to get used to…” Harry mused, “I wonder what vegetables I can use.”

Dippy fairly skip up to them, “Master Harry be wishing to see the cellar? Dippy take.”

“Cellar?” Remus asked.

“Yes, Manor have big cellar. Store lots of food. All keep fresh. Be special magic. House elf magic. Come!” she took Harry’s arm tugging him towards the small wooden door off to the side.
They went down a steep dark staircase that went down a few steps, about seven probably.

Dippy led them into a large chamber; it was partitioned off with something was a cross between a sort of wall and a thin wooden screen. There was a sort of aisle; there were large hunks of meat. There were also shelves of glass jars bearing pickled vegetables, jams and preserves. Something like Mrs. Dursleys’ canned things from the pantry. There were also herbs and what almost seemed to be fresh produce hanging from the ceiling or sitting in baskets on shelves.

Reminding Harry of a large walking freezer he’d once seen on the Telly.

“I’ve never seen such a place…” Remus said in awe, “How does it keep?”

“House elf magic. Something like preserving charms but different. Last long, long time. Dippy’s grand dam say in case of bad crop, save much. Use old first. Once found fruit ten year still good. Grand dam said find older, made cider fresh.”

Harry scurried along the shelves, “Some of that romaine lettuce, spinach, tomatoes, cucumbers, ooh baby carrots.” He wanted a dressing he favoured, calling out spices needed for a simple vinaigrette, “vinegar too.”

“What sort of vinegar Master Harry be wanting?”

“White?” Harry said shyly.

“Master Harry want Dippy chop?”

Harry shook his held, “I’m used to chopping. Been using a knife since I was five.”

Dippy’s eyes went wide, “Why? You being an heir just like Master Draco. You be Lord Potter one day.”

“Harry was raised by his mother’s Muggle relations. They made Harry cook and clean for them.”
“Like house elf? That wrong. Very wrong.”

“Perhaps,” Harry admitted, “but I like cooking. Ooh blackberries! And cocoa! Dippy if I mix a cake can one of you take it out when it’s done?” he had no idea how hot one of those ovens ran.


With the ingredients he wanted selected despite being off season Harry skipped back to the kitchen where Dippy, Dreca and Remus were only too kind to help him learn how to cook in the old-fashioned but nevertheless charming kitchen.

At one point Harry said something about how he wished he had thought to make biscuits only to see an unfamiliar elf pulling a set of fluffy biscuits out of the brick oven.

On a tray was a dish of fresh cream butter and a pitcher of fresh milk, brought over that morning Dreca assured them. Knowing the Masters would be home they’d requested that their estate dairy send up some.

Harry again marvelled how well stocked the Manor’s kitchen cellar was, fresh milk and butter? He’d never had such luxury…

Dreca spirited off to summon her masters when Harry declared everything was finished including the cake which Dippy had placed aside with the house elf version of a warming charm to keep the cake as warm and fluffy as when it came out of the oven.

There were two tables in the kitchen, one long like a House table at Hogwarts only more ornate and the other was smaller meant only to seat not more then twelve. The smaller table was arrayed with the dishes of food. The dishes were of monogrammed and family crested china and silver. Was that how the House Elves at Hogwarts arranged meals? Transferring hot food from the kitchens to the tables somehow switching empty dishes with full ones filled with steaming plates?

Harry remembered as Dippy escorted them to the family dining room, that even when one arrived late to a meal at Hogwarts that the food was just as hot as when it first appeared on the House tables.
Lucius, Severus and Draco were playing through another of the Planet movements, Jupiter, Bringer of Joy, with Lucius pausing to give some instruction to help them play through the difficult piece despite his simplified versions.

Dreca popped into the Music Room bowing nervously, “Dreca sorry to interrupt Masters but Master Harry say dinner ready. He be meeting in family dining room.”

“Thank you Dreca.” Draco said grinning, music always calmed him and he was ecstatic that Dad was proud of him and Severus. He might never be as good as Lucius but he could one day hold his own.

Lucius put up his viola, loosening the strings on the bow before putting it back on it’s stand and casting his dust repelling charm.

Draco shyly copied his father with the violin; he’d caught on quickly though he’d only played the pianoforte before.

Severus closed his instrument, “We should wash our hands.”

“There is a washroom near the dining room,” Lucius offered smoothing his robes.

Although it was considered family tradition for the Malfoy children to eat meals with the family after the age of nine Draco spent little time in the family dining room having been excluded from his then parents company. Severus came over on his release from professor duties to check his homework and give him lessons. He looked forward to the attention, his nurses did their best he supposed but nothing replaces a parent. As he grew older Dreca took over more of his care and the nurses were at last gone. Severus was still busy but now that he was at Hogwarts as a student he saw more of his now papa.
They reached the family dining room a few minutes before Lucius, Severus and Draco.

Harry could see Draco was glowing; spending the time with his fathers had been good for him. He felt a bit of an ache not to have his own parents…

Draco let go of his fathers’ hands, something he’d never do in public but this was home and it was different. He hurried to sit beside Harry leaning over to kiss him softly, “tell me, did every thing go alright? What did you make?”

Remus laughed, “Judge for yourself.”

The dishes were now full of steaming food; there was a platter of baked lemon and herb chicken, a bowl of fresh salad, a flask of dressing, a basket of steaming rolls, a disk of fresh butter, a pitcher of warm fresh milk and a plate with fresh from the oven potatoes. There was also a complimentary white wine to accompany the chicken and to aid with digestion.

Draco eagerly filled his plate with the wonderful smelling food, placing a warm biscuit on his bread plate and serving himself salad. He took a bit of chicken and moaned, it was tender and the flavours…

Harry asked nervously, “Is it alright? I’ve never used an oven or a stove like the one’s you have. I was worried it wouldn’t turn out.”

Lucius laughed, “He wouldn’t sound like that if it wasn’t. I’ve only heard him like that with desserts.” He delicately cut himself a bite of chicken and sampled it, a look of wonder filled his face. “You,” he said after finishing the bite, “are an excellent cook.” Those Muggles beat him? Imbeciles…

Severus tasted the chicken and tears filled his eyes but didn’t fall. He swallowed before looking at Harry, “It tastes just like Lily’s…”

Remus nodded after he finished his own bite, “He may look like James apart from his eyes but he is far more like Lily. I was having flashbacks to her first visit to Siri’s kitchen after he turned off the house elves. Foolish thing to do, considering they stand between you and many things including starvation.”
Harry blushed, “No wonder they don’t take kindly to Hermione’s desire to free them.”

Dreca and Dippy looked up from their place near the window waiting to see if they were needed.

Dippy spoke hotly, “He’s a bad un that one. Who can blame him being that woman’s elf? But wanting pay? Bad Dobby. He’s not real Malfoy elf. We don’t want freedom or paying,” she spat the last word. "I’m so ashamed of him,”

Dreca sighed, glancing up; “Dippy liked Dobby until he started talking about freedom. She thinks he’ll come to a bad end.”

“He works for me now. I think he’ll behave.” Harry said trying to deflect the conversation.

“We spoke out of turn.” Dreca said thinly.

“So he can’t mingle with other house elves?” Remus asked curious.

Dreca nodded, “Should keep eye on dishes. Mister Harry be wanting us to bring up his cake for Master Draco.”

Draco turned to Harry, pausing in his barely polite eating mannerisms. “You made me a cake?”

Harry blushed nodding, “You may tease Vince and Greg for being greedy with sweets but you like them too. You’ll eat anything with chocolate. When we have blackberry anything, you smear the preserves over toast or you eat just the blackberries in the porridge.”

Draco shifted nervously, “Blackberries are so good!”

The five practically family ate their way through Harry’s delicious meal before Draco turned to Dreca, “Cake?”

The house elf twittered and the empty supper dishes were replaced by a cake, but what a cake! It was two layers of chocolate cake with blackberry filling, there was chocolate frosting and a heavy
amount of blackberries covering the cake.

Draco whooped and earned a glare from his fathers, to which he paid no heed.

A shy Harry asked Lucius if he would serve it.

He did so.

Soon they were digging into Harry's cake with identical expressions of bliss.

Draco was bouncing and making such noises of delight one might mistake him for orgasming at the table.

When they had finished their cake, Draco had seconds, Harry found himself being kissed eagerly by Draco.

Lucius chuckled, “Oh dear you two, I suppose I better let you stay the night. You will return to Hogwarts by Lunch.”

Draco nodded, “If we have to have Dreca Apparate us into the Entrance Hall we will be.”

Harry was blushing; he’d never had someone compliment his cooking before…

“You’ll have to cook for us again Harry. It reminds us of your mother. A really lovely woman.” Severus said quietly.

Remus nodded, “Wonderful meal. Better then I could have done.”

Harry was about to cry from happiness when Draco led him up to his new room in the Lord’s family quarters.
Lucius was finally comfortable with Remus to consider allowing him to sleep in their bed. He still wasn’t fond of the idea of having to share his mate with anyone much less a werewolf. It not only broke everything he’d been taught but went against his Veela instincts, a werewolf was a creature of darkness. Remus was the very opposite of his nature as a Veela who was a Creature of Light. He also wondered who would be the True Dominant, Severus was submissive to both of them but only one Dominant could be considered the Head of their family.

Severus must have known what his Bondmate was thinking; he leaned over to whisper in Lucius’ ear, “Bed?”

Remus’ ears twitched, he could smell the faint smell of sex that teased him as it wafted from his companions. He forced down his jealousy, Lucius had been Severus’ lover and mate long before he’d become attracted to the formerly abused Slytherin.

Lucius raised a perfect eyebrow, “It’s early Sèvere.”

Severus’ Glamour shivered at that endearment, “Luce.” He forced the feeling away enough so he could think clearly, “Please?”

“Please what?” Lucius teased.

“Let Remus come to bed with us. I need him…” Severus said quietly, he rarely if ever begged, it was a sign of weakness, to soften the blow he repeated words that Lucius had spoke when they were to be parted after the then Head Boy’s graduation, “Ni moi sans vous, ni vous sans moi.”

Lucius glanced at the werewolf and sighed, as much as he hated to admit it, Remus Lupin was an honourable man. He was going to have to learn to share if that was what Severus wanted. He said gruffly, “Comme te veux.”

Severus grinned; turning to pulled a confused Remus into a kiss. “Come to bed?”

Remus glanced up at Lucius.
Lucius nodded, “It’s our job to keep him content. He’s had enough sorrow in his life.” So what if he spoiled Sev? The man deserved it…

The Severus who smirked at them both made them a bit wary, “Hurry up. Before I have to try to satisfy myself.”

For someone who’d suffered more broken bones and injuries then they could imagine was scurrying away at a pace that floored them.

Lucius and Remus had no choice but to give chase.

XoooooX

Severus reached the Lord of the Manor’s quarters that Lucius had redone for him. He had no need to admire it. His rounds with Lucius early this afternoon merely whetted his appetite, his need. He needed them both…he stripped, his clothing relocating to a hamper for the elves to wash. He used a charm to turn back the bedding and one to prepare himself. Not too much, he enjoyed the burn but what would suffice for just Lucius making love to him wouldn’t quite do for them both. He desired them both…

He lay on the bed, pinching a nipple into hardness, his legs spread and stroking himself. He’d be hard to resist…

The door flew open.

Lucius’ grey eyes were stormy with desire while Remus’ were decidedly amber in colour, their own sex no doubt straining in their pants. They reeked of desire…

Severus smirked, “Well? See something you like?”

Lucius declothed himself with the flick of his wand, “Watch yourself Sèvere.“
“Sev,” Remus growled softly, his eyes drinking in the slight, scarred form of his mate. “Sev…”

Severus gave them a look of pure innocence, “I am doing nothing. But I will do something if you don’t get up here.”

Lucius grumbled, “Tu me rends fou.”

Remus muttered, “What is it with you two and French?”

Severus swallowed, “Luce knows it turns me on…”

Lucius snorted, “Of course it does. So what do you want?”

Severus’ eyes were quite black as he replied, “Baise-moi.”

Lucius smirked, “Dirty mouth for a Lord or a legal consort.”

“Look who taught me French you pervert.” Severus shot back; he turned his gaze to Remus, “Comprendre Francais.” Then he repeated his desire in French.

Remus’ ears burned, he repeated it but heard English, “You…want me to fuck you?”

Severus rolled his eyes, “That’s the general idea my wolf,” he’d actually used the endearment ‘mon loup’ not that Remus actually heard that under the influence of the comprehend French spell. A few nights with that cast on the werewolf and he’d be cursing in bed like they did.

Remus glanced at Lucius, “A pity, I know what he wants but I’ve never done it.”

Lucius chuckled, “I see.” Flicking his wand and muttering a spell, he cast warm lubricant into Severus’ no doubt slightly widened and relaxed channel. Sending his wand to rest on a nearby table, he spread Severus’ legs more to bear his entrance, “See this? He wants us to fuck him here.”
Remus muttered, “Knew that. I can read.”

Lucius squeezed his shoulder, “I expect you do. But I doubt they told you how to double penetrate a wizard.”

Remus blushed and shook his head. “No.”

Severus grumbled, “One of you fuck me damn it! I don’t care which. Don’t make me conjure a sex toy and do it myself!” he would too if they made him wait much longer. He was horny and he’d waited too long for this. Between Lucius’ jealous and Remus’ desire not to cause offense, he was suffering from a severe lack of sexual enjoyment. He was supposed to get more sex with that idiot-usurping woman gone not less!

Lucius sighed, “Demanding!” with wandless magic he levitated Severus, “Do us a favour and lay down Remus. I’d fuck him first but double penetrating him is difficult. He’ll have take you inside himself first and then bend over some so I can get inside him.” He glanced at his still levitating Bondmate, “You sure you want this? You prepared yourself? We don’t want to injure you.”

Severus rolled his eyes, “I’m not a child. I’m only a few years younger then you Lucius Malfoy! I know what I want and I want both your cocks in my arse now!” then he proceeded to muttering in Gaelic at them both.

Lucius laughed, “I can still understand you, my little asshole.”

Remus noticed Severus stiffen as he moved to lay beneath the slightly older man and did not understand.

Severus growled, “I may enjoy being fucked by you Lucius Malfoy but I don’t enjoy being called a little cocksucker by you or anyone else.”

Remus guessed the phrase must have multiple meanings and the spell had chosen the least offensive one to translate.

Lucius lowered Severus to lay beside Remus, he had to admit that the werewolf was rather attractive. His affliction had made him have a rather muscular and tanned physique. He glanced at Severus, “How do you wish to do this? Facing him or me?”
Severus sighed, he just wanted to be fucked why did it matter? Then his more logical mind sobered him, even for wizards double-penetration was uncommon and had to done with care. Too much aggression on the part of the dominants and the submissive could be grievously injured and it would be far too embarrassing for the submissive to seek the services of a healer, which could lead to further harm. “I’ll lay on top of Remus facing him,” knowing it would crush Lucius a bit, “Only because it will be easier to move me that way.”

Remus swallowed he’d get to see Severus in all his glory after a fashion? Riding his cock as Lucius fucked him?

Lucius grumbled, “Very well. Best get us as hard as you like and then proceed to ride the wolf.”

Severus tugged Lucius closer and brought the two cocks together, his crippled looking hands quite adapt at pleasuring two, though it was usually his own and Lucius’. He eyed them both, Lucius’ was much longer then his own and a good deal thicker, while Remus’ was between them in length but was of a prestigious girth. He licked his lips in anticipation.

Remus groaned seeing Severus stroking him like that and licking his lips he was almost undone.

Severus grumbled summoning a potion, taking a sip and holding it to Remus’ lips, “Virgin you maybe my wolf but if one is your limit I won’t be pleased. Swallow that.”

Remus did as he was bidden though thoroughly embarrassed, “What is it?”

“A potion of his own concoction.” Lucius said taking a swallow. “It grants the partaker the ability to have multiple orgasms. We’ve only used it a time or two, never really had the time to enjoy it.”

Severus muttered tossing the vial aside, “Pretty sure you used it that one Hogsmeade Weekend.” Flushing slightly, the time he was sure his lost pregnancy had been conceived.

“That’s enough Severus, he’ll come if you continue.” Lucius chided.

Severus moved to straddle Remus holding the thick cock in position to sink down on it. “Like as not the fool of a wolf will come the moment he gets inside me. I’ll not be pleased.”
Lucius chuckled, “He’ll soon recover, I ought to know. He’ll have no choice with the friction of me fucking you, it will make him ready in no time.”

Remus was highly embarrassed, he didn’t like thinking about Severus being Lucius’ lover but his cock twitched in his mate’s hand as he thought about Lucius’ cock thrusting against his own.

Severus groaned as he felt Remus’ thickness sink past both rings of muscle, he worried that he’d not prepared properly. Remus was thicker then he’d expected having never truly seen his endowment. He’d be in trouble later and Lucius would lecture him. Though thankfully not in the boys’ earshot, although he’d been about fourteen when he lost his virginity to Lucius, considering Harry being a submissive Chuvash until they figured out how to make a mating with a Veela work Harry would have to abstain from penetrative sex. Hopefully they figured it out before Harry’s first Heat...he gasped as he felt Remus’ hung and bulging bollocks resting against his arse. “Salazar’s...” he couldn’t think clearly to finish the expletive.

Lucius kissed his neck and massaged his back, “You alright my heart?” an endearment he used only in bed, when he threw aside his mask and was at his most tender.

Severus took slow breaths, “He looks big...but he feels bigger...its different...” he mumbled, he relished the familiar calming presence of Lucius’ body pressed to his, “I’ll be fine.” He all but snapped, “Just go slowly. I’m not waiting all night! I need this. If I go with either of you separately you’ll want to fight. This is the only way.” He smirked, “unless I convince Remus...” his eyes twinkling with mischief and intrigue.

Remus was trying to hold back an orgasm that was like trying to hold back a flood with one sandbag. “Convince me what?”

Severus kissed him intensely, “To let me see what the joys of Chasing are. I’d never dare ask Lucius to let me...you’re different.”

Remus could hardly breathe, he’d wondered how they’d incorporate him into their sex life but he’d never dare consider Severus might want his arse. He almost came, it was so different to actually be inside his mate, to feel that pulsing warmth all around him. Even among werewolves he was unique, James had a few girls before Lily but was faithful from then on. Siri wasn’t the type to settle down seriously, and no girl was every really interesting in Wormtail. He’d been the odd one, the virgin, the one who could never bring himself to have sex just for sex’s sake and desired to cleave to his mate. At this moment he realized, he’d have to cleave to both. He doubted he’d be allowed to submit to just Severus, Lucius would want to put him in his place. He had to admit, the former Prince of Slytherin was good-looking, he could see him pressed intimately against Severus, rocking him and
slowly his former year mate began to ride him.

Severus could feel Lucius’ cock pressed to his back, he wanted it, craved it but he needed to get used to the broadness of Remus’ manhood first.

After a few moments, Lucius pushed Severus down so that Remus bottomed out and then made him lay down on the werewolf’s body. He glared at Remus, “Hold him still. Don’t let him squirm. Distract him.”

Remus nodded, a bit nervous about feeling that pureblood cock against his own once more. He pulled Severus into a demanding kiss, reaching between them to wrap his own hand over the potion master’s much slimmer manhood.

Severus would deny he whimpered into the kiss as Remus touched him, but whimper he did.

Lucius hastily cast more lubricant on his cock before moving to thrust inside Severus’ arse, a place that by rights as his Bondmate and Lord belonged to him. He was going to remind them both just whose bed this was and who ruled in the bedroom. He thrust slowly into his longtime lover and now Bondmate, pressing Remus’ thick cock firmly against Severus’ prostate no doubt.

Severus winced as Lucius entered his arse, he broke the kiss laying his head on the werewolf’s shoulder and started cursing, “Holy fucking shit, God damn it.”

Lucius stopped, the vulgar French cursing warning him that Severus was hurting if not extremely discomforted. He growled at the potions master, “You're too tight. What were you thinking? Idiot!”

Severus took a bit to relax and rounded upon Lucius when he recovered himself. “You drive me fucking crazy. Fuck me Lucius! I mean it.”

Lucius muttered some choice words in a variety of languages before slowly resuming his cock’s descent into the already overly tight and crowded passage. He’d have to take care not to hurt Severus overly much. He could be a bit too enthusiastic during sex. At this rate he’d have to apply the pain relieving, healing balm Severus spent the summer of his fifth year developing.

Severus knew he was too tight and resolved to remember to make his internal muscles more relaxed next time.
Remus felt his cock twitch as Lucius’ moved up it, he couldn’t help it as he threw back his head and let out a primal scream of pleasure as he erupted inside Severus filling him with spunk.

Severus bit his lip to hold back a whimper or a curse as he felt the spurts of Gryffindor cum released inside him. “Fuck! Lucius just do it. If you two just come the moment you’re inside me I’ll not enjoy this.”

With one quick thrust Lucius was bollocks deep in Severus’ arse, his cock bypassing Remus’ by a good five centimeters. The other man was thick, thick enough to make him almost jealous but he was longer and was content with that. He nudged Severus’ legs farther apart to make it easier on him, “You alright my heart?”

Severus flushed, his arse tight around them both, he reveled in the feeling guessing the consequences on the morrow. “Yes. Move it damn you!”

“As you like.” Lucius muttered, “You're still too tight Sèvere.”

“Do you really think I care?” Severus muttered before kissing Remus.

“What do I want you to do about it?” Lucius growled, “Think next time.” He began his first thrusts in and out of his mate’s arse, up and down Remus’ deep-seated cock. It felt different and was quite stimulating to feel the wolf’s cock thus.

Remus was quickly hard again and no doubt dripping precum, Merlin this felt amazing. He slowly began rocking his hips in conjunction with Lucius.

Severus collapsed on Remus, he couldn’t move as waves of pleasure coursed through him. So what if he charms his anal muscles more sensitive to get the most out of his first double fuck from his two mates?

The sensation of two cocks thrusting into a too tight space ensured that it wouldn't be long before Lucius and Severus finally surrendered to their first orgasm of the night while Remus experienced his second.
After a few moments to catch their breath Lucius went to move off when Severus restrained him, “Wait. Let’s try you fucking me while Remus and I suck each other.”

Lucius’ eyes twinkled, Severus sucking cock while getting fucked? Delightful. “Very well if the wolf isn’t tired.”

Remus grumbled, thanks to whatever that potion was he wasn’t the least bit tired. “I’ll handle it.” He’d never sucked a cock before but he could copy Severus’ ministrations on his own prick.

Lucius chose to levitate himself and Severus, moving his mate off the werewolf’s thick manhood. “Then clean,”

“Don’t!” Severus snapped, “I already cleaned myself out thank you. Besides, if I’m going to suck another cock it best taste something of you Luce. Move it Remus before I change my mind. I want your cock where I can suck it. And your face where I can kneel over it.”

A far from lethargic Remus scrambled into place and felt a shiver of excitement run through him. He hadn’t had enough of pleasuring Severus not by a long shot. Was that the potion or his own desire?

Lucius returned them to the bed, Severus practically humping Remus’ face. His own thrusts into Severus’ loose arse were rather sobering. “You’ll have to clamp down Severus or I shall not give you much pleasure.”

“Mind you hit my prostate Lucius and I’ll enjoy it plenty.” Severus tossed back before licking the cock before him. Flicking over the slit and beneath hood of the foreskin. “I do like a man who is complete. Never liked the look of a circumcised prick.” His father had one but thankfully, Lucius and Remus did not.

Remus squirmed a bit beneath Severus’ tongue before deciding one lick would be an interesting experiment.

“No, no! Suck it! Put your mouth on it and suck. Best way to get used to it. I have the experience to take my time!” Severus snarked.

Remus coloured, “Oh…” He did as Severus ‘ordered’ and found he was right.
Lucius continued the thrust against Severus’ prostate, getting off on him ordering the younger man about. Remus was he was sure of it a few months younger then Severus. Though near in age and both having passed their Apparation tests the first time, they hadn’t sat for the same test. Severus had taken the one in late February while Remus had been obliged to wait until June to take it with his friends, Potter’s he was sure was in March sometime. It had been in his obituary.

Unused to blowjobs, or better yet unused to Severus’ skilled month and he was coming in the potion master’s mouth.

Severus was a cum addict, he liked it in his arse or in his mouth. He found as addicted as he was already to Lucius’ he’d soon be the same with Remus’. The moment the first shot of fresh cum hit his tongue he was coming himself.

Remus wasn’t prepared for Severus to cum and promptly began to cough and choke. But decided the flavour wasn’t dreadful. He’d have to try again.

The smell of freshly spilled cum and Severus’ tightening around him and Lucius was coming inside his Bondmate’s arse again.

Severus lay there gasping before he could come up with another sex scheme to wring another orgasm out of them before the potion ran its course.

Chapter End Notes

Chapter 29- The Memorial of Alvin Drystan Wood

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Chapter 29- Memorial of Alvin Drystan Wood

It was a sombre Charlie who retrieved Fred at Lunch and Sophronia insisted on accompanying them.

“Percy’s my cousin and soon to be brother. It wouldn’t be right for me not to attend.”

Draco nodded sipping his juice, “She’s right. Better take her.”

Charlie realized that Draco’s words had wisdom, “I’m already properly dressed. Your robes were sent to Weasley Hall I’m sure.”

George was supposed to meet them at Weasley Hall. With Viktor who had mostly likely insisted it would be bad form not to attend.

Sophronia was, as Angelina guessed quite fond of dark clothes, but she was worried about not having a proper outfit.

Angelina came over with a black dress over her arm, “It’s a bit big but I’m sure I can fix it. We’ve got time to dress at the Hall if Lady Weasley has no objection.”

Charlie mouthed a thank you to his apparent future sister by Bonding to be, “I’m sure Grandmother will be more then obliging.”

“I do hope I meet her approval.” Angelina said a shade nervous.

“Nonsense you make me mind and settle down from my riotous playboy ways. She’d say good for you, nothing good can come of dramatic romancing of young ladies. Best to settle down with a woman you respect. You’ll keep me in line I’m sure,” Fred chuckled kissing her cheek.
Angelina flushed shoving him away, “Frederick! Behave.”

“You think it will bother your fathers if we used their floo?” Charlie asked politely.

Draco shook his head, “Papa won’t mind. He understands Percy’s despair more then most I expect. Not that I have all the details of course. He’ll be glad to help in any way he can.”

Charlie nodded, herding his brother and soon to be sisters away.

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Percy was highly emotional now that the day for his lost baby’s memorial was here. He’d slept ill once more last night. He was paler then usual with dark circles under his eyes…

Oliver had insisted he’d be more comfortable at Weasley Hall and Lady Cedrella had agreed. They’d spent the night in the family quarters but not the nursery where Percy might have stayed as a child. Though not Bonded or officially engaged Lady Cedrella had allowed them to share a bed as though she knew that he was important to her grandson putting this terrible thing behind him.

Percy glanced at himself in a looking glass; he saw his pointy nose, his red eyes and pale face. He looked away, how could Oliver stand to look at him? He looked haunted; gone was his carefree self from when they’d been young and in love, ignorant of the pitfalls and cruelties of the world.

Oliver turned him to face him, lifting his chin and kissing him soundly, “None of that. Brooding doesn’t suit you. I’m going to make it my duty to make you smile. Alvin won’t be our only child. I love you too much not to see you happy. Odd I’m sure some might find it but seeing you round with child is something I’ve often fantasized about.” Besides thanks to magic, wizards were sometimes able to conceive without potions.

Witches who favoured Intimate relationships with other witches had a more…difficult time with conception. Some chose to adopt because it easily since usually conception required one witch to use a gender-switching spell, which could as in the case of all Human Transfiguration go awry. Not all witches who preferred their own felt comfortable with having sex with a man even with their lover in the guise of a man. Although there was the option so he’d heard of a wizard relation donating their
essence, which was cast into the witch’s womb when a Healer claimed, they were at their most fertile. Either way he felt sorry for them, wizards conceived differently. Something that Muggleborns or Muggle-raised would find hard to understand, when he’d been thirteen his father Oberon had found it difficult to broach the subject of sex with him and handed him a book, ‘A Wizard’s guide to sex’. Which had helped a great deal, it told him that it was just as normal for a wizard to fancy another wizard as it was to fancy a witch.

It explain to a wizard that wizards with magical creature blood in their ancestry were more likely to have children naturally then one with pure human ancestry. The how was not fully understood. It was said that when a wizard’s penis grew and their bollocks dropped in puberty that they also retained through some quirk the womb of a witch. Apparently female was the default for all children in womb, how Healers discovered this Oliver didn’t wish to know, since it was quite unnerving. Whatever made this default form become male wasn’t as complete as should be in some wizards, no one was sure if it was in all. Magic could be a bit separate from the witch or wizard that hosted it. Magic managed to blend in some manner the essences of two wizards into something that could conceive or perhaps, the ‘womb’ which only prepared itself when the wizard who was ‘Keeper’ was truly fertile and blended it with an egg that didn’t release like that of a witch in a cycle. However it worked, knowing Percy conceived once he’d no doubt conceive again. If the abortion hadn’t scarred his womb in any way. He’d been too embarrassed to ask Percy if he’d been examined. The abortion hadn’t included an attack on his fertility or he hadn’t heard that it had. He kissed Percy again, more intently, his hand resting on Percy’s flat stomach. “It’s sad, it was cruel what he did but we’re more able to raise a child now. We couldn’t have handled school and a baby. I would have begged you to keep it if I’ve I’d known.” He hugged Percy whispering, “Because it was ours. Considering how much I adore you there could be no doubt Alvin was made in love.”

This comforted Percy immensely; he’d researched wizard pregnancies when they first began to go out. His supposed parents never once mentioned bent wizards or associated topics. He’d had to look it up to confirm his feelings for Oliver were acceptable. As painful as the murder of their child was, as much as he’d have wanted to keep it they’d been too young. He’d never have become Head Boy; he probably would have lost his prefect status and would have been forced to take time off from school putting him behind. It would have made Professional Quidditch teams look on Oliver as unreliable. He wished they’d been more careful, but he wanted to have Oliver’s child…

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The entire Weasley Clan: Lord Septimus and Lady Cedrella who presided over them, Arthur their father, Gideon their bearer, their uncle Cadmus whom they hadn’t seen in years, as well as their three cousins whom they weren’t really close to due to Molly’s contrivance, Andret, Branor and Calibom.

Percy’s Oliver was there of course since the Memorial was to be held at Rowan Grove, the ancestral home of the Wood family.
Fred had come with Angelina, while his twin George was accompanied by Viktor who seemed loathed to be separated from him.

Only the two elder Weasley-Prewett boys were unattached as it were.

Their cousins and Uncle Cador were surprised to be invited no doubt.

Though Ron and Ginny were Percy’s cousins as well, given Ron’s current behaviour they couldn’t invite him. Ginny had been exempted mostly because it hadn’t seemed suitable to invite one but not the other.

Oberon spoke in a carrying voice though low, “We come together as a family, one bound by the ties of love and kinship to the grieving parents, my son Oliver and his lover Percy. Lately they learned they suffered a great tragedy. Young though they were they conceived a child together. That child was brutally stolen from them, in a way that none of us can truly imagine. They wish in the company of family who love them to put this child to rest. To assure his spirit if he watches from the Veil that he is loved and missed.”

Oliver stepped in front of the Vault that bore the bones and ashes of his ancestors, “Our child, a son, your name is Alvin Drystan Wood. So it would have been if you’d take a breath.” He squeezed Percy’s hand, “Alvin for your sire’s family, we Woods have Elven ancestry. I wished to honour that as my father has done.”

Percy said quietly, “Drystan, for Arthurian given names are in my own line. It means herald and sorrow. Your loss brought me great sorrow but also was what brought your sire and I back together.”

Oliver raised his wand, using it to carve the name into the black marble his father had placed there in gilded script. “Alvin my son, thou are lost but never forgotten. We regret you are not here but we shall endeavour to be the kind of parents you would be proud of.”

Percy shook with silent sobs.

Gideon understood how it felt to have your children stolen but unlike Percy, his grandson could never be restored to him.
Lady Maria also moved to comfort her future son, having lost a child early into her Bonded life with Oberon, who was to her dashing in a way that struck her as one named for a king of the Fae must be. Or was Oberon a King of the Elven? She never had a head for Legends…

Together they grieved.

Wearing her winter coat and Angelina’s black dress, Sophronia wished she knew Percy and Oliver better that she might truly grieve with them. To lose a child must be awful…

Oliver pulled out a box, kneeling in the snow in front of Percy, “One might claim that this isn’t the place for this but I beg to differ. I would hope Alvin would want to share this moment with you, with all of us. I wanted as much of our family together.” He opened the box covered in sueded black Jarvey skin, inside nested on green silk were three rings; one was a mostly simple band with two vines entwined, the other two were matching Celtic knots. Woods favoured Celtic knots due their place in what was once rural Scotland where Celtic beliefs once held sway over all.

Percy’s eyes shone, his heart beating fast. The rings were masculine enough to suit him. It was a nice thought to think of Alvin looking down at them from the Veil and smiling on them. He hauled his more muscular and heavy lover up kissing him. “Yes, a thousand times yes.” He’d waited years to hear it, before Ginny being taken into the Chamber of Secrets when he’d been happy before Dumbledore had mentally assaulted him he’d longed and dreamed of this day, this moment. He had hoped for happier circumstances but this was perfect.

Oliver slipped the engagement ring on Percy’s finger; “You’ve made me the most grateful and happy man alive.”

George’s ring a simple ring that was crafted by a wizard with Romany blood or so he’d claimed was on his hand. Viktor had seen it in a window after shopping for his outfit for the Memorial. It was made from fine silver the symbols reputed to mean devotion and fertility. A ring from that jeweller was believed to promise a happy and fruitful bonding. George was a passionate person, who took great pleasure in Viktor’s arms and saw his desire to bear Viktor’s children as no threat to his own manhood. He might one day if Viktor offered want to make love to his mate but for now he was content to enjoy the pleasure of having Viktor take as much pleasure in bed the way they were.

Fred admired Percy’s engagement band, his own keen eyes catching sight of George’s he winked at his twin. He glanced at his Angelina wondering what might be suitable to a fiery lass such as she. Knowing his skill at inventing he’d want to no doubt make it himself. Perhaps, using Transfiguration. He’d come up with something; he wanted to see her as pleased with his ring as Percy and George obviously were.
Chapter 30- The interview

Lucius Malfoy was a bit shocked when the door guardian flitted into the empty painting inside; he never took much notice to arrogant former Slytherin potions master Professor Vindicus. "What do you want sir?" Lucius asked looking up from his reports.

"There is a Mr. Krum outside. He wishes to speak with you."

Viktor Krum? To see him? He shrugged, "Very well send him in."

Viktor stood in, after the portrait swung wide to admit him, "You are I'm told a powerful man in these parts with connections?" he lapsed into Russian, his English not very strong embarrassingly enough. He should have studied more.

Lucius stood brushing his robes smooth and moving towards the hearth, "If we're to discuss business then we'd best be comfortable." Russian was one of the tongues he was fluent in, which served him well being on the Wizengamot's Foreign Relations committee.

Viktor sat opposite, "If you wish."

"What do you need my assistance for?" Lucius asked, resting his elbows on the arms of the leather high backed chair and steepling his fingers.

"I heard you are in property? I know that George and his brother will be seeking property and I hoped since I know little about it that you might assist him."

"You'll be allowing him to pursue his business venture?" Lucius was surprised, not that he would dare prevent Severus from opening his own apothecary if he desired. Eastern European wizards especially those with Chuvash or some such blood tended to be more then a little old fashioned.

"This inventing business is as much his passion as Seeking is for me. As long as he doesn't neglect his duties at home Otec has agreed me may do as he wishes. Considering that George wishes to have his own greenhouses and Otec is a procurer of rare and dangerous ingredients for potions and wandcores on occasion. If George can manage to grow some of these it might give Otec more profit then seeking them in the wild or paying a higher fee to a non-family member."

Lucius laughed, "Had you been raised here Mr."

"Call me Viktor." Viktor interrupted.

"Very well Viktor. You wish me to seek out premises for their future establishment?"

Viktor nodded, "I'll talk to Fred somehow and find out what they need in large quantities and convince Otec to make it a Bonding gift. We'll purchase the property if their family doesn't wish too."

"When the issues with the Prewett Estate settle down and monies recovered I'm sure that that side of George's family will no doubt invest something. I remember catching those twins up to tricks and I'd
Lucius said with a frown. "A pity a find for I see no reason why I should not be in company with a Prewett or a Weasley with except of the loutish Ronald and his odious mother. I have no opinion on the sister Ginny." Although he felt he'd done her and ill turn by placing that Dark Artefact in her cauldron.

"If you can look about for the premises I'll give them to George as a Bonding gift from myself. I'll pay for them. I'm sure what I made from my royalties for my likeness and what I was paid to fly in the World Cup will cover it. I wished to speak to you on another matter. It seems that it might be more…prudent to announce our engagement in the British paper due my being a Triwizard Champion here. The Continental papers will pick it up I'm sure. It wouldn't be so shocking for the British to find I'm chosen to Bond myself to one of their own. I wonder how soon I can get an interview."

Lucius chuckled, "I'll send for Ms. Skeeter. She'd love to interview you I'm sure. Perhaps over dinner? I can see if we can get a translator if you aren't confident in your English."

"I'll ask Draco. I'm sure he'd be happy to test his Russian to translate." Viktor said thoughtfully.

"I'll arrange everything. I'll inform her of the strict guideline of her interview. She'll not want to alienate us I believe. If she does well, I'll come up with something to knock her down a peg." Lucius smirked.

"Thank you sir." Viktor said standing and holding out his hand.

"Oh not at all. I'll be pleased to assist you. I wish you both the best. I only wish that I had half the support you do when I was your age." Lucius rose and shook the young man's hand genuinely pleased at his manners.

"Dinner? Where?"

"Probably that new place, The Orchid. I'll be sure to arrange it under the name of Krum."

Viktor bowed before leaving, "Thank you again."

Lucius made haste to depart immediately for Diagon Alley to visit the premises of the Daily Prophet to seek out Ms. Skeeter.

XooooooX

Lucius arrived at the offices of the Daily Prophet, making his way to the receptionist's desk.

"How might I help you?" The woman asked before looking up and then bobbed a muddled curtsey in her seat. "Pardon me my Lord. How might I assist you?"

"Is Ms. Skeeter about? I have a scoop she might enjoy being the first to know."

"Oh dear, Rita's in the field. Out at Hogwarts she said this morning." The woman said morosely.

"Haven't you a way to get in touch with her if it's important?" Lucius asked a bit annoyed.

"Oh yes, well Mr. Cuffe does being the chief editor and all." The woman said in a mixed air of arrogance and annoyance.

"Then I'll just have to speak to him." Lucius said setting off in the direction.

"But sir, I mean my Lord,"
Lucius paid the insufferable woman no heed. Making his way to the Chief Editor's office he barely gave the startled assistant or secretary whatever she was sufficient time to announce him.

"Lord Malfoy," the rotund man with spare grey hair rose stiffly to greet him, "I'm ashamed at my late congratulations on your recent Bonding. How is that adorable mite Potter?"

Barnabas Cuffe was not a man whose company Lucius Malfoy sought out, in fact he was an obsequious, insufferable man who cared far more to the sensational then the facts. in some cases he could as was Skeeter, be quite useful and others he was more an annoyance then an asset. He hoped he might prove the latter rather then former in this case.

"Harry Potter is fine, he's still getting used to the idea he'll be staying in the Wizarding Community in the company of his guardian Professor Lupin."

"I see. I heard a rumour that former Auror Black has been released from Ministry Custody. Can you comment on that?"

Lucius took a deep breath, "No I can't. You'll have to approach Madam Black-Tonks, his cousin who is holding the Black and Potter votes for young Lord Potter or the Head Auror Scrimgour."

"Can you comment on you arrival the other afternoon with two hogtied persons? One a missing and presumed ill Lord Crouch, Head of International Magical Cooperation?"

Lucius shook his head, "I cannot unless I am given permission to speak by the Aurors on the case which at present I have not. I came to speak on a very different matter, a happier one. I have in my offering an exclusive interview that if we two can come to an agreement your Ms. Skeeter might have this evening."

The man gestured for Lucius to sit and began rubbing his hands together in a thoroughly disagreeable manner.

"An exclusive? Of what kind?"

Lucius sat reluctantly, dispelling the dust with a touch to and a silent thought while gripping his cane. Unlike his father, he preferred to keep his personal wand in the snake headed cane rather then the wand used by the Head of the Malfoy Family. "Of a rather sensational kind. I am here representing a party who chose you out of a number of other papers to break the news to. They felt being in Britain as it were that it would be apropos to give the Daily Prophet first knowledge as it were."

"That kind of exclusive? My dear Lord Malfoy I must thank you for convincing them of such."

Lucius waved his hand in dismissal. "I did nothing of the kind, it was this personage's decision. I merely offered to make the arrangements. Still being deliberately vague, "There are of course conditions."

Mr. Cuffe paled slightly, "Conditions?"

Lucius nodded, tapping the end on his cane in a repetitive manner against the wooden floor, knowing it annoyed Cuffe immensely. "Conditions. The first being that until the article is published it is to remain private, it is not to be bragged about in Leaky Cauldron or some such place. Second, Ms. Skeeter is not to use her Quick-quotes Quill, this individual wishes to have the facts announced not whatever sensationalist drivel usually is scribbled by Ms. Skeeter. Thirdly, she will ask and write answers only questions approved by those who consent to be interviewed."

Cuffe swallowed visibly, "It's not for me to agree. It's up to Rita you see, being a reporter and all."
"If these are not followed I have the assurance of no less then three rich and powerful personages that you will find yourself under a lawsuit." Lucius said coldly, if Rita broke these then he was sure that Septimus and Gideon who indeed wish to sue the Daily Prophet as would no doubt a man of Viktor Krum's father's wealth and authority due to his name being well known is some circles.

Cuffe began to sweat, "Lawsuit? Would that really be necessary?"

Lucius frowned, "Given those concerned I'm afraid so." Really sometimes the Daily Prophet was more gossip rag then anything else. "Of course if the conditions are too onerous I'm sure I could contact another paper. Perhaps the Franciscan Herald?"

Cuffe stiffened, "I'm sure we can come to an understanding."

Lucius schooled his face into the impassive Malfoy mask; he knew very well the ill feelings between the Franciscan Herald and the Daily Prophet. It didn't matter if there was the channel between them. There had been animosity between both editors and staff for eons. "You can get in touch with Ms. Skeeter if she's in the fields can't you?"

Cuffe mopped his brow with a stained silk handkerchief, "Yes, of course." Opening a drawer and digging through it. "Where is it? Don't often have to do this..." he pulled out a octagonal mirror and dusted it before hissing abruptly. "Rita?"

Lucius was surprised as the quietness of the voice, there was a sort of buzzing nose that he didn't care for and then finally the poisonous sweetness of Rita Skeeter's voice. "Barny? What a surprise! You never contact me in the field."

"I need you in London right away. We have an offer of an exclusive. They want you."

"Delightful! I'll be right there."

"These is the matter of conditions," then Cuffe frowned, "Oh dear she didn't stay around long enough to hear much have Apparated."

"Ignorance is no excuse Mr. Cuffe." Lucius tossed back in an icy tone.

"Yes, yes. I'll deal with it." Cuffe tried to assure him.

Lucius wasn't having any of his protestations.

The door opened wide.

The screech of the secretary could be heard, "Rita he's in a meeting you can't go in."

Rita tittered, "I'm invited."

Lucius turned to acknowledge her arrival with cold distain, "Ms. Skeeter."

"My Lord. Are you the subject of my interview? An exclusive with Lord Malfoy and his new spouse Lord Prince?"

"Now Rita we have something to discuss first." Cuffe tried to interject.

"Now Barny do be quiet I'm talking to his Lordship." Rita said fluttering her overly long eyelashes.

Lucius as disgusted, but his impassive face gave nothing away, "No. I come representing another. Perhaps, you should listen to your boss."
"Barny? My boss?" she tittered again, "I'm a correspondent. I take on only assignments I choose. I'm a free-lance journalist. I'd much rather talk to you."

Salazar's Python, she was flirting with him! He was a happily Bonded man thank you with two bedmates now. Remus added a bit of spice to their sex life, with some more experience he'd loose that shy virginal air. Lucius said coldly, "I suggest you listen to him Ms. Skeeter before I decide to offer the exclusive to another reporter."

Cuffe looked stricken, "My Lord she is the best we've got."

"Perhaps, she doesn't have the right touch, the delicacy to take on this assignment." Lucius purred.

Rita looked affronted; "I can take on any assignment if I wish. What do I need to pay attention to Barny?"

"Conditions Ms. Skeeter." Barnabas Cuffe said twitching.

"Conditions? What sort of conditions?" the nosey woman clad in poisonous green said winkling her nose.

"Conditions insisted upon by the personages to be interviewed."

"What right do they have to tell a journalist how to do their job?" Rita hissed through clenched teeth.

"Rita, sit down please." Cuffe all but begged.

Lucius realized too late that Barnabas Cuffe was putty to Rita Skeeter.

"Now Barny I'm sure," Skeeter said in a sickeningly sweet voice, "We can negotiate these 'conditions'."

"Merlin's staff we cannot." Lucius said sternly, "It is the wish of the parties concerned that their conditions be followed to the letter. If that cannot be accomplished I'm sure I can pursue a reporter with the Franciscan Herald to come across the Channel to oblige us of an interview."

"Rita, please." Cuffe was back to wringing his hands, "Do be civil about this. We can't set our noses in the air with persons like his Lordship. It just isn't done."

"Oh posh. One can always negotiate." Skeeter said scornfully, "There is such a thing as journalist integrity."

Lucius couldn't restrain himself from a snort but managed to turn it into a cough. "MS. Skeeter, there might be a great name making story coming your way if you would oblige the personages in this exclusive. I can promise you in a short time that you will have a story to set the ears of the Wizarding World both here and abroad. A story that would make you a household name worldwide, people in China would know the name Rita Skeeter."

"You can't bribe me Lord Malfoy." Rita said stiffly. "I'm not one such as that Fudge."

"A pity Ms. Skeeter that you aren't more amiable. It's not a bribe but a promise. My associate and I have had in mind all the while to hand over the most sensational story the Daily Prophet has ever printed. Why the sales would be so numerous that they couldn't be counted even by a Gringotts goblin. You could write a book and retire handsomely on its royalties. It would easily outstrip the sales of your book on Dippet."
Skeeter's lips twitched but her eyes were like ice, "Sounds like a lot of stuff and nonsense to me."

"Would it help to dangle the name of your interview tonight?"

"No!" Skeeter glared folding her arms.

"Pity, would have thought the name of one Mr. Krum would whet your reporter's appetite."

"Rita," Cuffe begged once more, "please be sensible…"

"Of what is the subject of the interview?" Rita said waspishly.

"That is what you shall find out tonight." Lucius said silkily.

"You mean the Mr. Krum? Triwizard Champion for Durmstrang Institute and Seeker from the World Cup?" Rita said with tight lips.

Lucius smiled reluctantly, "the very same."

"Very well, name your conditions." She said boredly but her eyes sparkled with mischief that left Lucius more than a little alarmed.

He did name the conditions.

Skeeter gave an exaggerated sigh, "You best not be lying about your stories Lord Malfoy or I shall be poking about your business."

"I have nothing to hide. I've kept my nose clean since I was released from the Death Eater trials." Lucius said with forced pleasantry.

"Where am I to met Mr. Krum?" Skeeter said shortly.

"At the Orchid in Hogsmeade. There'll be a private room there for the interview which is to take place over dinner." Lucius said rising, bowing slightly though she deserved the gesture not at all. "I shall inform Mr. Krum that you have agreed to the interview and the conditions." Of which Krum had no knowledge of at present but he would be informed. As he left he flung back, 'By the way Krum will be having an interpreter for he doesn't trust his English to answer, he understands quite well so I'm sure you wouldn't dream of saying anything rude or unseemly.' He flung over his shoulder, it wasn't until he was about to Apparate to Hogsmeade that he worried about his parting remarks.

XooooooX

Lucius and Charlie escorted Draco, Viktor and George to Hogsmeade against the protests of Dumbledore who insisted that George and Draco who were underage stay at the castle for they were underage and it was not at present a Hogsmeade Weekend. As it was George Weasley had spent the entire weekends as it was out of school which was unwise.

To which Lucius had quoted the school rules as drawn up by Ravenclaw herself if legends were to be believed that of age family members had the right to escort or allow an underage student to leave the castle if escorted by member of said family. Viktor was not under the authority of the Hogwarts' Headmaster and being of age, he had certain allowances as Dumbledore could ascertain if he chose to question Headmaster Karkaroff. After which they left Dumbledore fuming and glaring at their retreating backs.
Lucius escorted them into The Orchid a few moments before six, asking for wine and firewhiskey for himself, Charlie and Viktor, while ordering Butterbeer and whatever juice was the House's recommendation. In Paris or at home it was one thing to allow minors to drink. With a nosy witch reporter like Skeeter around it was best to be seen as whiter then white especially with Skeeter's nose already out of true with the imposed conditions which he had privately informed Charlie of who agreed and on the way there had informed Viktor and George of in soft Parseltongue. Draco had been informed as to his duties but his father in clipped short Gaelic, which Skeeter would be less likely to know in comparison to their more normal French.

Malfoy Manor might be near Devizes in Wiltshire near the Famous Stonehenge, which was actually a Wizarding ruin, rather then a Muggle one. Thus Muggle scholars couldn't make heads or tails of it.

They barely had time to set down to relax and have a glass of something to refresh themselves after their long walk from Hogwarts to Hogsmeade when Rita Skeeter flounced in, her customary photographer in tow. Skeeter was wearing a poisonous green suit, a black cape and high heels carrying her customary alligator purse.

Viktor and the rest of the company rose in greeting; out of customary courtesy rather then any esteem for a woman who though had her uses also possessed a spiteful nature.

Viktor bowed slightly, "Ms. Skeeter."

"Viktor, may I call you that? You may call me Rita! I haven't spoken to you since the interview of the Triwizard Champions following the Weighing of the Wands Ceremony." Skeeter said

Lucius noticed George's spine stiffen when Skeeter began flirting with his fiancé and mate. He prayed that the submissive Chuvash would keep his temper.

Viktor's smile seemed to freeze on his face, "I would prevere if ve remained polite. Me muther would not forgeeeve me for such imformaleety." His broken English more apparent in his embarrassment.

Lucius spoke swiftly, "Remember the circumstances and conditions Ms. Skeeter. The interview can be ended at any time."

George had nervously agreed to be mostly silent unless Charlie indicated it was alright to answer. He didn't understand why this interview was necessary…

Draco gestured from Ms. Skeeter to sit opposite himself, Viktor and George, Charlie and his dad were at opposite ends of the table but near enough to intervene if worse came to worse. "I'll be translating for Viktor."

"Aren't you young Mr. Malfoy?" Skeeter asked digging into her volumous purse for a quill, ink and parchment.

Lucius' upper lip twitched in annoyance, "Ms. Skeeter, you agreed, 'no Quick-quotes Quill."

Rita Skeeter gave an aggrieved sigh replacing her poisonous green quill that matched her suit far to well and pulled out a peacock quill that's feather looked a bit crumpled. With a slight huff, she dipped it into the now opened inkpot, the ink an equal shade of green as her suit.

To keep from noticing if she spilt it, Lucius thought annoyed.

"Why did you wish to be interviewed?" Rita said in that overly pleasant and flirtatious tone.

Viktor understood perfectly but out of politeness allowed Draco to repeat it in Russian. He
swallowed and squeezed George's hand under the table, "I'm not very good with interviews." He said shortly in Russian, pausing, "Don't tell her that Draco."

Draco nodded, "I'll only translate what you wish."

Viktor nodded clasping his Slytherin counterpart's shoulder companionably. "For that I thank you. Tell her I wished to give her the honour of being the first to congratulate me. For I am imparting to her first out of our families the news of our engagement."

Draco passed on the message, "Viktor wishes for me to impart to you on his behalf that 'he wished, to give you the honour of being the first to congratulate me. For he is imparting to you, Ms. Skeeter first out of our families the news of our engagement'."

Skeeter sputtered, "Engagement? To whom are you engaged Mr. Krum?"

Draco smirked translating the astonished words.

Viktor laughed uproariously pulling George's left hand to rest it on the table, "You're welcome to inform her my friend in all the glowing terms you wish about my George."

Draco laughed and spoke in English, "To one George Weasley-Prewett who is the fifth born son of Lord Gideon Prewett and former Auror Arthur Weasley. Mr. Weasley is also the grandson of Lord Septimus and Lady Cedrella Weasley. The young gentleman currently sitting at his side."

Ms. Skeeter blinked, "You're bent Mr. Krum?"

Draco's grey eyes flashed, "We both know do we not that being bent is no crime and is by no means looked down upon. Their families sanction this Bonding; both by George's fathers and his grandfather who is head that family. Viktor assures me that his father also agreed, they have been away this past weekend so that he might introduce George to his father."

Skeeter seemed to stumble about for words, "So...tell me how they met or some such thing." Quite forgetting her manners.

Draco repeated the question in Russian and waited for Viktor's reply.

Viktor began slowly after some thought, "I was attracted to George at once. We have similar interests and backgrounds. I was graciously invited to sit at Slytherin House's Table in the Great Hall for meals you see. Draco was accompanied by Harry Potter as well as George and his twin Fred to breakfast one morning following Draco and Harry's return to Hogwarts. Draco Malfoy introduced us, I was taken with him, Beater he may be but I have never met a more gentle and affectionate soul."

Draco smirked at the mention of himself and then repeated in English to his own immense amusement, "Viktor was attracted to George at once," that was most certainly true, he had a hand in that after all. He continued the translation, "They have similar interests and backgrounds in common coming from both highly prominent families you see. He says that following his arrival at Hogwarts, I the Prince of Slytherin, my rank assured by being at that time the highest ranked person in Slytherin House, invited the Durmstrang students to share meals with us. One morning following Harry's and my return to Hogwarts, George and his twin Fred accompanied us to breakfast you see. Introduced them and it seems that Viktor was taken with him at once. He says that despite George's position being that of a Beater for the Gryffindor House team, he is the gentlest and most affectionate soul."

Skeeter seemed to be in shock as she attempted to take notes of the interview. She stammered another question, "Tell me what one thing originally brought you together?"
Draco didn't even have a chance to translate before Viktor was replying in Russian.

Viktor grinned, "Quidditch." Pausing to squeeze his fiancé's hand.

Draco heard him prosing about Quidditch and how it brought them together. None of it that would appeal to Ms. Skeeter or her readers so he took creative license. "Viktor says Quidditch, they both are fanatical about the sport. George was lucky enough to attend the Quidditch World Cup where he had the chance to see his future fiancé fly at his best. He was in the Minister's box a guest of future Triwizard judge Ludo Bagman. However they did not realize until later that they'd seen one another in passing until recently."

"Any plans as to your futures? Will you live in Britain or abroad?" Skeeter asked in part curious and in part waspish.

Viktor replied in Russian after Draco's translation, not that he needed it. "I'm in my last year at Durmstrang, while George is still in his Sixth Year at Hogwarts. I plan at present to continue flying for my Bulgarian Teams though I may consider flying for a British team if they'll have me. That's still in the future. As for where we shall live George is quite close to his family and his family, namely his Grandfather offered them a house. It is tradition where I was raised that the paternal, or dominant's family provide a home and the maternal or in George's case submissive's family provide the furnishings. The house on offer is a large house in a place called Godric's Hollow. Otec advised me to take the offer. In turn he would pay for its furnishings with of course his grandmother and my mother. Otec, being Branislav Krum who runs a successful operations, indeed claims by some to be one of the highly thought of and respectable in retrieving rare potions ingredients and wandcores for prominent potioneers and wandmakers. George however has business interests of his own and plans to go into business with his brother. George plans to stick to inventing and leave the promotions to Fred.

Draco once more took a bit of creative license with Viktor's words to flesh them out, "As you know Viktor will be graduating at the end of the school year from the Durmstrang Institute following of course the Third Task of the Tournament. George however shall have another year at Hogwarts. Viktor shall of course continue to fly for Bulgaria though he may consider flying for a British team if George doesn't wish to be parted from his family. His fiancé is quite close to his siblings coming from a large family and is especially close to his twin.

Viktor's father had offer to buy them a home as is customary where he comes from but George's grandfather Lord Weasley graciously offered them a property that has been in the Weasley family for generations, a large country house in Godric's Hollow. Which his father advised him to accept, between his mother and George's grandmother they shall see to the furnishings of their future home. Mr. Branislav Krum, his father has agreed to cover all such expenses. The elder Mr. Krum runs one of the most successful operations in retrieving rare potions ingredients and wand cores for prominent potioneers and wandmakers. Viktor's fiancé also has interest in business pursuits with his brother although I believe he will be more interested in the inventing side rather then the promotions aspect."

Skeeter was still in shock as she fumbled for a new question, "Um…rumour has it that another member of that family is engaged."

Draco didn't even have to wait for a reply from either of the happy couple, "Yes, to a Keeper who flies for Puddlemere United, a strong, honourable sort. His name is Oliver Wood, good friends throughout their days at Hogwarts I'm told. They broke up briefly over some stressful incident, quite sad really. They're quite happy now, I heard a rumour that young though he is that Percy soon-to-be Wood, might be offered the position of Head of the British Ministry Department of International Magical Cooperation." That last part was pure fiction as far as he knew but of course Skeeter didn't
know that, "He's only been there a matter of months but due to former Triwizard Tournament Judge Crouch's illness he has been running it quite smoothly mostly likely due to his experience as Head Boy at Hogwarts. I do hope it is true; he is a bright, hard working fellow. I wish him only the best, I know Viktor has said that would be an honour to call him and Oliver brothers."

"Is it true that you had a hand in their introduction?"

Draco preened, taking on an air of self-importance. "Yes, I had invited the Weasley-Prewett twins to join Harry and myself; I'm courting Harry Potter by the way, for breakfast. Viktor asked on behalf of his Durmstrang classmates to join us and I cordially invited them to. I thought that since we were all a bit nervous to mention that we all were interested in Quidditch. It just went from there. I had a feeling they'd make a match of it."

Skeeter asked incredulously, "Mr. Malfoy, are you considering a career as a professional Matchmaker?"

Draco chuckled, "Of course not, it's just a hobby. I maybe the Prince of Slytherin you know but I haven't quite decided my path just yet. I'm considering studying to be an Unspeakable or apprenticing to my papa Professor Prince-Malfoy and becoming a potioneer." All quite true as it was, being only fourteen he had no idea what he wished to do with his life besides Bond to Harry when they were of age.

Skeeter seemed to remember she was there and awkwardly returned to the interview of her proper subject, "Mr. Krum, you get along well with his family?"

Draco translated and waited for Viktor's reply.

Viktor began after a moment of thought, "Yes, I find his brothers a jovial group. Luckily I am a only child, Bonding George I'll have gained five brothers if you include Oliver. I'm looking forward to becoming a part of a large close family. With the Quidditch talent in both our families, our children might fly as well. I wish a little that George wanted to fly. He's a very fine Beater. He's exceptional, I've flown for both the Vratsa Vultures and the Bulgarian National team and he's a superior flyer and Beater." A shy bit of laughter escaping his thin lips.

Draco translated for the most part what Viktor said with a bit more flair, "Oh yes, his grandparents and his fathers think they're good for each other. They are looking forward to a long and happy life together. Viktor believes their children will most likely be very keen at Quidditch. Who knows, they might play in a Quidditch World Cup themselves. It's quite sad that George has no desire to pursue a professional career as a Beater. He'd go far, Viktor calls him exceptional; he laughed, protesting that, he's not just saying that because they're engaged. He thinks George could teach the Beaters he's flown with on the Vratsa Vultures and the Bulgarian National teams a thing or two."

Noticing George's nervousness increasing, Charlie stepped in calling the interview to an end and insisting that they apply themselves to dinner.

Skeeter was annoyed and spoke up, "If you'll just let Bozo take a few pictures of the happy couple we'll need to be on our way so I can write up the story."

Charlie nodded, "We thought as much." He handed out a folded rectangle of parchment, "my grandfather wished me to hand this to you. Wished it to be printed in the same edition as this interview."

Skeeter snapped it up, ordering her photographer to take pictures quickly before leaving.
Viktor waited until the door closed and her footsteps faded away, muttering in broke English, Russian and Parseltongue, "Vhat a disagreeable woman. She'd vrightin a harvy."

Lucius chuckled, "Frighten a harpy? I think rather she has harpy blood."

They all laughed uproariously at that.

Dinner was ordered and they ate leisurely before the boys were escorted back to the Durmstrang ship and the castle respectively.

Charlie returning to the Forest, the dragon keepers would be returning with the Dragons later in the next day. Following the return with the Dragons, he would be going on a prolonged vacation.

Lucius however returned to the comfort of Severus' apartments to the less tension of the company of his mates.

Chapter End Notes

The next morning there were wails and glares directed at George after the Daily Prophet arrived.

Laughing Draco began to read article on the front page of the paper in Russian for the benefit of their Durmstrang guests with Harry and Sophronia reading over his shoulder.

‘The most famous Seeker in the World to be Bonded?’

By Rita Skeeter

Witches and some Wizards I expect will be crying all over the World at the news that Durmstrang Institute’s Triwizard Champion and Seeker for the Bulgarian National Quidditch team, Viktor Krum is to be Bonded sometime in the New Year. To whom you might ask? To one George Weasley-Prewett who is the fifth born son of Lord Gideon Prewett and former Auror Arthur Weasley. Mr. Weasley is also the grandson of Lord Septimus and Cedrella Weasley. Though as good-looking as this boy is one wonders why he would be chosen by such an internationally famous person.

In an interview with Mr. Krum, he told this reporter, ‘I was attracted to George at once. We have similar interests and backgrounds. As you know I’ll be graduating at the end of the school year from the Durmstrang Institute. George however shall have another year at Hogwarts. I shall of course continue to fly for Bulgaria though I may consider flying for a British team if George doesn’t wish to be parted from his family. My fiancé is quite close to his siblings coming from a large family and is
especially close to his twin.

My father had offered to buy us a home as is customary where I come from but George’s 
grandfather Lord Weasley graciously offered us a property that has been in the Weasley family for 
generations, a large country house in Godric’s Hollow. My father advised me to accept, between my 
mother and his grandmother they shall see to the furnishings of our future home. My father has 
agreed to cover all such expenses. My father runs one of the most successful operations in retrieving 
rare potions ingredients and wand cores for prominent potioneers and wandmakers.

My fiancé also has interest in business pursuits with his brother although I believe he will be more 
interested in the inventing side rather then the promotions aspect.’

‘Tell us what one thing originally brought you together?’

‘Quidditch. George was lucky enough to attend the Quidditch World Cup where he had the chance 
to see me fly at my best. He was in the Minister’s box a guest of future Triwizard judge Ludo 
Bagman. We did not realize until later that we’d seen one another in passing until recently.’

‘How were you introduced?’

‘I was graciously invited to sit at Slytherin’s Table in the Great Hall for meals you see. Draco 
Malfoy was accompanied by Harry Potter as well as George and his twin Fred to breakfast one 
morning following Draco and Harry’s return to Hogwarts. Draco Malfoy introduced us, I was taken 
with him, Beater he may be but I have never met a more gentle and affectionate soul.’

‘We heard a rumour that your fiancé’s elder brother Percy is also engaged is this true?’

‘Yes, to a Keeper who flies for Puddlemere United, a strong, honourable sort. His name is Oliver 
Wood, good friends throughout their days at Hogwarts I’m told. They broke up briefly over some 
stressful incident, quite sad really. They’re quite happy now, I heard a rumour that young though he 
is that Percy soon-to-be Wood, might be offered the position of Head of the British Ministry 
Department of International Magical Cooperation. He’s only been there a matter of months but due 
to former Triwizard Tournament Judge Crouch’s illness he has been running it quite smoothly 
mostly likely due to his experience as Head Boy at Hogwarts. I do hope it is true; he is a bright, hard 
working fellow. I wish him only the best, it would be an honour to call him and Oliver and 
brothers.”
‘You get along well with his family?’

‘Oh yes, his grandparents and his fathers think we’re good for each other. I look forward to a long and happy life together. Our children will most likely be very keen at Quidditch. Who knows, they might play in a Quidditch World Cup themselves. It’s quite sad that George has no desire to pursue a professional career as a Beater. He’d go far, he’s exceptional; (laugh) I’m not just saying that because we’re engaged. He could teach the Beaters I’ve flown with on the Vratsa Vultures and the Bulgarian National teams a thing or two.’

This reporter also had the opportunity to interview; with permission of course young Mr. Malfoy who introduced the happy affianced pair.

‘Mr. Krum tells us that you were responsible for their meeting.’

‘Yes, I had invited the Weasley-Prewett twins to join Harry and myself; I’m courting Harry Potter by the way, for breakfast. Viktor asked on behalf of his Durmstrang classmates to join us and I cordially invited them to. I thought that since we were all a bit nervous to mention that we all were interested in Quidditch. It just went from there. I had a feeling they’d make a match of it.’

‘Mr. Malfoy, are you considering a career as a professional Matchmaker?’

‘Of course not, it’s just a hobby. I maybe the Prince of Slytherin you know but I haven’t quite decided my path just yet. I’m considering studying to be an Unspeakable or apprenticing to my papa Professor Prince-Malfoy and becoming a potioneer.’

This reporter wishes young Mr. Krum all the best. We hope that he continues to do well in the Triwizard Tournament. May the best Champion win the Triwizard Cup!

Draco grumbled, “That dratted women! She said too much!” she’d twisted his words a bit and the way she wrote about George was downright rude! Her whole article was as if it’d been cut into pieces and rearranged by a Kneazel of all things.

He paged through to the announcement page where they printed engagements, Bondings, births and deaths to read two announcements.

Lord and Lady Wood of Aberdeen, Scotland and Lord Gideon Prewett and his consort Arcturus of
Cairn Eerie, Scotland wish to announce the engagement of their sons Oliver Wood and Percival Brian Prewett-Weasley, ages nineteen and eighteen respectively. Oliver Wood is a second starter Keeper for Puddlemere United while his fiancé Percy works for the Department of International Magical Cooperation for the Ministry. They are to be bonded at a presently undecided date in the New Year. Their plan is to live in Britain.

Mr. And Mrs. Branislav Krum of Bulgaria, and Lord Gideon Prewett and his consort Arcturus of Scotland wish to announce the engagement of their sons Viktor Makariy Krum and George Caius Prewett-Weasley. Viktor Krum, currently of Durmstrang Institute is their Triwizard Champion. He flies for the Vratsa Vultures as well as the Bulgarian National Quidditch team as his schoolwork permits. Recently he flew in the Quidditch World Cup for Bulgaria as their Seeker catching the Snitch though not winning the match. His fiancé George is a Sixth Year student as Hogwarts. Their plan is to live in Godric’s Hollow, Britain following their Bonding.

Fred remarked dryly, “As least she got that much right.”

Ron stormed over, shaking what was no doubt Hermione’s paper or at least not his for he was too poor to have one of his delivered. Who knew if that two-face girl actually forgave Ron for slapping her. “George! You’re going to marry this foreigner? You’re consorting with the enemy.”

Fred laughed, “Enemy? What do you mean Ronnikins?”

“Not talking to you. I don’t know how you can stand being twins with a disgusting shirt lifter who betrays all of Hogwarts by consorting with a Durmstrang student. He should be supporting his own!” Ron growled.

“Whether or not I have a problem with George’s fiancé is between me and my brothers. I think Viktor is a decent bloke. He cares about George and that’s what matters.” Fred glared, “Who are you to tell your cousin what to do with his life?”

“Such disrespectful behaviour, Mr. Weasley.” Came the obsequies voice of Dumbledore. “That will be twenty points from Gryffindor.”

Fred turned his back on the odious Headmaster.

“Ten more points for rudeness to an authority figure.”
Viktor caught enough English to understand what was going on. “Pardon Headmaster, vat has Fred durn to be punished like zat?”

“Beg pardon Mr. Krum, but you aren’t a student at this school.” Dumbledore said scornfully.

“Perhaps, zat iz true vat, Fred iz my Prietene. Blya!” lasping in Russian Viktor scowled.

Those understanding Russian, especially the witches’ ears and faces burned. Blya was in appropriate slang, not to be used in polite company for it had the meanings of shit, fuck and hell, though it literally meant whore.

Dumbledore’s face darkened, he looked at Viktor up and down sneering, “Tebya ne ebut, ti ne podmakhivai!”

Viktor bolted up livid, as did the rest of the male half of Durmstrang students and Draco who had learned that phrase in one of the more lurid novels in the Malfoy library.

Viktor spat out a torrent of Russian and Parseltongue at the man for his rudeness.

Which Draco understood, well the Russian half of the tirade.

Valea! Pizda!

Which Draco knew meant go away, cunt.

Ivanovski, Viktor’s schoolmate, who had agreed to fly for Gryffindor as a Keeper muttered under his breath something that Draco didn’t understand.

However, Viktor did...

“Jebo te Bog te jebo da te jebo te Bog da te jebo dabogda...”
The Durmstrang Keeper’s girlfriend Ekateirna Petrova looked faint with dismay.

For the teen’s words meant, ‘May God fuck you, may He fuck you, God, that's who, may He fuck you, and may God allow God to fuck you, by God....’

Draco leapt to his feet putting a restraining arm on Viktor and said sharply, “Firtat. Ostyn’, comesean.” Which mean mate, chill or mate not at the table depending on how one took it.

Viktor glanced at Draco, his anger evaporating some, “Zank yo.” He turned to George and hugged him, knowing his display of temper hadn’t been seemly. It might have come as a shock. He hissed Parseltongue in his ear, “Hush Srce moje. I am sorry I let my temper get the better of me.”

“What is going on here?” Karkaroff said as he and Severus made their way to the table.

Draco quickly brought Severus up to speed in Gaelic.

Karkaroff snapped at his own delegation of students in Russian.

Viktor being far more interested in reassuring George what happened, being of Chuvash descent, his temper when riled was...shocking. Had he been like Charlie or his father, he’d have transformed of all things, frightening these Hogwarts students out of their mind. A Chuvash or a Veela transforming was more, not to say common at Durmstrang, but a blind eye was turned to it.

Ivanovski was forced to relate the events to his Headmaster.

Karkaroff turned his ire on Dumbledore, “I was under the impression that we were to be welcomed as guests. Not treated as poor relations, unwanted and unworthy of a mediocre amount of respect.”

Severus bowed, though he had little love for Karkaroff, “My apologies, Highmaster. This is a disgraceful event. I am sure the Headmaster is just overwhelmed by events these last few weeks.” He glared at Ron, “I have my suspicions who’s at fault here. Be off with you now before I come up with a reason to take points or grant detentions.”

Ron snapped, “Me, responsible? George is whoring himself out to some Durmstrang scum.” He
shook the paper, “I can read. Percy’s done the same. Spreading his legs for that Wood. Calling it Bonding when it merely is an exaggeration placing oneself into the keeping of a man.”

Fred was appalled, “Where did you learn such vile language?”

Ron rolled his eyes, “I can read. Besides, there are types of Bonds that while legal, aren’t in keeping with the dictates of polite society. Eventually, Krum will get bored of the novelty of using a British Beater as a plaything and he’ll turn George out, his reputation ruined.”

Blaise’s ears burned, as did everyone whose ears understood the vileness spewing from Ron’s mouth.

George looked from Ron to Viktor in horror as if he couldn’t comprehend it. Surely Viktor wouldn’t do any such thing. He was too good… he knew it had to be all lies…

Blaise noticed Durmstrang’s confusion, he caught Draco’s eye, and then he began explaining Parseltongue the vile thing that Ron was accusing Viktor of.

Fred didn’t words to explain it in Russian or in Parseltongue but he was shaking with rage, beyond words as his hands were clenched into fists at his sides.

As Draco and Blaise explained farther, the Durmstrang delegation became more outraged. One of their own being attacked and they’d come as guests for a Tournament that was to foster pleasant relations between them?

Viktor glared at Ron, hissing in Parseltongue, “Be glad that I didn’t understand you the first time and that I am not a true Chuvash. If I were, I would have ripped your head from its shoulders! Since you are family to my George, however tenuous that link is, I cannot allow myself to harm you.” He glared at him and then pulled a shell-shocked George into his arms for a kiss, breaking it and glaring at Ron as he sneered in English, “I vill Bond to George. A proper Bonding. You are mistaken. I love him. Vat iz somezing you vill never undersan.” He drew George away.

“I think it best Highmaster that we remain in the ship until things cool off.” Viktor said through pursed lips in Russian to his Headmaster. “I’ll do my homework. If this cunt is still present next year, you’ll still have a Krum to teach.”
Karkaroff stared after Viktor’s retreating form, muttering in Russian, “Gle kurtsa ti u slamnatome sheshiru!”

A vulgar expression of surprise that Draco knew to mean, a dick wearing a straw hat! Most likely directed at Dumbledore and his hideous wizard’s hat.

An expression that made the Durmstrang witches for there were at least two, highly embarrassed.

An enraged Karkaroff was still seething as he looked at Dumbledore and Severus, muttering still in Russian. “U pitchku materinu! Koji ti je kurac?”

Those who understood Russian knew it meant, ‘motherfucker’ and ‘what the fuck is wrong with you?’

Karkaroff glared, ordering his students to retire to the ship until they had something by way of an apology.

An apology was something neither Dumbledore nor Ron would see fit to give them, Draco knew taking Harry’s hand and glancing at Adrian and Sophronia who clearly wished to be elsewhere. He took Harry’s hand and move to take his leave followed by the rest of his House. He glanced over his shoulder at the odious Hogwarts Headmaster and tossed back a phrase in Russian, “Jebo te Bog na današnji dan!”

Severus must have understood that, for his face was flushed with anger and embarrassment.

Draco’s words meant, ‘This goes down in history as the day God royally fucked you!’

Severus snapped, “To the dungeons with the lot of you. Draco, you will go straight to my chambers, a word in your ear I’ll have.”

“A blatant expression of disrespect of authority. I knew that keeping company with such as Mr. Malfoy was not good for one of Mr. Potter’s sensibilities.”

Harry whirled on him, “My sensibilities? Draco not good for me? You started it, you creep! Sticking
your nose where it doesn’t belong! Ron, Fred and George may not be brothers but they are cousins, as distasteful as the relationship might be to them both. It was a family matter that you hadn’t the right to poke your nose it.”

“And what business is it of yours, pray?” Dumbledore said stiffly looking down his broken nose.

Harry rolled his eyes, “We’re all Blacks! My grandmother and theirs, our grandmothers were cousins which makes us kin.” He stuck out his tongue, “So there!”

Severus who’d heard that Ron was Dumbledore’s nephew, though he would be loathed to admit his sources. He pinched his nose, “Harry, that’s quite enough. To my apartments this instant. I’m sure Remus and Lucius will give you both a dressing down for such displays of temper. I shall be assigning detentions for the both of you. Your hearts may have been in the right place but your actions are far from excusable.” He whirled on Dumbledore, “A fine way for a Headmaster to behave! Insulting visiting students! You’ve managed in the space of a few minutes along with your pathetic excuse for a nephew to incense our guests! What have you done to your common sense and vaulted regard for your fellow man?”

Dumbledore’s face was red, “What did you say?”

Severus said coolly, “I said that Ronald Weasley that was, is your nephew.”

Ron looked ill at first and then his face took on rather disagreeable look of superiority.

“I’ll thank you not to go about telling wild stories.” Dumbledore stammered.

Ron looked crestfallen.

Severus snorted, “I’m far from mistaken. That boy did not spring from the loins of Arthur Weasley. He in fact is the son of your brother Aberforth who runs the Hogshead tavern.”

Ron went from gleeful to despondent, as if being related to the Headmaster of Hogwarts wasn’t as promising, now that his father was named as the owner of a tavern.
“Don’t speak of things you know nothing of, Severus Snape!”

Severus’ sneer turned into a mask of utter hatred, “My name,” he hissed, “is Severus Prince-Malfoy.”

“Oh, so George Weasley is following your footsteps? As the plaything of a rich and powerful wizard? I’d have thought better of one with your abilities and intelligence.” Dumbledore sneered.

Severus snapped, “Well, now I know where Ronald gets his dirty mind and filthy language. My relationship with Lucius is not beyond the pale as you imply. It is one of equality and respect, something you Headmaster would not understand.”

XoooooX

Remus thoroughly intrigued by Severus’ mind and his potions journals, had raided all of the books in the Manor Libraries and that of Hogwarts for any book or scroll in anyway associated with that of wandlore. He had glanced through Moody’s last assignments and graded them hastily, though finding he had little patience for such things.

Lucius had read the paper and was pacing, clearly furious at that Skeeter woman. While muttering threats of lawsuits and overthrowing that gossip rag that the The Daily Prophet was.

That not so peaceful mood was broken when their portrait door was slammed open followed by the rain of insults from its inhabitant.

Entering the room were Draco and Harry, not far behind was a seething Severus.

Who upon entering the apartment, tossed Remus his wand, “Hold that! I ought to not have it in my possession, for fear I’ll storm out of here and threaten that arrogant useless fool!”

Lucius could feel the rage radiating off his Bondmate and his son, as well as from Harry. “What happened?”
Draco spoke first, “Ron started it! Coming over to our table and insulting George and Percy, implying they wouldn’t be entering true Bonding but rather would be taken into their Quidditch playing lover’s keeping. They would be their sexual playthings! Viktor didn’t understand a word of it! I shouldn’t wonder since astute tutors do not teach such language.”

Harry noticed that the angrier that a pureblood got the more old-fashioned their language was. In Severus’ case, it must be Lucius rubbing off.

“In that case Draconis Lucius Abraxus Prince-Malfoy, would you explain to your father where you learned such vulgar Russian? Certainly not from a tutor or myself. I doubt any of our Durmstrang guests wouldn’t dare teach you. They, unlike our Headmaster, have at least attempted to be courteous.”

Draco winced, “I’d hope you hadn’t heard that.”

“They don’t call me a dungeon bat without reason. I’ve got ears that seem to hear through walls.” Severus said glaring.

Harry had no idea what Draco’s Russian had meant, nor anyone else's. He found Severus and Draco’s behaviour and language funny and burst out laughing.

Severus’ piercing eyes turned to him, “Don’t think you’re getting off easily Harry. Your mouth didn’t help matters. Like I said, you might have had good intentions but your actions left much to be desired. As much as we dislike him, that odious man is still Headmaster and is owed at least a modicum of respect.”

Harry winced at the scathing tone of Severus’ voice, “I’m sorry. I just got so mad at how he was treating them! He didn’t have the right to take points from Fred to telling Ron to clear off or when Fred ignored that creepy old man to keep his temper.”

“He didn’t have the right to speak to them in such a way, nor did Ron. That’s not the point. Taking points for ludicrous reasons, I’m certainly not one to talk. I’m a dreadful professor. I’d be happier helded up with my research! I haven’t patience for teaching. It’s a lot of nonsense to teach dunderheads who haven’t the slightest interest or talent for brewing and don’t wish to.”

Harry sighed, “You once thought I was one of those dunderheads. You took great pleasure in making me utterly nervous, so I’d bollocks up. I’m really not so bad at Potions. I might not make it
my life’s work as you do or Draco might, but I can see it has its purpose. I may go into a field where brewing is a needed talent.”

“I’ll have to punish you as much as I hate it. Draco, a week of scrubbing cauldrons without magic. Harry, you’ll go through my potions ingredients cupboards; both of them. I want you to go over the list and make sure they are still in the proper arrangement. Also, take note of anything I’m low on.” Severus said with a hand to his temples.

“What about classes?” Draco asked, it was getting near time for them to start and papa had sent the entirely of Slytherin House, with the exception of himself, to the dungeons.

“With Minerva away in St. Mungos, unless we ask Dumbledore to fill in which Lucius will not agree to and considering that Remus is at present the only other professor formerly of Gryffindor I am sure we can declare today, free study. After that grotesque display of temper by the Headmaster, I am sure that I can request a private meeting with the other professors. Perhaps, it is time we stepped in and gave Dumbledore the what for as well as the boot. As for George, I’m sure he’ll be out of classes for a while. Viktor and Karkaroff quite refuse to enter the Castle without an apology.”

Remus sighed, “off with you both. You heard Severus. Free study for all and you’re both to do your detentions. I suspect that Harry’s will take longer.”

The last thing Draco and Harry heard was Lucius groaning, “I do hope Madam Maxime doesn’t hear of this or Skeeter, for that matter.”

Blaise was outside waiting, “What’s the word?”

“Detention for myself and Harry. Remus is filling in for Professor McGonagall as Head of Gryffindor at present. Between them they’ve cancelled classes for the day. Ordered the lot of you to do Independent Study. We might not see George for a while, if Viktor and Karkaroff are true to their word and they stay on their ship. I’m sure papa will see that food is delivered to them. As rude as Dumbledore has been, my fathers won’t let our guests starve.”

“I shall pass the message on. Will you two be alright in the classroom along?”

Draco smirked, leaning over to whisper, “Papa chose his classroom and apartments well. They once belonged to Slytherin himself. Probably the safest places in this place.”
Blaise nodded, he handed off Draco and Harry’s snakes, “Been upset and wanted in those apartments. They’re in a right temper they are, although I sort of respect them, Paradox and Shishreyu.”

“The castle rumbles itself in dismay.” Shishreyu said in a hiss of displeasure.

“They were quite upset when I returned to the dormitory and insisted on being with you.” Blaise said with an affected air that he was put out. “I’d keep them by you in case something happens. One of them can find me.”

"Very well,” Draco said, “I’d best be scrubbing those cauldrons.”

Blaise winced, “Without magic?”

Draco nodded ruefully, “Without magic.”

Harry asked quietly, “Can’t we switch? I don’t mind scrubbing the Muggle way.”

Blaise laughed, “That’s why he’s given it to Draco. It will annoy Drake and you’d not mind it. What’s he assigned you?”

Harry sighed, “Cataloguing and organizing his potions supply cupboards.”

Blaise chortled, “An assignment Draco would relish. Now off with you, both will take a while but you’ll be close enough to keep an eye on one another and talk. Tell stories or what not. I’ll go study. Be a bit boring around here with the Dragons gone.”

“Blaise, I do believe you’ve got a bit of a crush on Charles Weasley.” Draco teased.

“I most certainly do not have a crush on him!” Blaise said turning red, “No, why don’t you see about your detention and leave me to work on my Transfiguration paper.”

Draco laughed silently at Blaise’s retreating back before leading Harry into the Potions classroom to
begin their ‘detention’.

Chapter End Notes


The phase 'Tebya ne ebut, ti ne podmakhivai!' means 'Mind your own God damn business' although it literally means, 'you're not getting fucked, so don't get up and squirm on my cock'.

I'm sure anyone being told that would end up livid especially since it came from the Headmaster of Hogwarts.
Chapter 32- Sirius before Council of Magical Law and plans to overthrow Dumbledore

On the last day of November, Andromeda arrived with a summons from the Council of Magical Law.

Ironically, it was the day after Durmstrang stormed out of Hogwarts and nothing Lucius or Severus said, would change Karkaroff’s mind. Until there was an apology from the Headmaster of Hogwarts, Durmstrang wouldn’t step one foot towards the castle.

An absence that was noticed at once by Madame Maxime, though not fond of Karkaroff, she too took offence at Dumbledore’s behaviour once acquainted with it.

Lucius sighed, “What do you need, Andromeda?”

Andromeda rolled her eyes, “Annie. Call me Annie. We’ve known each other far too long to remain on such formal terms. I heard tell that you’re a solicitor?”

Lucius stiffened, he had a bad feeling, “Where did you hear that?”

She lowered herself almost gratefully, though entirely gracefully into a seat near the hearth, “Thank Salazar! I know nothing about law. I’m a Healer.”

Remus and Severus were in class leaving the apartments to Lucius, “I repeat, where did you hear that I was a solicitor?”

“Never mind that. Lucius please, I’m a bit out of my depth right now and I need you to advise me.”
“Advise you how?” Lucius asked, piqued.

"I’m to arrive with Sirius, my cousin before the Council of Magical Law. I remembered how eloquently you argued for Harry. I need that.”

Lucius covered his eyes, “Do you know what you ask of me? I despise Sirius.”

Andromeda sighed, “Of course you do. I know as well as you do the pranks and down right abuses he used to, with his minion James Potter, subject your Bondmate to. Are you forgetting that I was a prefect as well? I was Head Girl until my elopement. They felt it set a bad example and I was forced to resign. The position was given to Amelia Bones of Hufflepuff, something our House never forgave me for.”

“Then how can you ask it of me?” Lucius said irritated.

“Because, you’re the only one I trust who knows the truth. This is about justice! This is about putting away the right person for the murder of Severus’ best friend. My cousin will have to learn restraint; he can’t act like a child and torment Severus. Remus won’t stand for it and neither will you. Things are different now; Severus can’t make you turn a blind eye to it. I’m no fool, I knew how things were between you even then. Why do you think I let Ted court me? Being under a Betrothal Contract to you, I should have been, as our House would have put it 'off the market'. Yet he saw I was unhappy and that the only time I was, was when I tutoring him at Potions.”

Lucius took a deep breath, she had a point as much as he wanted to argue with her. They were from the beginning ill-suited not that their parents cared in the least. All Lady Black and Lord Malfoy wanted was to join their families, preferably his son with her eldest niece. "I’ll do it. When do we need to be there?”

“At ten. It’s a quarter after nine and I just received the summons. I’ll retrieve Sirius and meet you in Courtroom ten.”

Lucius stood and helped her up, in spite of her request he was still a gentleman. “Very well. I’ll leave in a few minutes.” Salazar help him, he needed a drink.

XooooooX
Madam Amelia Bones called out from the dais, “The Wizengamot vs. Sirius Orion Black. Voice for the accused?”

Lucius stood up feeling quite ill, “Lucius Malfoy representing Sirius Orion Black.”

Fudge looked startled, Umbridge sneered, Dodge looked shocked, Dumbledore enraged and Lady Longbottom was amused. The other faces were hidden from Lucius’ sight due to where he was sitting.

“I am surprised, but never the less, it shall be recorded. Why might I ask?” Madam Bones was curious.

“I was requested by my former Housemate, we were at one point betrothed and served together as Prefects and later as Head Boy and Girl for a time. She impressed upon me that she knew no other solicitors.”

“When did you take the law exam?” Umbridge asked in a sickly sweet voice.

Lucius laughed, “Immediately following my father’s diagnosis with Dragon Pox. He was too ill to be concerned with such things. I had wanted to go into the legal profession. Had I been a second son, I would have been able to have more control over my life choices. As a firstborn, my life was dictated from day one. I consider this a favour to my former Queen.”

Sirius was about to make a comment when Andromeda glared at him and twirled her wand menacingly.

Madam Bones nodded, “Very well the charges if you please, Madam Umbridge.”

“Two counts of conspiracy to comment murder. One count escaping custody. One count kidnapping. One count assault of a minor. One count attempted murder. One count destruction of private property. One count non-registry of animagus status.” The look in Madam Umbridge’s eyes was gleeful.

“As to the count of conspiracy to commit murder, my client wishes to put in a plea of not guilty. That count is based on charges disproven. Sirius Orion Black is not and never was a Death Eater. For all his faults, for they are many, those he was loyal to he was until death. As to the charge of escaping
custody, he was imprisoned without charge and thus the count is invalid. As to kidnapping, I assume that is reference to the child Ronald Weasley that was, his true name we challenge is Ronald Bilius Dumbledore. As such, if that charge remains, we ask that Lord Dumbledore be required to recuse himself.”


“On the grounds that the child Ronald Dumbledore is your nephew. It is in poor taste for you to oversee a case that involves a close family member.”

“In that case, Augusta should recuse herself.” Dumbledore sneered.

“Lady Longbottom’s relationship to the Black Family is through Marriage and is not a close one.” Lucius said evenly.

Madam Bones nodded, “I think Lord Malfoy has a point don’t you, Cornelius?”

Fudge shifted nervously, “Um…”

Doge spoke up slowly, “I think we should vote on it.”

Lucius thudded the flat end of his snake headed cane on the stone floor of the Courtroom, “This is a matter of law. Either drop the charges of kidnapping and assault of a minor, or he’ll have to recuse himself. Further more, since he is also at present Headmaster of Hogwarts that the destruction of property would be a painting and the red velvet curtains of his nephew’s bed, I respectfully request those also to be dropped. He cannot legally preside over a case having to do with destruction of property he is currently entrusted with.”

The Council broke out into murmurings.

Madam Bones rapped her gavel for quiet; “I have always been a stickler for the law. Headmaster Dumbledore, we are at an impasse. Either recuse yourself or I shall drop the charges.”

Dumbledore’s face was red with anger, “It is my right to serve this Council, which I have done for
“Very well then, the aforementioned charges will be dropped.” She glanced at Lucius, “Is that satisfactory?”

Lucius nodded stiffly, “Quite. As to the Charges regarding the Potters, the Department of Magical Law has in its possession memories regarding their deaths. I would like to call Senior Auror Kingsley Shacklebolt to testify.”

Madam Bones nodded, “The Council acknowledges Senior Auror Shacklebolt.”

Shacklebolt took a seat in the witness chair in the centre of the Courtroom.

Lucius strode toward the man confidently, “Please inform the Council of your investigation into the Deaths of the Potters.”

Shacklebolt seemed relaxed, “I was first informed as to the irregularities of the case,”

“I object!” Dumbledore snapped. “Senior Auror Shacklebolt is overly acquainted with the defendant.”

Shacklebolt nodded, “I was his mentor and trained him. I see no reason why it should colour my reiteration of the facts.” his eyes seemed to hold the man in disdain. “I freely admit my connection with Auror Black.”

Madam Umbridge spoke up, “I object to the title being granted to someone such as Sirius Black.”

Dumbledore nodded, “It seems to me that Senior Auror Shacklebolt believes himself to be above this august body.”

Shacklebolt sat up straighter, “I do not. I have always given this august body the utmost respect.”

“Because you’re sleeping with Madam Bones.” Dumbledore sneered
“And you’re stuffing Lord Doge. That’s neither here nor there.” Shacklebolt said stiffly, “Both facts have nothing to do with the case. If you won’t take my word for it after examining the untampered memories of the Boy-Who-Lived, then I don’t see the reason to show you Dumbledore, the memories of the night the Potters died that come from He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named himself!”

Madam Umbridge squealed and nearly fell of her stack off cushions.

Fudge mopped the sweat off his brow “You have HIM in custody?”

Shacklebolt shrugged, “In a manner of speaking.”

Madam Bones glared at him, “Why were we not informed of this?”

Andromeda stood, “Permission to speak, Madam Bones?”

Madam Bones’ eyebrow raised, “Very well.”

Andromeda bowed, “The Dark Lord Voldemort,”

The Council stiffened, fanned themselves and turned pale at the name.

Andromeda paid them no heed, “who was born one Tom Marvolo Riddle, is in Custody but not in the custody of the Ministry. He shall remain in custody, most likely until the end of his days, provided his judge upon hearing of the true horrors of his supposed reign of terror, doesn’t see fit to tear his head from his shoulders.”

Fudge stammered, “And whose custody is this? His crimes were committed mostly in the Jurisdiction of the British Ministry of Magic.”

“True. Headmaster Dumbledore, would you like to inform them why he shall not stand before the Council of Magical Law to face Judgment?” Andromeda asked sharply.
“No for I do not know.” Dumbledore said in a haughty tone.

Andromeda sniffed, “Pity. For I believe that Senior Auror Shacklebolt has a memory to the contrary. For I was present when they were delivered into his hand from the King of the Chuvash himself. Tom Riddle was born a Submissive Chuvash. Thus putting him outside the jurisdiction of this body.”

Madam Umbridge sniffed, “That’s what one gets for intermingling their blood with Muggles and monsters.”

Lucius said dryly, “Really? I wonder what turned Gellert Grindelwald into a Dark Lord. You were the last to duel him, Headmaster perhaps, you know?”

“I don’t see why I should.” Dumbledore said waspishly.

“Whatever you say, Headmaster. Whatever you say.” Lucius said dismissively. “Returning to the charges, on the count of failure to register as an animagus, my client pleads guilty,” seeing the look of triumph in Madam Umbridge’s eyes he continued, “However, the charge if he is found guilty, carries with it a years sentence in Azkaban. My client has served unlawfully, twelve years or thereabouts in that ghastly place. He would agree however, to register immediately today in fact at least with the Auror Department and shall at once pay the fine for non-registry. As for the charge of attempted murder he pleads not guilty. I am sure any reasonable person could understand his anger at Pettigrew. An intimate as it were, a schoolmate, someone he trusted as a friend, who took of the role of Secret Keeper to the cottage where the Potters were hiding and betrayed them to their deaths and the attempted murder of his godson. The magic in the Wiccaning Ceremony is rather unique. Having been involved with one for my own child, I can state with impunity that the effect of being informed that your godson was attacked will make you lash out. You are keen for vengeance.”

Shacklebolt nodded, “I assume that was the reaction of your Bondmate following your informing him of the attack on Saturday?”

Lucius said flatly, “Yes. In Severus’ case, Draco was attacked not once but twice with the Cruciatus curse. In Harry’s case, at the time of the murders of his parents, he had been subjected to the Killing Curse. That would have put Auror Black in an uncontrollable state to a point. I doubt that his duty as an Auror would have allowed him to actually kill Pettigrew. Although the deep friendship, he share of many years with James Potter may have made him wish to kill Pettigrew, but I doubt he could. Lily Potter’s best friend from childhood faced the same emotion when facing Pettigrew, however he saw in the end that it would be better to bring him in alive. Just as Harry was able to convince Auror Black that killing Pettigrew wasn’t the answer. The only way for Auror Black to get his honour back was to allow Pettigrew to be arrested. If having murder in your heart could be a crime, Azkaban would be full to the bursting point. Since Black cast no Unforgivables I humbly request the charge of attempted murder be dropped.”
Madam Bones nodded, “When I heard most of my family being killed, I felt the same need for revenge yet I let my better nature rule me. I did not take a life out of a sense of vigilantism.”

“How did you manage to arrest Pettigrew?” Dumbledore asked boredly.


The dais was in an uproar.

After a few minutes of deafening din, Madam Bones rapped loudly, “SILENCE!” once the chamber had quieted she turn to Lucius, “Lord Malfoy, is this true? You arrested He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named?”

Lucius nodded, “Yes. When Barty Crouch was unmasked as a false Moody, I considered the possibility that some of his rambling wasn’t nonsense. He’d been imprisoned once, I was sure of it. I was suspicious or perhaps, I should say Severus was, that using Polyjuice that Barty and his mother who were both ill at the time were switched. Apparently, if you die in the form you assume through the Polyjuice Potion, you remain in it. Where else do you keep an escaped prisoner, but at your House, where you can keep an eye on him? It was Barty who stole Harry’s wand and used it at the Quidditch World Cup during the Riot to cast the Dark Mark in the sky. Winky was his caretaker. How Diggory missed him, I don’t know.”

He paused to breathe before continuing, “The Dark Lord killed Bertha Jorkins, so we can call off the search I’m sure we’ll never find the body. Crouch was worried that Jorkins would reveal his secret, that why he wanted her tracked down. Of course, I didn’t know this until after I found him a prisoner in his own home. Pettigrew and the Dark Lord fell upon the house after realizing that Barty was still loyal and not in Azkaban. Between them, they cooked up the scheme to have Barty impersonate Moody and place Harry in the Tournament by confounding the Goblet of Fire into believing there were four schools competing and that Harry was in the Fourth school, which is why his slip merely said Harry Potter, though he was a student at Hogwarts. The Dark Lord manipulated the idea that when one’s name came out of the Goblet that one was trapped in a magical contract. Lord Crouch was under the Imperious at the time and would have agreed that Harry belonged in the tournament, which he did. After that he must have become untrustworthy, for he was at home ill. In all my years I’ve never once heard Crouch stay at home ill.”

“What does this have to do with the case against Black?” Madam Umbridge asked sweetly.
Lucius bit back a snarky retort; “I was getting to that; upon entering the Crouch residence, we encountered Pettigrew almost at once. Severus was tempted to do him injury; I used the Incarcerous reminding my Bondmate that it was up to your august body to deal with him. When we found Crouch, he raved at us; I realized he was quite mad. We placed him under the Incarcerous as well and levitated them both until we came to what would have been Crouch’s personal suite where the Dark Lord was. I was prepared hand him over to you until he revealed he was Chuvash. So we summoned the King of that people, and that Sirius Black was not pleased to find that the Dark Lord was one of his subjects but was adamant that he be the one to judge him, as is tradition. As I am sure Senior Auror Shacklebolt will no doubt agree, there are pensive memories proving not only did my client not betray the Potters to the Dark Lord, he also does not bear the Dark Mark.” He tugged up reluctantly his left sleeve show casing his own mark while gesturing silently for Sirius III to bear his left arm.

The dais gasped, at his audacity of unveiling his Dark Mark.

“He would never have been admitted into the Dark Lord’s presence if he did not bear the Mark.” Lucius said reluctantly.

“You know this why?” Doge asked stiffly.

“My father, as I’ve said before, promised that I would join the Dark Lord’s cause the day I was born. It is customary for firstborns of the upper crust of Wizarding Society to remain under the thumb of their fathers. Younger sons have a better lot; they must make their own way in the world. It has often been the way the world works. I never wished to serve the Dark Lord, much less have the dubious honour, of being considered a part of his inner circle. I tried to fight but there is only so much a firstborn son can do against their father. Either this Sirius Black had more courage then I did or considering his mother was the true Head of the Black Family at the time; perhaps, it was easier for him to throw off the yoke.” Lucius said grudgingly.

Sirius III was dumbfounded, it sounded almost as if Lucius Malfoy of all people admired him.

“Head Auror Shacklebolt, you have these pensive memories that Lord Malfoy mentions.” Fudge asked sweating.

“I do. Dawlish is waiting outside to bring in the memories and a pensive with a large screen.” Shacklebolt said with a air of almost palatable defiance.

Madam Bones flicked her wand, the door to the Courtroom opened, “Auror Dawlish, you may bring in the evidence.”
However, it wasn’t Auror John Dawlish who levitated the table with the pensieve, large viewing screen and vials of memories, it was Head Auror Scrimgour. He bowed regally, “My apologies for the substitution. I thought in light of the case, it would be best if I was responsible for the evidence.”

Madam Bones nodded, “An understandable and wise choice.”

Scrimgour added the first memory to the pensive that of Tom Riddle and Peter Pettigrew from the mind of the Dark Lord himself.

The dais was silent as the memory played jerkily.

Obviously, Lucius thought the Dark Lord’s mind was in turmoil even before he murdered the Potters and attempted to kill a helpless infant. He could hardly believe that Dumbledore, then a professor of Transfiguration would have gotten away with much less dared to rape a student. There was much for the man to answer for. How were they supposed to proceed with the Triwizard Tournament with the Durmstrang delegation refusing to leave their ship and Madam Maxime being overly critical about even imagined slights?

After the last memory played in the pensive, Lucius drawled lazily, “I believe the evidence exonerating my client is insurmountable.”

The grim looks on Dumbledore, Doge and Umbridge’s face cemented that.

Madam Bones said quickly, “All those in favour of the dismissal of the charge of Conspiracy to commit Murder?”

There seemed to be a reluctant unanimous vote.

Lucius resisted a smirk, “Thus, I assume that the charge of escaping custody will be summarily dropped?”

Madam Bones nodded, “As will the charges that Madam Umbridge forgot, 13 counts of murder and one count destruction of public property. Since according to the pensive evidence from both Pettigrew and Black, it was Pettigrew who used the Blasting Curse and killed those poor Muggles.”
“That merely leaves the charge of failure to register as an animagus.” Lucius said politely.

“As Head of this august body and in light of his unjust serving of twelve years, the one-year sentence in Azkaban is excused.” Madam Bones said with a rap of her gavel.

Dumbledore looked outraged.

Though for what reason, Lucius couldn't really fathom at the moment.

“In light of the evidence Auror Black, you are released with apologies. Also the fine for being unregistered shall be suspended if you register within 48 hours.”

Sirius III bowed, “It shall be done, Madam Bones.”

Shacklebolt conferred with his superior.

Scrimgour spoke succulently, “Madam Bones, we request that Black be reinstated as an Auror and placed on medical leave. Of course, unless he passes both a physical and mental exam, he shan’t be allowed to returned to active duty.”

Madam Bones nodded, “Since he is innocent of all charges, with the exception of not registering as an animagus, at least with the Auror Department.”

“If my cousin is agreeable, before I return home, I shall register with Head Auror Scrimgour.” Sirius III said politely. He laughed sarcastically, “Although, I very much doubt my animagus form would be of use.”

Lucius said sharply, “There is the matter of his unlawful imprisonment without trial. Surely, he deserves some compensation.”

Mdam Umbridge gave a short cough, “Compensation? He’s already admitted to breaking the law. I don’t see why he even deserves to be an Auror.”
Lucius’s voice was silky and yet sharp as a knife, “Really? Compared to all the charges, Auror Black’s failure to register is a minor one. Considering his animagus form, I very much doubt it would be used in any way that would make it truly applicable to the reasons why the Animagus law passed in the first place.”

“Solicitor you maybe,” Lady Longbottom said sharply, “but are you are implying that you know better then us?”

Lucius shook his head, “Of course not, my Lady. For example, Professor McGonagall’s animagus form is that of a tabby cat, is it not? She is registered, because if she were of a different character, a cat animagus could be used to spy on persons unlawfully or perhaps might give her opportunities at burglary. However, she is an honourable person and would never do such a thing. I suspect she only became an animagus to stretch her great talent at Transfiguration. However, that is not the issue. In such cases as unjust imprisonment, is it within the rights of the House of Black to file for Compensation. In the interests of not inconveniencing the Ministry, we ask for immediate possession of the entire Estate belonging to the Crouch family.”

Doge protested, “That is really too much to ask. In such cases, it reverts to the Ministry.”

The known Dumbledore sycophant missed the tightening of muscles in Dumbledore’s jaw.

Lucius said, “Then you are unaware of how the Goblins deal with entails?”

Madam Umbridge said sweetly, “Why does that matter, Lord Malfoy?”

Lucius toyed with his cane, “In the case of Sirius Black III, when all males, with the exception of Sirius III passed on, according to the nature of entails as managed by Gringotts all properties, investments and vaults came into his possession despite his incarceration and disownment by his mother. Why? Simply because he was the closest male by blood, merely by virtue of being the eldest son of the previous Lord Black. His brother predeceased his Father and his mother outlasted his uncles, who would have been too ill or injured to take on the responsibilities of Head of the Ancient House of Black. You have the option of granting to the Lord of the House of Black what the Goblins will say is already his and relieving yourself from having pay, not only twelve years of back pay as well as restitution for suffering. We all know what ghastly place Azkaban is.”

Madam Bones glanced at Fudge, who had no objections, “Very well. It is so ordered. The Crouch Estate shall be rewarded to Auror Sirius Black in restitution for his unlawful imprisonment.”
“Now wait a moment, Madam Bones. This is highly irregular.” Dumbledore protested. “It would seem that he is profiting from Crouch’s poor judgment.”

“Oughtn’t he? Crouch didn’t give him a fair trial. We have Pettigrew and Black’s wand here and no one insisted they be tested to see which blew up the street. No one checked to see if he bore the Dark Mark. I said then that imprisoning him without a trial was foolhardy and I was right.” Madam Bones glared. “I said the that Estate is his. The Goblins will give it to him anyway. By agreeing with them, we avoid having to pay him restitution ourselves. Now do be quiet, Headmaster.”

Sirius III bowed, “Thank you, Madam Bones.” He bowed to Scrimgour, “I look forward to returning to the ranks.”

Scrimgour said stiffly, “If you pass tests stating you’re fit for active duty. Get some meat on those bones. You look like a walking skeleton.”

“I’ll be sure to eat plenty if my cousin will allow me access to my personal vaults.”

Andromeda repressed a snort; she knew already that he’d taken money out to buy Harry a Firebolt of all things. She’d noticed the withdrawal and taxed him about it. Really, the man was insufferable…

“If that is all, this session of the Council of Magical Law is over.” Before any member could protest, Madam Bones rapped her gavel firmly.

Lucius glanced up at Fudge, “A word in your ear, Minister. Although, I have no objections to Shacklebolt and Scrimgour sitting in.”

“My office is the closest, Minister.” Scrimgour said with a slight bow.

“Oh very well. I’ll join you there presently but do hurry, I’m hungry.”

Sirius III glanced at Lucius, his face wary, “I suppose, I owe you some amount of gratitude.”
Lucius sighed, “I did this against my better judgement. I did it as a favour to And…” he caught her look and amended it, “I mean Annie. Also, I don’t fancy Remus muttering about you being sent back to Azkaban for want of a decent solicitor.”

“Why would you be listening to Remus complain?” Sirius III asked sharply.

“I share a Hogwarts apartment with him, I’m considering letting him join Severus and myself in a legal triad.”

Sirius III sputtered, “Legal triad? Whatever for?”

“He’s courting my Bondmate. Apparently, his Creature decided Severus is his mate.” Lucius said silkily.

“I don’t believe it. Moony would never want Sniv,”

Andromeda cursed him temporarily silent. “My apologies, Lucius. I’ll have to teach him better manners. He shan’t need his voice to register. We’ll follow you to the Auror’s office and he’ll fill out the necessary paperwork. Then, we’ll leave you three to talk business.”

Lucius glanced up at Lady Longbottom, “Lady Augusta, if you would join us.”

The formidable woman looked shocked, but nodded.

Dumbledore stormed out of the Courtroom his face red and his shadow Lord Doge, following in his wake anxiously.

Madam Umbridge was about to follow Fudge when he turned, “Why don’t you see about lunch, Delores? I’ll be along in a bit.”

Somehow, Lucius severely doubted that Fudge would be capable of doing any such thing.

XooooooX
“Lucius, what is so important that you couldn’t make an appointment? Was it really necessary to keep me from my lunch?” Fudge was almost whinging.

Lucius said quickly, “I think it best if you all sit. My news is that which one should not attempt take standing up.”

When they were all seated, each face regarded him with apprehension.

Lucius toyed with his cane, “I’m not sure if Lord Weasley has been informed as of yet but I fear this unhappy news would not keep for long. Durmstrang has been grievously offended and is at present refusing to return to Hogwarts Castle, and I for one don’t blame them.”

Lady Longbottom had a fair idea which might have happened considering that poor Percy’s sad tale had been related to her by good friend Lord Weasley.

Fudge however, was confused.

Scrimgour was annoyed.

Shacklebolt went straight to the point, “What exactly did Dumbledore do now?”

“He and his nephew insulted the honour of both the Weasley family and Durmstrang's Triwizard Champion Viktor Krum. He heavily implied that the Bonding to take place between both Viktor and George, as well as that of Percy and Oliver, was no true Bonding. That in truth, they were going to be taken in keeping and treated as glorified Mistresses and not Bondmates. A situation that neither Lord Weasley nor his son in law Lord Prewett would agree to. I believe the phrase Dumbledore told Viktor translates to both ‘Mind your own God damn business’; though it quite literally means, ‘you’re not getting fucked, so don’t get up and squirm on my cock’. A very vulgar thing to say to a guest who is also a Triwizard Champion.”

“What is the situation?” Fudge asked in total abject horror.

"Karkaroff refuses to return to Hogwarts Castle until he receives an apology. One I fear will never come as long as that man is Headmaster, which means, the Tournament will be a disaster. Madam
Maxime is outraged; she takes exception to everything regarding it as a slight to herself and her Educational Institution. She all but forbids mixing between her students and that of Hogwarts. There is little Severus or I can do to calm Karkaroff.

“Is there anything we can do to speed up the removal of Dumbledore?” Lady Longbottom asked sharply.

Lucius nodded, “A suspension by the Hogwarts Governors. Weasley will vote for it, so will the Prewetts. I will, if Algernon is instructed thus, he will too. I’m sure Annie will want him removed.”

“Any reason I can state?” Fudge looked pale.

Lucius snorted, “Investigation by the Aurors? We’ve turned in evidence of serious wrong doing, one case of multiple separate counts of sexual assault on a minor, one count unlawful use of Veritaserum, one count Imperious on a student, two counts of unlawful abortions without consent and two counts at least of bribery. Multiple counts of unlawful entry to vaults belonging to Harry Potter, theft,” catching the pale sweating face of Fudge, Lucius paused, “The list goes on; Shacklebolt has evidence tying him to seven counts of kidnapping and at least one count of conspiracy to commit murder. I wonder if he didn’t have a hand in the Potters’ murders.”

“Enough.” Fudge looked ill, “You’re welcome to suspend him. What do we do then?”

“Considering Deputy Headmistress McGonagall’s connection to former Senior Auror Moody, it would be bad form to support her for Acting Headmistress. There would be too much negative publicity if the accusations against Moody came out.”

Lady Longbottom was thoughtful, “I see. Whom do you recommend?”

Lucius leaned lazily against a bare patch of wall, silently bespelling any dust, “Professor Flitwick. He’s an honourable man, very knowledgeable in his field. I’ve never heard a breath of scandal associated with him. He cares a lot about his students and has always been fair.”

Andromeda nodded, “I remember him, he never really show favouritism. He did offer tutoring for those who were falling behind, especially to OWL and NEWT students.”

Lady Longbottom nodded, “I was among his first groups of pupils. I have decent memories of
Lucius noted a slight note of derision in her voice, “With as busy as McGonagall will be with Moody, I’m sure she’ll be stepping down as Deputy Headmistress. She’s already missed at least one day of classes because of him. I’d like to recommend Severus.”

Shacklebolt looked at him quizzically, “I’m surprised you didn’t recommends him for Headmaster.”

Lucius waved a hand dismissively, “He’d make an ideal Headmaster, when the time is right. However, he hasn’t the years of teaching experience one needs to hold the position, Flitwick does. Unlike the Position of Professor of Defense Against the Dark Arts, the Charms Position doesn’t have a rumoured curse, so I doubt it will be hard to fill.”

“What about Defense Against the Dark Arts?” Fudge asked.

Lucius appeared bored, “In light of Crouch’s reveal and arrest, as well as Moody’s current stay in St. Mungos; I offered the position temporarily of course, to Remus Lupin who had to give it up after a short illness.”

Shacklebolt and Scrimgour were about to protest, but thought better of it.

“He’s already there and previously held it. Dumbledore didn’t see fit to find a decent professor. He allowed the Fake Moody to teach the Unforgivables to students as well as cast the Imperious on them. I was going to have him removed anyway.” Lucius sneered, “Especially, since he attacked my son. He turned him into a ferret and managed to bypass the protective magic of his Wiccaning. Severus had to levitate him to his personal apartments where he spent a sleepless night feeding Draco potions. He needed six pain relievers, two doses of Skele-grow, multiple applications of Bruise balm and internal healing potions as well as blood replenishers.”

“Godric preserve us! What happened to the poor child?” Lady Longbottom gasped.

“He transfigured Draco into a ferret and bounced him off the stone floor and ceiling like a Bludger.” Lucius said through tight lips.

Lady Longbottom went on horrified, “Such goings on at Hogwarts! I was always a supporter of Dumbledore even when my dear Francis was sent against him.”
Lucius and Shacklebolt looked at one another but said nothing.

Scrimgeour was disturbed, “Sn… Lord Prince,” he amended, “he’s your son’s godfather? I wonder how he avoided not attacking the Fake Moody. If such a thing happened to Neville, I don’t know what I might do.”

Lady Longbottom gave the man a slightly sad look, “I can somewhat understand your feelings. However did he not attack Crouch for that?”

Lucius sighed, “He had more important things on his mind at the time. Punishing Crabbe and Goyle for duelling in the corridors and tending to Draco. At one point he despaired of my... our son’s life. He did summon our Healer, but only once he was certain that he was in dire need of Healer. A fine Potion Master Severus may be, but he’s no Healer.”

“What didn’t he summon Madam Pomfrey?” Fudge asked.

Lucius sneered, “That woman is so far up Dumbledore’s arse that they share the same brain. She never treated Severus’ injuries suffered at the hands of James Potter and Sirius III Black. How could he trust her with his godson? Besides, it is the custom of old families to only allow their own to be treated by a family Healer. I’d like that woman released from service. She was a pathetic Healer during her training and has never shown herself to have grown beyond that.”

Fudge wiped his brow with his now dripping handkerchief, “Who would replace her?”

Lucius bowed at Andromeda, “Madam Tonks was a Healer before the birth of her child. If we released Pomfrey; perhaps, she would agree to hold the position temporarily until we cast about for a suitable replacement. Dumbledore surrounds himself with persons no one else would hire. He’s hired against the Governors’ objections, three persons unfit for their duties. One being Pomfrey, whom I wouldn’t trust to treat a person who worked on one of my farms, let alone my son. He also hired an expelled student who never took his OWLS, much less his NEWTS, to teach Care of Magical Creatures. You remember that great lout who allowed Draco to be injured by that Hippogriff and introduces them to dangerous creatures. Draco mentioned he once tried to raise a dragon. It was smuggled out of the castle by Harry and that idiot Ronald Dumbledore. The third is a useless teacher of Divination. That flighty woman Sibyl Trelawney, I believe she’s from somewhere in Cornwall where you reside Lady Longbottom.”

Lady Longbottom nodded, “I remember, her grandmother or some such person was a great seer. I
believe she went to school with my mother, only Cassandra’s name was Trelawney then.”

"Dumbledore hires unsuitable instructors?" Fudge looked even more ill.

“Yes, its surprising that persons such as William and Percy Prewett-Weasley turn out at all with professors like them. You’ve got a good manager for the Department of International Magical Cooperation, I hope you don’t waste him, Cornelius. I’ve heard the Department has never been so well run."

“Yes. Yes. Dolores says the same thing. She wants me to bring him into my office as a junior assistant.”

“Pah! A waste if you ask me.” Lucius said sardonically, “If I were you, I’d let him carry on young or not, and keep that department running. He’s a former Head Boy and quite smart. The only one to step forward when Crouch took off and try to keep order. He’s been very hands on with the Tournament since he joined the Department. A male Lily Evans, if I ever saw one, with the pride of a Black. Understandable, with Cedrella for a grandmother.”

“You really think I should?” Fudge asked warily.

Once more his unreliable nature struck the others.

Lucius though he was a chameleon, incapable of having a view of his own and taking his colours or views from those around him. Useful perhaps, for his purposes, but not strong enough to not be used by others. He’d always been rather subtle in his manipulations of Fudge. A man like that can hold a grudge easily and for all Fudge’s wailings about Dumbledore, he fancied the man was too weak to do anything about him. He said shortly, “Any objection to my calling for a meeting of the Board of Governors to suspend Dumbledore? After all, there is an investigation as to his character and activities.”

“One,” Scrimgour put in dryly, “not entirely sanctioned by my Department.”

“Yet acknowledged nonetheless.” Lucius retorted, “If it had been your lover who had a child you sired unknowingly forcefully aborted, you’d have wanted his head too. Given the animosity between Dumbledore, and myself, I could not just arbitrarily lop his head from his shoulders- as much as I would like to. I decided to go about investigating him and doing it right and proper.”
“A very wise thing,” Andromeda said, trying placate him.

“Yes, yes.” Fudge said nervously.

Lady Longbottom, who would be Madam Longbottom considering her position in the Wizengamot, had she been born to that family, that is. Seeing as she’d married into the family whose seat she held through her husband and due to the incapacitation of her son, Madam was beyond her.

Andromeda was a Madam because she was born a Black, though used the name of her Bondmate—probably since her aunt had disowned her. Now that she was reinstated as a Black, she might chose to go about under the name Black-Tonks to assure others that she had a right to her family’s seat. Especially, since tradition dictated it belonged to one of the Sirius’. Harry being too young to hold the Potter seat and Remus ‘dirty blood’ due to his werewolf nature couldn’t hold it, so Andromeda had two votes, which was all that a Wizengamot member was allowed.

As for Amelia Bones, she held her family’s seat due to her younger brother’s reluctance to enter the political arena and her family was entailed upon the female line. As a second son, he’d made his own life’s choices and chose to allow his sister, a formidable woman just as Augusta Longbottom was, to remain the Defacto Head of the Bones Family. Though Alger, who voted for the Woods on the Board of Governors had a wife who likewise joined the Wood Family through marriage was August's brother in law and hadn’t the political aplomb of his sister-in-law.

Fudge’s stomach growled in a distracting way, he stood nervously, “That being all have your own way. Vote him out. Fire him, suspend him, I don’t care. Never liked the bossy man myself.” He slithered away like a backboneless eel.

He raised an eyebrow at Augusta as Fudge had left, “After that grotesque display, will you join us is voting him out?”

Augusta nodded sharply, “His behaviour is unbecoming a Minister for Magic.”

Madam Bones nodded, “He should care more about the children. When I think about my niece there with him,” she shivered.

Lucius was thoughtful, “Your brother, he’s certified as an expert at… Charms?”
Madam Bones shook her head, “Transfiguration.”

“Would it be possible to see if he could fill in a moments notice for Professor McGonagall? She is beside herself with Moody so ill. The students missed one day of instruction because she upped and offed without notice to check on him.”

Madam Bones nodded, “I’ll see. He’s between jobs at the moment. His youngest child, a son and hope of the family you know, has been ill. He was supposed to start this fall but you know how things can be with children. He’s not well yet and its too late to start. We’ve had to let his tutor go as well. Poor thing, I know that Susan adores him.”

“Draco was once in bed for weeks, plucky little upstart tried to brew a difficult potion quite beyond him at the time. One miscalculation and he blew up the lab. He was supposed to wait for Severus to give him a lesson. His tutor was supposed to keep an eye on him, but the little rascal slipped away. Had to let the tutor go as you can imagine, seeing as Draco being my only child and heir. He was well quickly though, not a mark as to his ordeal. He was rearing to get back to the lab. Though Severus had to seal it to prevent another accident. He learnt though.” He sighed, “What I need is a charms expert.”

Sirius had remained in the corner and spoke up, “Why not Remus? He was always better at Charms then Defense. Defense was more mine and James’ thing. Pity we don’t have Lily; she’d have adored to succeed Professor Flitwick. Though I remember that Demeter Lovegood was very keen at Charms, Lily said they both worked in the department on Experimental Charms for a time. Is she about? I heard she married a disowned Malfoy… Xeno I think. Very odd fellow.”

“Demeter died in Charms experiment gone awry. Leaving my cousin Xeno to raise his daughter alone. He is rather odd but a Malfoy ,just as much as you and Andromeda are Blacks. Father disowned him because he couldn’t take the mark.” A memory that annoyed Lucius to his very bones.

“I’m not well enough to continue on as an Auror but I still remember all the Defense stuff. I’d love to see Harry. If you do knock Dumbledore out on his arse, I’d be happy to take over Defense, so Remus can teach his beloved Charms. When he’s ill, I’m sure Flitwick would love to fit in.” minding his words carefully, not keen on outing Remus’ werewolf status.

The meeting having obtained its objective broke, the members breaking to go for lunch, each lost in maudlin thoughts due to Dumbledore’s high disagreeable actions.

Andromeda and Augusta were promising to inform the other Governors of the upcoming meeting, which they sent for Friday.
Somewhat exuberant, yet subdued, Lucius flooed back to the apartments in Hogwarts that he shared with Remus and Lucius.

However before he left, Sirius that useless moronic bully had been gracious enough thank him for getting him out of the spot of trouble and pass on greetings to Remus. Renewing his offer to take on the Defense Post if Remus was needed to take over Charms.

Chapter End Notes

Chapter 33- Cockerel, Curiosity and the Kneazel

Dora was following Dumbledore to the Hogshead again, in her falcon animagus form this time.

Dumbledore glanced around; satisfied, he grabbed a handful of powder and stepped into the floo. He touched his wand and a Glamour appeared, now Dumbledore looked closer to fifty, he had curly red hair and blue eyes.

In short he looked like a Weasley…

That struck Dora as odd, until the thought struck her. Was there a relation between Prewetts, Weasleys and the Dumbledores? Weren’t most Pureblood families related by bonding and procreation? Then again, she could see bit of the teenaged Dumbledore in this person, but then again, that picture had been black and white of course.

Dumbledore chuckled, “Rick Dorian, nice to see your face again.” He was touching his face to check it or something.

Rick Dorian? Who in Helga’s name, was that?

Dumbledore smirked, licking his lips. “Knockturn Alley.”

He disappeared in a flash of green flames.

Dora shifted back to her brunette alter ego, but made herself more masculine before quickly Apparating into Knockturn Alley. Such a place was not for a woman, well not a lady, for it was an area of ill repute. Despite being the child of a former Queen of Slytherin, Dora could never be mistaken for a lady.
She arrived to see Dumbledore slipping through the crowd.

Careful to avoid being noticed by anyone, she followed him without seeming to. She had aced tracking and stealth, despite being naturally clumsy.

He slipped into a disreputable pub, The Cockerel.

Dora repressed any reaction to that, as she slowly followed him. She checked herself in a dirty window to be sure she looked male enough.

As soon as she entered, she slipped into a shadow and resumed her falcon form. Soaring up into the rafters, under a disillusionment spell, she followed him on silent wings.

Patrons of the Cockatiel were disgusting, pawing and buying drinks for young pretty teenage looking boys. They were likely of age and using glamour charms to appear younger.

Dumbledore walked to a big man who smelled like a troll and whispered, “Ganymede.”

The man lazily flicked his wand and the velvet rope moved to grant passage.

Dumbledore walked past the guard and through a door that led to a set of darkened stairs.

Cloaking her powers, Dora shifted from a falcon to a mouse. Chasing after Dumbledore, while trying not to fall down the stairs.

Dumbledore whispered a word to unlock the door, “pæderastie.”

Dora gulped, den of iniquity indeed.

At Dumbledore’s password, the door swung open.
Dora scurried in and hid.

Dumbledore entered.

“Rick, it has been a long time. Your favorite James was recently purchased but I have a few recent procures that might stimulate you. Some, even virginal.”

“Ah Suez Erastes, virgins? You know my tastes well.”

“Come, let us see what you make of my wares.”

Dora followed carefully.

Erastes led Dumbledore into a room full of beds.

On the beds where shy boys shivering, who had been dressed in what looked like thongs and long flowing sheer vest-like garments.

“Here, this one is called Kenny. He is a recent procurement, can see how his curls shine? His eyes are that blue you prefer.”

“Where did you find this luscious thing?” Dumbledore reached out to touch those soft curls.

“Languishing in some Muggle orphanage as we find all of them. He’s been washed with great care and perfumed. I promise despite his size, he’s thirteen.”

Dumbledore pulled out a handful of galleons; “He is mine for a while.”

The boy shook with terror.
Dumbledore lifted him into his arms, “Is my usual room free?”

“Yes, yes.”

Dora followed Dumbledore but he was too absorbed in the tiny boy in his arms to bother sensing for a spy. Or he felt too comfortable in his surroundings… too bad for him…

Dumbledore opened a door and entered.

Dora at his heels, hid under the bed. She heard the creak of the bed at the two others lay on it.

Soon, clothes fell on the floor.

Dora winced as she heard the sounds of kissing and Dumbledore’s whispered endearments. She tuned it out, until she heard Dumbledore open the door and move to leave that is. Dora paused briefly, to see the boy covered in spunk, sobbing. She could see no blood, so it didn’t seem like he’d raped him. Given the boy's age, she still considered the incident assault.

Dumbledore whispered, in a fond tone, “I’ll return, eromenos. Keep that beautiful body perfect for me, or I shall be angry.”

Dora glared at him, but followed nonetheless.

Dumbledore praised the boy and asked to be considered for purchase of him.

Erastes nodded, “Of course. Anything to oblige a patron such as yourself.”

“I shall return.”

Reluctantly, Dora followed him out of the place and out of the Cockerel. She waited until Dumbledore Apparated back to Hogshead and seemed to head back to the castle. Near ill, she longed to Apparate home and felt the need to scrub the filth of that place from her. Dumbledore had sexually assaulted a young Muggle, the Auror in her longed to arrest him, but she was on ‘vacation’.
She dreaded what her patron Lucius would say if he knew…

Wishing not to be seen, she shifted into her falcon form and started to fly towards the castle, only to hit a barrier. Yelping wildly, as she crashed into it.

“Tut tut, spying is a foolish occupation. One gets too overconfident. You don’t think I didn’t consider that you might follow, my dear girl, I can’t have you reporting on me or spying anymore.”

Dora tried to resume her human form, but found herself trapped.

“No, no I told you, I can’t have you bearing tales, Ms. Tonks.”

Dora’s eyes widened in horror…

“Yes, I knew it was you. I gave you a juicy little nugget of information on my character. I knew you’d be too keen to share it, so I laid my trap. You were always foolhardy weren’t you? I’m surprise they let you into the Aurors. I know you were expected to fail. I had Moody work you almost to death. Then you had to outdo you teacher, didn’t you? Even worse, you got him locked up and arrested Molly. I hope you’re happy now, knowing she’s going to spend the rest of her life in Azkaban. Wish I could find a reason to send you there. A few weeks there and you’d soon learn, which way your bread was buttered. Were I inclined to wenches, I’d have my way with you. Too bad I cast that impotence curse on Aberforth. I got sick of keeping an eye on his sexual exploits, so that he didn’t embarrass the family name again. Look at me wandering off at the mouth, a failing of age they say. How best to be rid of you? Should I drown you in the Lake or fed you to the owls?”

Dora’s horror must have still shown in her eyes, her mother had warned her to take care. The whole curiosity killed the Kneazel and all that.

“Too bad there aren’t more creatures around that would be interested in a titbit like you. You’re too small to satisfy a Hippogriff and Thestrals prefer dead things. Unicorns are herbivores, while Abraxans only eat grains and drink single malt whiskey. You’re too small to satisfy the Giant Squid. We’ll have to settle for an owl or something.”

There was a blinding flash of light, blinding them both.

Dumbledore flung a practically paralysed Dora in an attempt to cover his eyes.
The language was unfamiliar as Dora vaguely noticed magic being weaved.

Dora landed hard on a stone, her fragile bird body not as resilient as her human form would be. The last thing Dora saw before fainting was that of a overly large Kneazel.

XoooooX

Luna knew coming out was tricky, it might expose her but she had little choice. She knew Auror Tonks was going to be in danger, she hadn’t seen that she died, so she figured someone had to save her. She’d met up with that Kneazel of Granger’s who took a liking to her. They’d befriended one another, it seemed to know that the falcon was no such thing. She could communicate with it somewhat; it said that Granger called him 'Crookshanks', a name he didn’t care for. Said Granger, smart though she was, underestimated him. He’d said he’d noticed a strange bird and a mouse scurrying about where it didn't belong. Even offered to show her the path the bird flew to the Castle.

Eager, but wary, to help Auror Tonks, whom she had never met but felt an affinity for, since she was trying to rid them of Dumbledore. She set out at great personal risk to save her. She couldn’t in good conscience send anyone else. Her Queen would be dismayed with her. She had crept closer, hearing Dumbledore’s taunting voice. The more he said he couldn’t allow her to live the more she was determined to save the woman. When she realized it was almost the moment of her vision, she cast out a powerful flash of light that blinded Dumbledore. To her horror, the paralysed Auror went flying and crashed on a rock.

Crookshanks scurried forward and picked up the falcon in his mouth.

Nervous and trying to make it look like an assault, she summoned his wand and was surprised to receive two. She also took any money he had on him and ran. Hopefully, he wouldn’t guess a student had waylaid him…

Crookshanks, who deposited the falcon in her hand, followed her. Cradling it ever so gently, she made her way, as invisible as she could, to Professor Prince’s apartments. She knew that Pomfrey was untrustworthy and hadn’t the magic herself to unparalyse the Auror or free her from her animagus form without injuring her. There was only so much an untrained Veela could do. Things like helping Theo and Draco were instinctive, she was more seer then healer, and that made a difference.

She reached the portrait of Professor Vindicus Veridian, bowing awkwardly, she addressed him,
“Are the professors or Lord Malfoy in?”

He regarded her dusty Ravenclaw robes with distain, “Whom might I say is calling?”

“Thena. Remus will know me. If they’re confused, mention swans but do hurry. Its an emergency.”

The portrait stepped out of the frame, murmuring about rude eagles and students always in a hurry.

XooooooX

Lucius and his mates were surprised when Professor Vindicus announced a Ravenclaw visitor.

Remus knew it was Luna at once when the name ‘thena was given, “Send her in.”

The portrait door was thrown open and the slightly wild looking girl nearly stumbled over the portrait hole.

“Oh thank goodness, you’re all here. Something awful just happened. I have no idea what to do.”

Remus noticed the still falcon in her hand.

Lucius blinked, “Is that,”

“Yes,” she said breathlessly, “It’s Auror Tonks. Oh, its all my fault. I knew she was in danger. I had to help, but I didn’t realize she was going to land on a rock. I don’t know what to do. Some shield thing that Dumbledore cast paralysed her. I hoped you could help Professor, being all talented with spell making. I’m more seer then Healer,” she set the poor falcon on a bare scrap of table, “She hit the rock so hard.”

Severus examined her, “I’m not a healer. I hate to ask Andromeda but…”
Lucius had already stepped towards the hearth to floo Lavender Vale and get Andromeda. Time was running out if Dumbledore was attacking Aurors himself!

Severus was worried, “I’m not as keen with animals…” he glanced at Remus, “I know you know something of revealing animagi, but would it be too dangerous to cast? Draco’s case was different, it was straight Human Transfiguration and not animagus.”

Remus was shocked to see the vital Dora Tonks so still and nearly lifeless, “I’d dare not cast it. If McGonagall was more coherent, I’d ask her but I don’t trust her yet.”

Stumbling out of the floo, were Dora’s worried parents, she was their only child.

Ted paled, as he looked at the broken falcon.

Andromeda looked faint, “Nymphadora! Morganna help us, what happened? Who did this?”

Lucius placed a gentle hand on her arm, “She needs you. She needs a healer; you understand her being a Metamorphmagus and an animagus. We need to know if we can force her from the animagus form without killing her. Is it possible to treat her as is?”

“She’s alive?” Andromeda gasped, silent tears coursing down her cheeks.

“For now.” Severus said softly.

“Unconscious.” Remus added.

Severus glanced at Remus, “The cupboard in my bathroom. Third shelf, short squat green bottle. Bring me one.”

Remus hurried off to get it.

Severus held out a hand to Andromeda, “I need to know if its safe to use diagnostic charms to discover the nature of what’s paralysing her. Will it be alright?”
Remus was beside him in a flash.

Severus snatched the bottle, removing the stopper and handing to her, “Calming potion. My own recipe. Won’t make you drowsy. I needed it with Draco.” He said by way of explanation.

Andromeda took it without comment and drank it in a quick swing, taking a deep breath, she replied, “It’s alright. Can’t see what’s wrong without knowing. We’ve got to get her out of that dratted falcon form. It’s hard to heal an animagus who is trapped in their form.”

The potion must be quick to affect one, Remus thought, typical of Severus’ brewing, based on his journals. Complicated recipes but quick working, he thought as he went to retrieve another for Ted, who now looked about to faint.

Severus used revealing charms to show the paralysing spell’s make-up. Finally making a decision, he pointed his wand at the forlorn figure and muttered something.

Dora’s falcon’s wings collapsed to the table with a worrisome twinkle of bone.

Ted snatched the calming potion and downed it, staggering.

Andromeda bit her lip and rubbed the back of her hand to her eyes, trying to clear her vision as she attempted to assess the damage to her daughter how best to help her.

Luna turned to Remus holding out the two wands, “He had these. I took them.’ Her hand was already taking on a reddish tint.

Remus blinked, “Poisonwood!” he conjured gloves and put them on before taking the wands, “Wash your hands quick. Can’t have him seeing that. He’d know it was you and wonder why.” He moved to examine Dumbledore’s wands; the man was dangerous with a wand who knew how dangerous he would be angry and wandless. He didn’t see the type to be daunted much by loss of his wand, or wands in this case.

Severus transfigured a chair nearby to a chaise lounge to place Dora on when they needed to transfigure her back into a human.
Andromeda swallowed, “I can’t treat her like this. Have to chance it and force her out of the form. Morganna, I hope I don’t kill her!”

Ted collapsed, forcing Lucius to catch him and place him in a nearby chair.

This room was a sort of common room to their apartments; a combination library, drawing room and parlour.

Severus picked up the motionless form of the falcon Dora and placed her in the centre of the transfigured chaise lounge.

Remus had more experience with revealing animagi, thus putting aside Dumbledore’s wands for the moment, “Want me to do it?”

Andromeda nodded, biting her lip.

Remus muttered the spell and stepped back to focus on the wands. Little he could do now, not being a Healer.

Andromeda watched the falcon shimmer and practically explode into that of a person. However, it resembled that of a slim brunette man with a light dusting of facial hair. Damn that girl, what had she been up to? Hadn’t she cautioned her enough to be careful? Why, oh why, did her only child have to follow in her idiotic cousin’s footsteps and become an Auror? She collapsed to her knees besides the chaise lounge and began using her less used Healing skills to assent her daughter's state. She was a birth healer specializing in treating bearers and witch ailments, “Shattered bones, Salazar's Cauldron,” she burst into fresh, albeit silent tears again, “she has a rib that punctured a lung! Internal injuries.”

Severus went to raid his potions cabinet that he kept well stocked in case of any emergency. He pulled out an array of eerily familiar potions; he’d used them in this very room to treat Draco…

Sobbing, Andromeda had to coax the rib out of Dora’s lung and used a complex spell- only used in emergencies, to heal the damage to the lung. Her former instructor at St. Mungos would throttle her. She knew darn well that she should not be doing this, but who knew Dora better then she did? She accepted the Skele-grow setting it down beside her as she determined whether Dora could swallow, determining it was too close to call, she threw all caution to the wind and cast it directly into her
daughter’s stomach. That horrible man would not win! Dora wouldn’t die tonight! Not if she could prevent it. She was a Daughter of the Ancient House of Black! The previous Queen of Slytherin! Dora would live if she had to exhaust all her magic and healing abilities. She did her best to deal with the other internal injuries before using the potions. It was dangerous to mix them, especially blood replenishers with Skele-grow. She’d wait until the Skele-grow was through her system before chancing more potions. She collapsed, “She’s stable, I think. Get Smythe! He’ll berate me for this but he can take over.”

She promptly fainted, which she would no doubt deny later. The usually unflappable witch would claim exhaustion.

Lucius sighed, “We’d best inform Shacklebolt and Scrimgour, they’ll be furious.” He summoned his house elves Stria, Dippy and Treca sending them after the needed wizards.

“What now?” Luna asked.

Severus turned to her, “Now, you get back to the tower and forget this ever happened for your own good. You did a very brave but dangerous thing. I hope to Salazar, you haven’t compromised yourself. Now get!”

Remus had discovered something that frightened him beyond measure, he stammered, “Lucius! Lucius, get over here!”

Lucius was disconcerted by Remus’ tone and speech pattern he normally seemed rather grounded. Anything that worried the werewolf worried him, “What?”

“I cannot imagine any worse discovery. These wands are Black Poisonwood with an Acromantula Webbing core.” His face pales and he looked ill, “the second… the second, Lucius… is Elder and Thestral hair.”

Lucius’ brow furrowed in confusion, “What is so dreadful about that?”

Remus threw his hands up in dismay, “You don’t… of course not, you’re not an Ollivander or Gregorovitch. Acromantula Webbing makes powerful wand; but it can be temperamental and volatile if not handled with respect. It is said to be strong for Defense Against the Dart Arts and offensive magic. Black Poisonwood is associated with strength and versatility, and requires an owner with a strong will- Dumbledore must have strong will to attempt what he does. Strangely enough its
strong for Protective magic, and various forms of Arcane magic. It is another difficult wandwood to master. Due to the poisonous and somewhat volatile nature of the wood, it tends to be rarer. Holding a poisonwood wand not bonded to you can cause some skin irritation, as exemplified by Luna’s hands. But as for Elder and Thestral hair! Godric’s Beard! They are never used! Only one wand is said to be that combination.”

Lucius stepped back, Remus’ eyes a bit wild, “What wand it that?”

“The most famous wand in the history of the world! The Deathstick! The Wand of Destiny! The Eldruhn Wand! The Elder Wand! The Ellhorn Wand!” he calmed himself, then swallowing, he continued hoarsely, “That is if the belief of wandlore scholars is true that it is the same wand. The wand rumoured to be made by Death himself, the unbeatable wand. First belonging to Antioch Peverell, since then leaving a bloody trail through the history of our world. Finding itself in the hands of infamous men. There are gaps, of course, and long ones, where it vanishes from view, temporarily lost or hidden; but it always resurfaces. It has certain identifying characteristics that those who are learned in wandlore recognize. Its history is bloody, but that may be simply due to the fact that it is such a desirable object, and arouses such passions in wizards. Immensely powerful, dangerous in the wrong hands, and an object of incredible fascination to all of us who study the power of wands.”

Knowing what it was, Lucius felt drawn to it himself, a need to possess it. He snatched up the wand in a fit of anger that Dumbledore should ever possess something so dangerous! Dora was family and he used it to hurt her! He didn’t even realize what he was doing, until it was done.

Remus looked on in horror and fascination, before crying out, “Lucius, no!”

Too late, the Lord of the House of Malfoy had snapped the oldest and perhaps, most dangerous wand in history.

Lucius stared at the snapped wand and swallowed, “By Salazar, did I do that?” he tossed the pieces on the wood table, “I’m sorry. I don’t know what came over me.”

Remus stared in shock at the broken wand; it couldn’t hurt anyone else now. But sadly, it was near useless…

The floo crackled to flame and Shacklebolt stepped out, with to their surprise, Amelia Bones.

Two pops and there stood Scrimgeour looking grim and Smythe looking indignant.
The two elves disappeared, at a nod from their lord and master.

Smythe was irritable, as he almost chose to step over Andromeda’s prone body, murmuring about bearers and healers being terrible mixes. He conjured a cot for the woman and unkindly moved her there with a flick of his wand. He then proceeded to examine the patient, cursing wildly as he tended to Dora. Examining the stack of potions and glaring at Severus, “Would have been smarter to summon me at once.” He said prickly, “It’s the same as when you dealt with Draco on your own as he was bounced all over like some mad creature.” He snipped potions and then proceeded to use them, as needed, “For an anguished mother, she didn’t kill the poor thing. What happened? Thought I was treating a girl.”

“She’s a Metamorphmagus.” Scrimgeour offered.

“Is she going to make it?” Madam Bones asked worried.

“What happened?” Shacklebolt’s features looked paler, then they had watching all those pensive memories at the hearing.

“Do tell.” Smythe said, still intent on his patient.

“Dumbledore!” Ted spit out, having regained consciousness, “That horrible excuse for a man!”

“Calm down Ted!” Severus said gently.

Lucius grimaced, “My fault, I imagine. She must have been trying to come report to me. Dumbledore laid a trap and she literally flew into it. He was going to kill her. He was stopped but the rescue didn’t go as planned. The poor thing was dashed against a stone while paralysed. It took a while to end whatever spell paralysed her. Then, there was of course the problem that she was still a falcon. Had to force her to turn back into human. Then, Andromeda began to treat her. Had a punctured lung, many shattered bones, internal injuries. It took a bit to move the rib,”

“Damn fool!” Smythe muttered absently.

Lucius continued, “Had to repair the lung and some of the internal damage. Only potion I saw her
give Dora was the Skele-grow.”

“Good thing too! Mix that with a blood replenishers, she’d have killed her. Foolish thing treating your own child. Parents! Fools!” Smythe grumbled giving the conversation half an ear.

Lucius sighed, “then I suppose the stress was too much, despite one of Severus’ special Calming Potions. She fainted.”

“Did your anonymous good Samaritan tell you anything?”

“Dora was brought back by a half Kneazel.” Remus said, pointing at Crookshanks, who had a self-important look. “Though we did receive two wands.” He glanced at them, “Know much about wands?”

Shacklebolt and Bones shook their heads.

Scrimgour snapped, “Not an Ollivander, why?

Remus held up the broken elder wand, “Behold the infamous Deathstick formally of Dumbledore’s possession. Lucius broke it.” He half glared at his mate’s Bondmate, “Logically, a smart idea, but from a wandlore enthusiast’s point of view, a very foolish one.”

“A awful lot of fools tonight, if you ask me.” Smythe grumbled.

They mostly ignored him.

“Dumbledore had the Deathstick? Are you sure?” Scrimgour said, in awe and dismay.

“Probably got it off Grindelwald when they duelled.” Remus held up the other wand, “This would be his personal wand. Wouldn’t recommend touching with your bare hands, seeing as its Black Poisonwood. Never would consider using Acromantula Webbing. Too dangerous…”

Madam Bones looked unnerved, “Acromantula Webbing?” Her nose wrinkled in distaste, “What a
wand! Poisonous wood and a giant sentient spider's web! No wonder he’s the way he is…”

“How dangerous is he without a wand?” Scrimgour asked.

Remus shivered, “I don’t want to know. I’d hand it over as evidence of the attack on Auror Tonks, if you think it’s safe.”

“What if he used the Deathstick?” Shacklebolt asked, with a look of worry.

“Then we’re in trouble because it’s broken. As for the concept of Dumbledore carrying the most dangerous wand in the history of Wizarding world, I find I don’t care for it.”

There were nods of agreement, even from Smythe, who seemed determined to me less than agreeable tonight.

Finally, the man stood up, “Don’t let that woman touch my patient.” He glared at Severus, “You should have sent for me. Potions master you maybe but you’re not Healer. Scraps and minor burns are one thing for a parent who is a healer. Anything serious must be treated by a more calm, non-related healer. I’ve made sure she’ll survive the night. She’s in a healing trance. Now, I doubt you want her here. Lavender Vale doesn’t have the protection.”

Luna stepped out of the shadows, “Black Manor. She’ll be safe there.”

Lucius rounded upon her, “Mordred and Morganna! You were told to leave! Do you know what you’ve done?”

“I’m not officially a member of your House! I’m an adult legally and you know it, Uncle Lucius! I’m giving my advice. I’ll not divulge my name or age.” Luna snapped, looking more like a harpy then a Veela.

Lucius sighed, “Salazar’s Bollocks!”

Madam Bones hissed, “Language, my Lord.”
Lucius glared, “You’re a Malfoy!”

“I may be of Malfoy Blood, but I’m not a Malfoy! I’m a Ravenclaw, not a Slytherin! I did what I thought was best. You really think that I was going to leave before I knew she was alright?” Luna raged, “If I’d been more careful, she wouldn’t have hit the rock!”

Remus moved closer, trying to touch her to calm the enraged Veela, only to be repulsed.

“My apologies.” Luna glanced at him, sheepishly, “Can’t help it, Veela and all.”

Remus stiffened, “Of course.” Creatures of Light didn’t mix with Dark Creatures.

Scrimgour winced, looking at her, “Veela.” He said with a sneer.

“I see Daddy was right you are one.”

Scrimgour took a step back.

“Shan’t tell if you won’t. Madam Bones won’t. Shacklebolt wouldn’t easily. Hard to read you.” Luna said sharply.

Remus knew then, that Scrimgour really was a vampire, not that he hadn’t guess but decided to stay far away from him. Neither kind liked one another, loathed each other more like. Luna mentioned they were the result of Dark Curses cast by Dark Witches who were in a feud.

Lucius’ anger deflated, she was right. By Veela standards, she was an adult. He really couldn’t order her around. “Luna, please! Go to your House. The last thing I want to do it to have to tell your father about this. I don’t want to face the Queen either. You know how dangerous this is. You’ve courted enough for one day. I hope you’ll forgive me eventually.” He snapped his fingers “Return her to the Tower. Don’t let her leave and keep an eye on her.” He snapped at Treca, “Only release her in the morning, or if her majesty summons her.”
A very upset Luna was Apparated away, still trying to wriggle free and berate her cousin.

Lucius bowed stiffly, “I beg you not to mention that she was here. I would hate for Dumbledore to realize she had anything to do with this. It is her family’s express wish that she continue to be invisible.”

“What did she mean by she’s an adult? Unless I’ve very much mistaken, she’s younger then my niece.” Madam Bones said sharply.

Lucius paled, “About that… might I refrain from mentioning? I’d rather not have to come up with a blatant falsehood and you’ll be better off not knowing.” He paused, then went on quickly, “Not that I don’t trust you… its just wiser not to spread the truth.”

Scrimgour’s lip curled in distaste, “She’s a Veela. Young too. Rare I know, to be one before sixteen.”

Lucius swallowed.

Scrimgour sneered at him, “Not hard to guess given her repelling of a we…”

Severus stormed towards him, “Leave him be.” He snapped. “Don’t bandy about such things, being born of an archaic dislike because of some jealous Dark Witches like Morganna and Vivian. Mordred, act like the adults you are! We have a badly injured Auror, a murderous mad rapist Headmaster, a starved and beaten saviour, not to mention a Dark Lord with split personality disorder!”

Remus sighed, “Severus, let it alone.”

“I won’t! I won’t let a hypocritical vampire of all people treat you like dirt! You’ve been mistreated enough as is, namely by me, but I’ll be damned if I’ll turn a blind eye to it!”

Scrimgour continued to shrink back from the enraged Potions Master, “Peace!”

Lucius snapped, “Sèvere! That’s enough! You will sit down and be quiet.”
Severus grumbled, but did as his Bondmate ordered.

“I think we’ve had enough excitement for one night.” Lucius continued sharply.

Taking the hint Scrimgour, Shacklebolt and Bones headed towards the floo.

“What about Dumbledore’s wand?”

Remus’ eyes filled with a marauder’s twinkle, “We’ll put it where he least suspects.”

“Where might that be?” Bones asked.

“Black Manor, of course.”

Severus grumbled out the summons for Sirius I, King of the Chuvash.

Who appeared rather disgruntled.

“Who wants me now?”

Lucius spoke quickly, “I beg pardon, but I speak for your niece and her child.”

Sirius I looked worried, “What happened?”

“Dora was investigating Dumbledore. He caught her in a trap. Trying to save her life, she was deathly injured. Two good healers have treated her, however, it would be best if she disappeared for a while for her own protection. Andromeda was overwhelmed by the devastating injuries of her only child and fainted. Ted isn’t taking it well either. It would be best if they disappeared, in case Dumbledore’s wrath falls on him.” Lucius said quickly.
Remus held out the Black Poisonwood wand, “It would also be a great favour if you would hide this. It’s too dangerous to be around. I doubt it had a hand in your great something grand niece’s assault but it’d too dangerous to allow him to have.”

Sirius grew enraged, “He attacked Nymphadora? I’ll kill him! As if raping children wasn’t bad enough! I’ll take them to my Manor. He’ll never touch them there. I’ll hold onto the wand. Is there anything else going on in the Wizarding World that I should know about?”

“Besides, Dumbledore insulting your Weasley-Prewett relations, no. We’ll settle that. We’ve got our plans in motion to remove him and ban him from Hogwarts forever.” Severus continued. “As for his blood, it will be a tug of war between the Weasleys, Woods, Prewetts, Malfoys and Blacks. We’ll end up, I’m sure leaving Ronald to your tender mercies eventually.”

In his rage, Sirius I had transformed, now it was altogether clear, exactly why these apartments that once belonged to Slytherin himself, had such high ceilings. Sirius I grabbed the Tonks family and the poisonwood wand before disappearing.

Scrimgour, Shacklebolt and Bones vanished into the floo, leaving Lucius, Severus and Remus to practically pass out from emotional and mental overload…

Chapter End Notes

Chapter 34- Sirius I visits Hogwarts and a war Council is called?

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Chapter 34- Sirius I visits Hogwarts and a war Council is called?

Sirius I was pacing in the common room of Severus’ apartment when they came down, he was waving a piece of parchment. “Received this, this morning. Thought you’d be interested. Was delivered to Andromeda though she was still abed. Can’t blame her. That Dumbledore is a practically suicidal individual, harming one of my family after I explicitly warned him. I should kill him myself. The Ministry can’t harm me.”

Lucius yawned, accepting the parchment, he skimmed it, “It’s an advisement of the Pettigrew trial before the Council of Magical Law."

Remus grumbled, “Wish I could attend. I have responsibilities here.”

“My sentiments exactly.” Severus said scathingly, “I’ll like to see Pettigrew sentenced to be Kissed.”

“I’ll be attending on behalf of the Blacks and the Potters. I do hope that useless excuse for a great grand nephew sees fit to stay at my place of residence. I found out he fired his house elves and I took him to task for it, installing some of my own. That lout has no concept of cooking and cleaning, especially of a house that size. A dislike of such creatures is a poor reason to turn them off. Lucky for the Blacks, after their Masters and Mistresses died, I did find myself Master over quite a army of them. I didn’t consider that they would revert to my authority. Their oaths of loyalty bind them to our House and thus, to myself. Should have wondered why I had so many.”

Lucius said sharply, “I’ll attend on behalf of the Malfoys and the Princes, so even Remus’ interests will be represented.” Ha glanced at Sirius I, “Have you informed your namesake about the attack on his cousin?”

Sirius I shrugged, “No, but I have stranded him at Black Manor where he has no way to leave. My mate and my army of house elves have strict orders to keep him within the Anti-Apparation wards. I shan’t be disobeyed. Tom Riddle’s presence there, is limited to myself, Andromeda, Ted, my mate and the one house elf who tends to him. I have given orders that my namesake is not to be informed at all, for fear of reprisals for his best mate’s murder of course.”
Remus was grim, “We’ll be discussing how we’ll be handling Dumbledore in house with the other professors in ten minutes. I’d like to give Tom a piece of my mind for even attempting to kill Harry, much less killing Lily and James. However, I can understand what trauma he’s been through because of Dumbledore. Not that it completely excuses his crimes, but I do feel sorry for him.”

Severus grumbled, “I too understand how being made infertile and losing any chance of having children can affect you. Unlike Tom, my mate still loves me and is looking for a way to heal what I’ve been forced to endure.”

“Mates.” Remus said sharply.

“Of course,” Severus amended, “mates.” He checked his timepiece, “We’d better hurry, thank Mordred, you thought of the Room of Requirement to hold the meeting to keep from being followed or spied upon by the Headmaster.”

Remus smirked, “Sometimes, being a Marauder has its advantages.”

“Indeed, you have a well-honed sense of sneaking and pranking.” Lucius said with a raised eyebrow before moving towards the floo.

The two professors took their leave, leading the Defacto Head of the Houses of Black and Potter as well that the Head of the Lines of Malfoy and Prince to attend a meeting of the Council of Magical Law.

XooooooX

It was a very interesting mix that sat in the Slytherin Common Room, all twelve hearths all ablaze with a darker green flame than that of floos.

This was a unique meeting, having been called for by the combined Court of Slytherin. This was a war council. The Defacto student leaders of other Houses had been invited as well.

The King of Slytherin Adrian Pucey, its Queen Sophronia Prewett and Prince Draco Malfoy were here representing their House.
Prefect and Quidditch Captain Rodger Davies and fellow Sixth Year Girls Prefect Felicity Eastchurch represented Ravenclaw. Also present was Luna Lovegood, but that was not addressed at present. It was to see who had accepted the invitation to attend.

Prefect, Hogwarts Triwizard Champion and Quidditch Captain Cedric Diggory represented Hufflepuff. Accompanying him was Sixth Year Prefect Deborah Smith, the acknowledged current descendant of Lady Helga herself.

Sixth Year Girls Prefect Angelina Johnson and her boyfriend Fred Prewett-Weasley represented Gryffindor.

Draco glanced at Adrian and Sophronia to gain their permission, before starting the ‘war council’. Receiving nods and shrugs, he began, “My apologies for disturbing you so early in the morning. A meeting like this could not take place without all of you present.” He bowed slightly to the two seated opposite the dais that held himself, Adrian and Sophronia. “I apologize for the guises you had to wear to attend. We took a poll in Slytherin you see, and the form you wear was unanimously declared the most beautiful. However, I am sure it is nothing to compare with your own.”

The second Giselle Goyle tossed her hair, “It is adequate. It kept me from gaining Madam Maxime’s attention.”

Millicent was visibly incensed; her Giselle’s looks adequate?

“Peace Lady, one’s own face is preferable as we all know. May I present, Mademoiselle Fleur Delacour, Beauxbatons’ Triwizard Champion.”

Seated beside the second Giselle Goyle, was what appeared to be a Weasley-Prewett twin.

“This is,” Draco continued boldly, “neither Fred nor George, but George’s fiancé Viktor Krum. Who has attended this meeting at great personal risk, due to his Highmaster’s refusal for any of their delegation to set foot on Hogwarts’ property.”

Viktor bowed his head, “I could not miss a meeting such as this. As an much as my Highmaster would not approve of this, I find that I agree whole heartedly with the message I received from Fred.”
Draco was great for the English comprehension and speaking spell he’d cast- with permission of course, on both Viktor and Fleur. He continued, “I do request for the protection of all concerned, that those present take an oath of secrecy. If you find you do not wish to be involved, you merely have to abide by your oath and speak to no one.”

There was no objection from Viktor, Fleur, Fred or Angelina; however Hufflepuff and Ravenclaw, with the exception of Luna, broke out into protest.

Luna lost her temper, her magic leaping out to shut them up, “Silence!” her glamour falling away and revealing her true self, with the flowing long hair and silver eyes of the Malfoys. She wore a white silk Grecian style robe, favoured by the Veela Queen’s Court and golden sandals. On her right shoulder barely visible was the birthmark of the House of Ravenclaw: a feather. Upon her left hand, was the Malfoy birthmark and it resembled a flame.

The two obvious representatives of Ravenclaw were floored and no more words attempted to fall from their lips.

Luna drew herself up to her full height, which wasn’t much, but her airy manner was gone and replaced with an air of authority and competence. “It seems that the time has come for me to reveal myself to my House. My name is Luna Lovegood.” She reached back to reveal the Ravenclaw birthmark, “I am the descendant of Rowena and I declare Ravenclaw House sides with Slytherin. I was not Sorted into Slytherin, but,” she held up her left hand to show it to the whole of Slytherin House, “were I, I would take my place as an honorary Princess of this House.” She released her hold on her Prefects, “I hope you have the honour to vote with me.”

Prefect Felicity Eastchurch said nothing, since she was still in shock.

Rodger however, glared at her, “Ravenclaw’s descendant or no, I do not see why you have the right to speak for us before we hear why we were summoned.”

Luna spun to face him, moving closer, her Veela powers no longer restrained, “Do I need to use my allure to make you obey me? I would hate to do so, but if you leave me no choice.”

Draco sighed, “Luna!” he said with a warning tone.

Luna glared at him, “I don’t tell you how to handle the Politics of Slytherin House, so don’t you tell
me how to run my own House. I’ve had enough of their walking all over me. For once, Ravenclaw will side with our Slytherin Compatriots as our Founders once stood together to establish this school.” She stood up, “I Luna, Daughter of Ravenclaw do declare myself in allegiance with Adrian Pucey, Son of Slytherin.”

As the words left her lips and she held her hand out to Adrian, magic from the castle flowed into her.

Adrian felt more confident then he ever had before, as words fell from his lips, “I Adrian, Son of Slytherin, do accept the Allegiance of the Daughter of Ravenclaw and her House.”

Likewise with his words, magic from the castle flowed into him.

Neville was drawn forward, “I Neville Longbottom, Son of Gryffindor declare my House in allegiance with the Houses of Slytherin and Ravenclaw.”

A burst of Magic flowed into him, filling him likewise with confidence and magic radiated from him.

Luna’ magic glowed blue with hints of bronze- reminding one of air, Adrian was a greenish blue with some silver- indicative of its association with water, while Neville’s magic shimmered with red and gold-like flames.

Deborah Smith, Hufflepuff prefect was magically drawn to the three. Her hand reacting out to clasp Neville's, “I, Deborah, Daughter of Hufflepuff, declare myself and my House in allegiance with the descendants of my ancestress’ fellow founders.” Magic from the castle joined her own and she glowed with yellow light, the colour of sand and parched earth.

The castle sang.

Draco coughed, “That was unexpected, however, the Four Houses in agreement makes this easier.”

The magic of the castle continued to vibrate in tune with the four descendants, who were loathed to release one another's hands.

“You four have declared an alliance. This is technically a council of war. The students are
contemplating rising up in protest of the Headmaster. The Headmaster has betrayed the students and I hold we owe him no allegiance or respect.”

“I, Fred Prewett-Weasley, wish to speak.”

Draco bowed, “the Council acknowledges Prewett-Weasley of Gryffindor House.”

Fred bowed, “My family has been greatly wronged by the Headmaster. He has separated my fathers, nearly killing them both. Kidnapped my four brothers and myself. Mentally assaulted my brother Percy, subjecting him to a forced abortion, the Imperious Curse as well as memory modification. He also insulted my brother Percy and his fiancé’s honour by accusing our Oliver of heinous things.” He bowed again. “This is all I may speak on. I ask that Viktor Krum speak on behalf of my twin and his School.”

Draco glanced at Sophronia and Adrian- who had finally returned to his seat, never gave sign of objection. “The Council acknowledges Viktor Krum of Durmstrang.”

“This Dumbledore has insulted the honour of myself, my mate and our school. My Highmaster has sworn without an apology from the Headmaster, we shall not set foot on Hogwarts’ property. I have eschewed that by attending this council. I want that man gone before he can harm my mate as he has others.” Viktor said sharply and furious, his Chuvash temper radiating his anger.

Harry stormed to his feet, “I would like to speak.”

Draco nodded, “The Council recognizes Harry Potter of Gryffindor and consort of the Prince of Slytherin.”

Harry crossed his arms; “I charge that the Headmaster cast the Nights of Hell Curse on my bed. Did willingly put me in danger on multiple occasions. Rewarded me for breaking the rules. He hired a pathetic excuse for a Healer who didn’t notice I suffered from severe physical abuse and starvation at the hands of my Muggle relatives. I was sent back for four summers to spend time with those who beat and starve me despite my begging. I was nearly killed at least twice here at this school. Hogwarts is supposed to be the safest place in the British Magical world. Yet, I’ve been almost thrown off my broom when it was jinxed with a Dark curse, I was nearly nearly strangled, was almost killed by a rogue Bludger, almost died from Basilisk venom and this year was entered in the dangerous Triwizard Tournament without my own consent nor that of a guardian, since I am not unlike Cedric, Fleur or Viktor of age.” He swallowed, his burst of courage deserting him, “That’s all…”
“He also allowed your guardian to be unlawfully imprisoned for over twelve years. He allowed Dementors to decamp upon this institution, placing all of us in danger. He also committed some great atrocity against my papa, our Head of House as well as against the former Dark Lord- of which I have no details.” Draco said continuing.

Luna was still standing, “I would like to speak on behalf of the House of Black.”

Harry and Sophronia looked shocked.

Draco blinked and then composed himself, “The Council acknowledges the Daughter of Ravenclaw.”

Luna bowed, well curtsied actually, “Last night, Auror Tonks, formerly of Hufflepuff House and honorary Queen of Slytherin was attacked last night by the Headmaster.”

Deborah and Cedric paled, they had been Housemates with Nymphadora, who chose to go by Tonks. Cedric, unlike Deborah had flown with Tonks for a bit.

Cedric swallowed, “What happened to Tonks?”

Luna nervously twisted the silk of her outfit with her fingers before answering, “She was undercover, investigating the Headmaster. He laid a trap for her and she flew right into it. She was paralysed and trapped in her animagus form. She was dreadfully injured and is currently with her parents in hiding. She is expected to recover.”

Cedric conferred with his fellow prefect and then stood, “Not only to do we ally ourselves with our fellow Houses, we would like to understand why we have been summoned.”

Draco smirked, “The Hogwarts Governors are holding an emergency School Board meeting to discuss Dumbledore. I would like to send my father with letter on behalf of the Students requesting a new Headmaster.”

“Who is being considered?” Rodger asked.
Draco raised an eyebrow, “Surely, you know there is only one serious contender for the Office of Headmaster.”

Rodger’s eyes narrowed, “Not Snape.”

“It’s Prince-Malfoy and no, he is being recommended as Deputy Headmaster as far as I can guess.”

“Why do you have to guess?” Cedric asked. “Isn’t your father one the Board of Governors?”

Draco laughed, “Yes he is, however I am not privy to all my father knows.”

“Isn’t Professor McGonagall, Deputy Headmistress?” Angelina asked.

Draco nodded, “Yes, however due to her ex-Bondmate being at St. Mungos, she’s been dealing with him and is expected to resign.” He glanced at each and every face, “Well, resign as Head of Gryffindor and Deputy Headmistress I expect. I’m not sure if she will resign altogether.”

“If she resigns, who will take over as Head of Gryffindor?” Felicity asked.

“No doubt, Professor Lupin who has taught here before and unlike ‘professor’ Hagrid is actually certified in his field and has real teaching experience.” Draco said politely. “Other than Hagrid and Lupin, I know no other professor with an affiliation with Gryffindor. Professor Burbage, Babbling and Sprout are Hufflepuffs, while Vector, Sinistra, Flitwick and Trelawney are of Ravenclaw.”

The Ravenclaws and Hufflepuffs agreed with the House affiliations of the professors.

“No only do we wish to sent a declaration of no confidence in Headmaster Dumbledore.” Sophronia said standing, a twinkle of mischief in her eye, “Slytherin and Gryffindor would like to offer Ravenclaw and Hufflepuff the opportunity to enter into a contest.”

Cedric looked wary, “A contest? What sort of contest?”
Sophronia smirked, “A Prank War. However, Gryffindor has the advantage of having Fred Prewett-Weasley so if you would,"

Rodger stood up quickly, “We’re not about to lose to a Gryffindor.”

Cedric was worried, “Would this be against school rules?”

Luna shook her head, “Absolutely not, it used to be a contest in late fall and winter to take away the boredom of being trapped in the castle all day when there were great snowstorms. A Prank War can only be declared when all four Houses are in agreement. The Heads of the Four Houses, as well as the Prefects, loosely oversee it. There are only two rules, No student must be in danger at any time and no permanent damage may be done to Hogwarts itself.”

Viktor looked intrigued, “Does my invitation to this ‘war council’ allow me and mine to participate?”

Draco smirked, “An ‘unauthorized’ Prank War solely to prove to the Hogwarts Governors that Dumbledore has no control over his school? Of course, we would welcome our Durmstrang and Beauxbatons’ guests to participate. With the superior education you receive at your excellent educational institutions, you can no doubt come up with some intriguing ideas.”

“Pranks? What is this?” Fleur asked, almost distastefully.

Draco proceeded to explain to her in excellent French.

Fleur’s features— which were still that of Giselle Goyle, became thoughtful and then, she smirked. “I think we can prove our worth. ‘Pranks’ as you call them may not be something we indulge in often at Beauxbatons, but I am sure we can come up with a few that will put yours to shame.”

Viktor grinned, “Between myself and my schoolmates, we’ll come up with some. We do have a greater knowledge comparatively to Hogwarts. due to the wider education we receive.”

Rodger glared, “No fair, Durmstrang gets a Weasley.”

Luna chuckled, “Don’t forget, I’m half Malfoy. I have the intelligence of a Ravenclaw and the
cunning of a Slytherin. We’ll hold our own, if I have to mastermind the whole scheme myself.”

Fred held out a hand to Viktor, “The loss of my twin will be a blow, but I’ve still got Lee.”

Angelina laughed, “I think it’s about time you taught me how to prank someone.”

Fred pulled out three bags from his pocket, “If Sophronia and Greg will assist me, I’m sure I can sell a few pranks.”

Draco laughed, “I’d recommend buying the Skiving Snackboxes. A few dozen or hundred students coming down with a multitude of unexplained symptoms of illness would also make that imbecile Pomfrey look incompetent.”

Viktor dumped a large bag of gold into Fred’s hand, “I’ll take a whole bag.”

Fred grinned, handing him the bag, “Pleasure doing business with you.”

Harry thought of something, he dragged Vince, Greg and Blaise away.

Blaise was curious, “What do you want Potter?”

Harry smirked, “How easy would it be for you to transfigure something into lemon drops?”

“Depends on what a ‘lemon drop’ is.” Blaise shrugged.

Vince sighed, “Why do you need me?”

Harry chuckled, “I’d like to buy your Bertie Bott’s Every Flavour Beans. Blaise has the superior Chuvash nose. He can pick out all the ‘nasty’ ones like blood and boogers. I only want those; so, I’ll be giving the good ones back.” He summoned Dobby.
“Yes, Master Harry Potter sir?” the bubbly elf asked bowing, “How can Dobby help?

Harry grinned, “I need one of Dumbledore’s lemon drops. I would like to know how the house elf magic for filling empty dishes with full ones works.”

Dobby’s brow wrinkled and his eyes narrowed, “Why Master Harry Potter want to know house elf magic?”

Harry laughed, “I don’t want to learn it. I just want to know if we make a duplicate of Dumbledore’s candy dish and fill it with nasty tasting candy transfigured to look like lemon drops, if house elf magic can keep refilling the candy dish.”

Dobby’s face brightened, “Yes, Master Harry Potter sir. I can do that. I can make a candy dish just like Headmaster’s. Will refill all the time with fresh candy if Master Harry Potter wants.”

Harry smirked, “Then go get me a lemon drop please, Dobby.”

The house elf disappeared with a pop.

Both Greg and Vince usually threw out the nasty tasting beans anyway, so selling them to Harry for a prank was no bother.

Blaise was curious what a ‘lemon drop’ was so he could see how to transfigure a bean to a drop.

Harry made a note to buy Greg’s nasty tasting Bertie Bott’s Every Flavour Beans all the time.

Soon Fred was sold out, Slytherins had already stocked up due to Greg and Sophronia’s sales in House. Primarily, besides Viktor who already had an appreciation for their Wheezes, his other sales were to Luna on behalf of Ravenclaw and Diggory.

Fleur had no idea what prank things Fred was selling and soon let herself out.

Rodger asked, “When does the Pranks War start?”
Draco smirked, “Why after breakfast.”

At that the Ravenclaws and Hufflepuffs left quickly.

Fred smirked, “Well, that was the fastest I’ve ever sold my product. Too bad George couldn’t have seen it.”

“Oh he will,” Viktor said shrinking his bag of Wheezes, “I own a pensieve. I better hurry before my absence is discovered. I’ll get George to show us how to use them.”

Chapter End Notes

Chapter 35- Meeting of the Hogwarts Staff regarding Headmaster Dumbledore

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Chapter 35- Meeting of the Hogwarts Staff regarding Headmaster Dumbledore

Oblivious to Draco's little War Council, Severus and Remus arrived early at the Room to Requirement.

Remus paced the Hallway three times thinking, 'I need a place for the Hogwarts Staff to meet. A place with portraits of the former Headmasters and Headmistresses as well as the Founders. We need their guidance. A place the current Headmaster can't enter.'

On his third trip past the place where the entrance to the Room of Requirement would be, emerged a door, not unlike that of the Headmaster's Office.

Remus pulled it open, and gestured for Severus to enter, "I believe I've done it. I'll stay out here to let the others in, I'll just hold the door open."

Severus stepped into the Room of Requirement to find two roaring fires, walls covered in portraits including those of the Founders, which he'd never seen. There was a large round table with room for each of the other Professors. On the table was a variety of drink and food items in case the meeting ran through breakfast. Hopefully, provided by the kitchens.

Slowly, the room started filling with Professors and other staff.

Septima Vector, the Arithmancy Professor who was a strict witch who taught in Classroom 7A on the seventh floor was the first to arrive.

Minerva McGonagall, who was the Deputy Headmistress, and Head of Gryffindor as well as Professor of Transfiguration. She arrived, but seemed distracted.

Sybill Trelawney, who taught Divination and was regarded as a mixture of a conceited phony and an out and out fraud.

Trelawney was attired in her usual fashion, she also arrived smelling of tea and sherry as well as the cloying smell of her classroom's perfume. She was wringing her hands and muttering about dark times.

Then came Filius Flitwick was the Charms Professor and Head of Ravenclaw. He was a keen duellist and one of the most respected voices in the area of Charms research, Flitwick was also the recommended choice for Headmaster Pro-tem.

Next to arrive was Rolanda Hooch, the Flying Instructor and Referee of Hogwarts Quidditch matches.

Rubeus Hagrid who was the Care of Magical Creatures professor, as well as Keeper of Keys and Grounds, came next.
Severus wished they could have excluded him.

"Wha' this? Why not meet 'n the staff room?"

Severus ignored him as he sat and merely sipped a cup of strong coffee.

Pomona Sprout was the Professor of Herbology and Head of Hufflepuff arrived looking far cleaner then normal. She clearly hadn't yet been to the Greenhouses this morning, so she wasn't covered with her usual amount of Earth.

Vector poured herself a cup of chocolate and was content to wait.

McGonagall poured herself coffee, as did Trelawney, but that was probably to sober up the flighty Divination Professor.

Flitwick likewise poured himself chocolate, before leaning over to ask, "Minerva, are you quite alright?"

McGonagall glanced at him, "Me? Oh, I'm alright."

Flitwick shook his head sadly and patted her arm.

Cuthbert Binns, a Ghost who still held the position of History of Magic Professor floated through the wall and seemed content to brood near a window.

Charity Burbage was the professor of Muggle Studies and arrived, ignoring the others, she headed right to Severus, "Severus, you must tell me what this is all about."

"Dunna bother Charity. That Snape he's a tight-lipped fellow." Hagrid's eyes narrowed with suspicion. "Maybe I shuda tol' Dumbledore about th' meetin'."

Bathsheda Babbling, who taught the Study of Ancient Runes and whose classroom was Classroom 6A on the sixth floor arrived next. She poured herself some juice and settled down to nibble on toast.

Aurora Sinistra was the Professor of Astronomy who taught at the Astronomy Tower. Remus who let her in, she acknowledged with a short nod, and then she made her way to sit next to Vector, with whom she was close.

There were a few other professors, who taught extracurricular studies such as Alchemy, Ghoul Studies, Music, Art, Ancient Studies, Magical Theory, and Xylomancy.

After the full compliment of Professors arrived, Remus was about to close the door when Madam Pomfrey came hurrying, "Lupin! Wait for me."

Accompanying her was Madam Prince, the Hogwarts Librarian.

Remus cursed silently, Godric's Sword! It wasn't bad enough they had to suffer through allowing Hagrid, a Dumbledore Loyalist to attend, but Pomfrey? That woman was beyond incompetent and worshiped the Headmaster. Prince, unlike Pomfrey, deserved the right to attend, so he let them both in before shutting the door and knew that it could not be accessed now.

Severus glanced up from his coffee when the door closed, to catch Remus' eye.

Remus nodded, all Hogwarts staff minus Filch was present.

Severus nodded back, a gavel appeared beside his hand. He grasped it firmly and rapped the table,
"Now if you would all give me your attention." He said, in a tone that was reminiscent of Lucius'.

The other professors and staff turned their heads to his direction.

"Why are we here?" Binns droned.

Severus sighed; he remembered that voice far too keenly. He and Lily had to take Pepper-up potions just to stay awake during that particular class. He cleared the thought from the forefront of his mind and began to speak. "I've called you here to inform you of the Hogwarts Board of Governors intent to convene on Friday."

"Whata they wanna discuss?" Hagrid drawled.

Severus ignored him, "I'm sure you're all painfully aware of the Durmstrang situation."

The reactions were mixed.

"Surely ya don't blame Dumbledore? That Durmstrang lot are all pompous gits. Telling Dumbledore what he oughta do." Hagrid said pompously.

Pomfrey nodded, "Dumbledore's a good man. That Headmaster of theirs is no good. I can't understand why anyone would hire a former Death Eater to teach much less preside over a school."

Severus went on in a cold voice, "Who is appointed as Highmaster of Durmstrang is not our responsibility, nor is it our concern. This is about Dumbledore."

"Snape, Dumbledore's done a lot for you. He kept ye outta Azkaban and gave yeh a job."

Severus glared, "He also murdered my child and cursed me barren."

There were gasps from the other staff.

Hagrid stormed to his feet, "Don'cha be spreading lies, Snape!"

Severus went on in the same deadly cold voice, "My name is Prince-Malfoy. Ask your vaulted associate Madam Pomfrey, she diagnosed a pregnancy when I thought it was the flu."

Pomfrey looked stricken and then said sharply, "It's my duty to report any serious medical condition to the Headmaster. It's in my contract."

Severus glared at her, "Be that as it may, his response to your information was to summon a student who was so prostrate with morning sickness that they hadn't kept anything down for two days, much less left their bed other than to see you, to his office. He interrogated them and then threatened to expel them if they didn't agree to an abortion. My lover was trying to negotiate with their father to allow us to be Bonded. I didn't know then that had either Lucius or his father Abraxus known about the pregnancy that Lucius and myself would have been allowed to Bond."

"I don't care if yer Snape or Prince or whatever! It's unnatural to be with a man! Must be Dark Magic that allowed you to have a child."

McGonagall finally woke from her Fugue, "Now Rubeus, that is all nonsense. It's perfectly normal for men to desire other men just as it is for women to desire other women. Why Septima,"

Professor Vector held up her hand, "I can speak for myself, Minerva." Her eyes narrowed, "I suppose you're ignorant of the fact that Aurora and I have been Bonded for years? In fact, she was the one that recommended I take up this post when it became available. We always wanted to teach
here together, so she kept an eye on the staff openings."

Hagrid's face filled with disgust, "Yer a,"

"If you dare use a derogatory term regarding mine and Septima's relationship, Hagrid I shall toss this coffee pot at your head." Professor Aurora Sinistra said her voice calm but her eyes flashing in anger.

Hagrid slumped in his too small chair and pouted.

"Like I was saying, besides his poor judgment with regards to my pregnancy. He threatened me with expulsion and informing my father, who was a magic hating Muggland e who took great pleasure using his fists on my mother and myself. Madam Pomfrey is not so foolish that she does not know that abortions are only to be performed by certified Healers, not power mad Headmasters."

"Now see here, Snape!" Hagrid growled.

"His name is Prince-Malfoy, he holds the Prince Seat but chooses to spend his time instructing students." Remus snarled, amber eyes flashing.

"Don't know why yer defending him, Lupin. He's that nasty Slytherin yer friends always pranked."

Remus snapped, "Padfoot and Prongs didn't just prank Severus, they humiliated and terrorised him! I should have sent them to Filch to do whatever dirty task he came up with. IT wasn't just pranking it was beyond such a polite term. It was down right abusive and Muggles would call it hazing, which is illegal!" he whirled on McGonagall and Pomfrey, "I hold you just as responsible. You were our Head of House, you should have told them to knock it off, it wasn't just boyish spirits. You told Siri to knock off his foolish game regarding the Whomping Willow but you didn't say anything about 'Snivellius Baiting'. It went so far as to my nearly killing him! Pomfrey didn't notice that Severus was following her and myself that night in Fifth Year, so I could have killed him! What did James and Siri get? A slap on the wrist and Severus was practically threatened with expulsion if he dared tell." He glared at Flitwick, "Tell me Filius, if such an act occurred with some of your students, what would you have done?"

Filius swallowed, "Sending a student into an enclosed space where there was a werewolf would be dangerous. I would have removed both James and Sirius from the Quidditch team permanently. They would have been in detention for the rest of the year, at least. James Potter would never have been allowed to become Head Boy. I would have questioned you to see if you were involved. If you had been, I would have forced you to resign as Prefect."

Severus turned to Sprout, "And you, Pomona?"

Sprout wet her lips, "I would have removed Potter and Black likewise from the Quidditch Team. It was a dangerous thing to do sending Severus, a very talented wizard advance for his years, but wholly unaware he was entering the den of a werewolf, during a full moon no the less. They would have received detentions for a good while." She looked nervous to be putting her friend in a difficult position.

Vector was even more worried, "Are you quite alright? I didn't know that you'd nearly been attacked by Remus."

Severus shook his head; "Remus never knew I was there until he was questioned by Minerva and Dumbledore the next morning. Potter stopped me from getting anywhere close enough to be hurt. However, I did see a werewolf inside the Shrieking Shack, which was why I was told under no uncertain terms was I to mention Remus' affliction."
"It was very wrong of you to follow us," Pomfrey said snootily.

Severus snorted, "You should have noticed me, which proves that you are still highly incompetent and too arrogant to admit it. I would start packing. The Governors are meeting to discuss not only Dumbledore, but his unqualified staff members."

Hagrid turned red, "You rotten little scoundrel! How dare you tell a person like Dumbledore who he should hire and who he can't?"

Severus looked at him boredly, "Let's see a person who actually knows their subject, has acquired a proper mastery and passed their OWLS and NEWTS or a student who was expelled on suspicion of opening the Chamber of Secrets? You raised an acromantula in the Dungeons, you attempted to raise a dragon and,"

There were cries of surprise and dismay.

"You convinced students to keep it a secret, when you knew raising a dragon is illegal. You're breeding illegally, I'm not a dunderhead Hagrid, I know that your 'Blast-end Skewts' are a dangerous bit of experimental breeding of fire crabs and manticore. Experimental Breeding is illegal for a reason and you're endangering students because you don't know what is appropriate or safe. You think a three-headed dog is safe enough to hide inside the castle, much less name it Fluffy. You allow immature students to get too close to Hippogriffs, which are notoriously dangerous due to their temperamental natures. You are underqualified," seeing Hagrid was about to protest hotly, Severus continued, "and you can't get around that fact. You have no notion of safety regarding students and you should never have been made a professor, especially since you don't have a Mastery in your subject, which all of us were required to obtain."

Hagrid was seething, "You've got no right ter be tellin' Dumbledore how ter run a school!"

"I do, since I hold the Prince vote on the Board of Governors. I am usually too busy teaching to attend. However, I allow Lucius to vote to me and he is going to recommend that Dumbledore be suspended, pending the investigation by the Aurors."

"It's all stuff and nonsense!" Hagrid roared, "Yer got it out for Dumbledore whose bin nuthin but kind ter ya. Yer a rotten turncoat, Snape!"

"I'm not the only student he's abused during his tenure as Headmaster. He used Veritaserum on Percy Prewett-Weasley after his then sister was rescued from the Chamber of Secrets. Upon finding out that Percy was seeing Oliver Wood, he placed Percy under the Imperious curse."

Again gasps of horror were heard around the table.

Severus continued, "He told Percy that he now hated anyone who played Quidditch but especially he hated Oliver. He told him that he was to Court one Penelope Clearwater when they became Head Boy and Head Girl respectively. He discovered an unknown pregnancy and aborted the child with neither Percy nor Oliver's consent. He failed to ascertain if Percy were engaged to the sire at all or had any intention to do so. After sending Percy away, he summoned Oliver and proceed to tell Oliver that Percy had come crying to him and accused Oliver of forcing Percy to do sexual acts. Apparently, the memories of Oliver's assaults on Percy were so difficult for Percy that Dumbledore had to use a memory charm to make him forget. Dumbledore used a memory charm indeed but not because Oliver Wood was raping him but because he did not approve of a relationship between the third son of Arcturus Weasley and the eldest son of Lord Wood."

Filius was outraged; his short body was shaking with it. "He was responsible for Percy's personality
change? I always liked Percy but he became quite difficult to deal with his Seventh Year."

Vector was furious, "He had no right to say who can't see who. Aborting children is not part of a Headmaster's duties."

"Nuna you has tha' right ter tell Dumbledore what ta do. He's the greatest wizard ter live."

"No," Remus said coldly, "that was Merlin, and even he went dotty in the end."

"Dumbledore's not a nutter! He hired ya when no one else would." Hagrid snapped.

"Actually," Remus said cheerfully, "in the space of two days I had two offers of employment. Lord Malfroy offered me the Defence post and Louis Ollivander told me in Paris on Saturday that he thought I was I quote, 'wasting my talents.' An Ollivander told me I ought to be crafting wands not lecturing students on Defence Against the Dark Arts or Dark Magical Creatures."

"Easy to lecture about Dark Creatures, yer one of 'em."

"That was unnecessary." Sprout said in a snippy tone.

Filius sighed, squishing his wand silently as he cast a powerful sticking charm on Hagrid's large arse as well as a strong Silencing charm on the man. "Now," he said sitting up straighter, "that should make our meeting more pleasant."

"Thank you," Remus said pouring himself a cup of Chocolate.

The castle began to hum with magic.

In intervals of three minutes, the humming began more powerful and then, it seemed to sing.

Severus started, "What is Slytherin's name was that?"

"Thank you, young man. It is nice to be appreciated."

The professors' heads snapped up to glance at a large portrait.

"Professor Slytherin, I presume?" Severus asked once he'd quite recovered his calm.

"You presume correctly." The thin man whose appearance failed to give his Chuvash blood away, said smugly.

"What is going on Professor?" Flitwick asked.

"I shall answer that." A tall woman with long straight hair and an imperious bearing spoke from a nearby portrait.

Flitwick inclined his head, "My Lady Ravenclaw an honour."

"It seems four heirs have risen and declared themselves in an alliance. The Castle blessed their alliance."

McGonagall was stunned, "Slytherins, Hufflepuffs, Gryffindors and Ravenclaws are in an alliance? That's impossible."

"You're the Head of Gryffindor and you don't believe your students are honourable enough to put aside their differences? You underestimate them." Ravenclaw sniffed.
"Bit surprised who my heir was." Godric spoke up, "Doesn't resemble me at all or you Salazar."

Pomfrey stammered, "You were…"

"I was mated to Salazar. He doesn't look like he'd be a Submissive Chuvash, does he? Sure he left because we got in a fight over allowing Muggleborns to attend but he came back." Godric's eyes danced with sensuality, "He couldn't resist my charms."

Slytherin grumbled, "Ric, you're an arrogant bastard. That Adrian's more your son then mine. Too honourable and not that cunning."

"He can speak Parseltongue." Godric teased.

Salazar sneered, "So can you. It's not that difficult, my current replacement can speak it!"

Severus inclined his head in reverence, "Only because some of the best Potioneers recorded their notes in Parseltongue. I learned it out of necessity, I understand better than I can speak, but I do not comprehend it well enough to write in it myself."

"You're the most talented Potioneer to walk these hallowed halls since my Salazar," Godric praised.

"I also inherited his office and rooms."

Godric snorted, "Mine too. Which is why they are so generously shielded."

"Ric, I'll thank you not to discuss details of my private life with such persons." Slytherin glared.

"Now Salazar, its my private life too. Come now be reasonable, we've been dead a millennia. I doubt us being lovers would truly shock anyone." Godric laughed.

Helga Hufflepuff simpered, "Nor 'Wena having that beautiful mate of hers, Aurelia Grimaldi. A ancestor of the Black Family if I remember correctly."

"Not that you didn't have a striking Bondmate in Augustus." Godric said with wagging eyebrows.

"All stuff and nonsense since ourselves are dead and gone. These professors have more important matters to discuss. " Salazar sneered.

"Yes, yes," Godric agreed, "About time someone decided to get that insipid man Dumbledore out of here."

"So you know what dastardly deeds he's been up to?" Severus asked with a raised eyebrow.

Salazar snorted, "What with abortions, Confounding Ric's hat, tormenting Ric's Phoenix and raping students in his charge? Oh yes, what the castle knows we know. We each had three portraits made during the building of the Castle. One to hang in the Headmaster's office, well in our day it was the Headmistress' Office. Rowena was an admirable woman who served as our first Headmistress, as well as Head of her own House and Professor of Astronomy. At her death the entrance to her sanctum, her own Astronomy tower was lost. The moving staircases and walls that like to be doors for a day and all that were her idea. She found a castle being the same from one day to next quite boring, you see. You wouldn't expect it with that stern manner of hers, but she was quite the imaginative trickster. Regarding our portraits they were linked by our blood, which we also added to the Castle during its construction. A witch or wizard's blood is full of magic you know. We had a portrait each in the Great Hall so that our students might question the portraits rather than ourselves. The final portrait was placed in the Head's office. However, since we functioned as Head of our own
Houses, unless we wished think out an idea between ourselves, which didn't happen often, thus we rarely communicated with them. It was our hopes that the Heads of Hogwarts would look upon us as advisers as they seem to with you all." He bowed slightly at the various portraits of other Headmasters and Headmistresses.

"However," Godric interrupted, "Heads became annoyed with us. Not liking our advice. However first to disappear were our Portraits in the Great Hall. After a century or two, professors got fed up with students disagreeing with them and saying, 'But the founder said this or that, so the portraits were removed and stored away." He sighed, "Wished we'd thought to use permanent sticking charms tied to our blood rather than just hanging them on the wall. Helga's stuck around a long time. Her replacements as Head of her House were more lenient with her advice and pronouncements. She always was an agreeable person. Rowena's portrait disappeared after a loud argument with a predecessor of yours Professor Flitwick. Salazar's portrait was removed following an argument with Vindictus Veridian over something to do with the fine art of Brewing back when that disagreeable fellow was merely Head of Slytherin House. Mine stuck around until Dumbledore became Head of Gryffindor. He knew I didn't take to him from the start. He smelt foul. I tried to warn Dippet about him, but Armando wouldn't take any notice of me." He glared at Professor Dippet who was across the room. "I was right, wasn't I? Dumbledore's a louse!"

"Yes, seemed an alright man. Very talented between his twelve uses of Dragons blood and work with Nicolas Flamel…" Dippet protested.

"The Dragons Blood research he was accused of stealing. As for Flamel, that was all hum. Flamel had the philosopher's stone before Dumbledore was born. He was born in the 17th century after all," Severus said dryly, "while Dumbledore was born in the 19th."

"So," Rowena asked sharply, "Who do you have in mind to replace Dumbledore?"

McGonagall looked up from her lap where she had been wringing her hands, "I would have to refuse, I have too much on my mind what with Alastor."

"Lucius is recommending Filius, I for one am in total agreement. He is the most senior professor and then comes Pomona, although Minerva is a few years her senior. The rest of us are of an age where we shared one or many years in school. Charity was a year behind us, that is Remus and myself, while Aurora, Irma and Septima were a year and two ahead respectively."

Bathsheda Babbling chuckled wryly, "I was in the same year as Andromeda and Lucius, but behind Arthur, Frank, Fabian and Gideon. I shared a dormitory with Amelia but of course, Ted Tonks was both a House and Year mate. If Dumbledore had been smart, he would have made Ted a Prefect. He was a natural leader but alas a failure at potions, though with Andromeda's tutoring, he wasn't half bad."

Prince also was of the same set of overlapping years as a majority of the staff; she had been in Slytherin and like Severus, had been under the Headship of Horace Slughorn. Despite being a year behind Aurora and two behind Septima, who had shared a House with her and Charity's elder sisters Faith and Constance. They'd taken her under their wing from the start, after all Septima became a Head Girl the year Irma was made a prefect so she'd known how it was from early on in her term as prefect, thanks to their guidance. All three women had been Prefects for their House, while Irma had been a mousy disagreeable sort of girl who grew up to be a striking woman with few social skills who lived for her books but had been made a prefect against her will. She'd spoken for, was offered and then taken up the post of Librarian when it was vacated. Aurora was the kinder of the two, likely remembering her from their school days and had written to her in case she might be interested. At least, that was what the staff gossip claimed. Charity had applied for the Muggle Studies post during
the summer of 1990 after Quirrell had agree to take a year's sabatical to refresh his knowledge of Dark Creatures and the like before taking up the Defence post the following September.

Filius Flitwick was stunned, "Lord Malfoy wants me to become Headmaster? But Minerva is Deputy Headmistress. Shouldn't she be first considered?"

McGonagall clenched her robe in her hands, "I can't be, if the accusations against Alastor came out... it would embarrass the school. A Headmistress with a rogue Auror for a former Bondmate, who might have slaughtered children... it's not to be thought of." she swallowed, "I'm considering a leave of Absence. I need to focus on Alastor but I can't neglect the children in my charge." She bowed her head, "If it's not too much trouble, I'm afraid you'll need to find a substitute for myself and a replacement for Filius."

Filius was slowly coming to accept the idea, "I never considered being Headmaster... I was content to oversee Ravenclaw House." He frowned, "If only Lily or Demeter were still alive, they both would have made an excellent Charms professor."

"In absence of those talented witches, the only person we have who is talented at Charms unfortunately, is Remus." Severus said sadly, "But he is currently holding the Defense Post. However, Madam Bones' youngest brother Ethan is certified at Transfiguration." Dumbledore was mistakenly under the impression that Ethan Bones had been studying Potions in America or had he done both?

McGonagall asked stiffly, "Can he, Ethan I mean, take over for me?"

Pomona spoke up, "I know Susan's brother was ill recently, he wasn't well by the end of August and she told me he's still weak but he's recovering. He might consider it."

Severus nodded, "Amelia said she would ask. I'm sure he could consider it an honour to teach here, even if he is only a substitute for you Minerva."

Filius said quickly, "If I take up the position of Headmaster, not only do we have the problem of finding a replacement Charms instructor but also a new Head of Ravenclaw."

Septima spoke up, "I'm the senior professor who is formerly of Ravenclaw House."

Filius smiled at her, "I know that Septima, however you are a bit stricter then I would like. I would like my relationship with the students in my House to continue. What I mean is that the Head of Ravenclaw's door is always open, that they are willing to tutor students who need it." He was wary of mentioning who he'd like to replace him. "However, if Remus is the only eligible person..."

"We'll just have to get a substitute for Remus until we can find a permanent Professor for Charms." Severus said with a shrug.

"Where would we find a person for Defense? It's a supposedly cursed job." Aurora said thoughtfully.

"I'm extremely glad Aurora that you were asked to take up the Astronomy post instead." Septima said stiffly, "Cursed or not, I wouldn't want you to take up the post."

Aurora laughed, "I don't believe in cursed or jinxed jobs, but I am happy you'd worry for me."

"If you mellowed her out a little Aurora, I don't think she'd be a dreadful Head of House. I just think that the Head is like a parent and should have a stern but caring aura. Something like Severus..." Filius admitted uneasily.
"Actually, Septima isn't so bad with children. After all, our daughter has been attending and we never treated her any different then the other students." Aurora offered.

McGonagall was surprised, "I didn't realise."

Aurora shrugged, "Surly you recognise the name Serotina? She has attended as a Vector and is in our old House. She used to attend a Wizarding primary school in Hogsmeade during the school week."

"My apologies, I always though Serotina was a niece." Filius replied in astonishment before continuing. "I must admit that Minerva is an excellent Professor, but I think she could be more accessible as a Head of House. The Gryffindors are scared of her."

"It suits me…” McGonagall muttered.

"Since Remus is the only other real Gryffindor Professor whether he teaches Charms or Defence, he should still take over as Head of Gryffindor." Septima said gruffly.

There was a loud bang and a crack appeared through the table spilling the drinks. Only to vanish immediately and the drinks refreshed.

Filius was annoyed, "I feel that persons who have not graduated, shouldn't hold the position of Head of House." He muttered, "If I was Headmaster, I wouldn't have hired you at all, much less keep you on. It's inconceivable that a person who didn't even complete his education would be a professor." It set a bad precedent…

Hagrid was red-faced and seething.

"However," Severus went on, "we shouldn't borrow trouble by firing or letting go professors at this stage." He frowned, "Moreover, Black offered to take over Defense for Remus. He is an Auror on Medical Leave, although I'm not sure having someone who has been on the run and was imprisoned in Azkaban, but who hasn't had any Healing in regards his mind or body is truly safe among children."

"How about another Auror then?" Septima asked.

"I would have asked Dora Tonks but she's recently been terribly injured on assignment. Shacklebolt is too busy with his cases, but he is about to close the Potter case for good, since Black has been cleared and Pettigrew is to be sentenced. He has to send both Bartimus Crouchess to Azkaban." He was avoiding the Dumbledore case. "As for the Weasley-Prewett case that will be settled." Severus said with a shrug.

Pomona was stricken, "Oh no. What happened?" Nymphadora Tonks or just Tonks had been a trial when she'd been her House, always up to tricks. However, she'd mellowed out or so she'd seen, since the feisty Badger became an Auror. Which is why she'd only been Captain of their House Quidditch team and not prefect material.

"She was on her way to make her report and fell into a trap her quarry set. Tonks was nearly killed, no one expected the subject of her investigation to be so… violent. Last I heard, she was still unconscious. It was touch and go for a while because of her injuries. She became trapped in her animagus form, which is how she got terribly injured. A piece of shattered rib punctured her lung." Severus said quietly, he wasn't confident enough to voice that her quarry had be Dumbledore himself.

Pomona was almost beside herself, "Helga preserve us! Poor Ted and Andromeda. She's their only
child. Taking such risks… how could she be so foolish?"

Remus reached over to squeeze her hand, "She had top-notch Healers. I'm sure she'll be alright. She's got the King of the Chuvash to avenge her and he is not someone I'd like hating me. I'm lucky he seems to approve of me." He shrugged, "He's probably the best thing to come out of that Family before Andromeda."

No one mentioned his old school friend Sirius Black the third of that name in recent time, the only person who looked put out was Charity Burbage, the Muggle studies professor.

Charity swallowed, "Are you sure you won't let Sirius come? It might be nice…"

Severus sighed, "We've never had someone released after twelve years of unjust incarceration in Azkaban. He's been on the run for over two years and is finally free. He's never been a hundred percent stable…"

Charity recoiled, "You never liked him…"

Remus resisted the impulse to roll his eyes at her, "How can you blame him? James wouldn't have tormented him so much if Sirius hadn't enjoyed it. It was ridiculous. If I didn't know Sirius was truly so into birds, I'd have thought he was tormenting Severus because he hated the fact he desired him."

Hagrid looked ill at the very notion of Sirius liking Severus.

Severus could barely hold back the bile rising in his throat at the very idea. He glared at Remus, "That is the single most disgusting thing you've ever said."

Remus shrugged, "It's the most logical thing. James was never quite so keen about bullying you as one might suppose. Then on most things, I was the outsider looking in. I couldn't understand his attraction to Lily Evans. Nor could I understand Siri's need to add a new notch in his wand, if you'll excuse my vulgarity ladies, by sleeping with as many girls as he could."

"He wasn't… Sirius isn't…" Charity protested.

Remus sighed, "Miss Burbage, Sirius might not be a killer or a traitor, but he most certainly was a rake and probably still is one; if his stunted level of maturity due to his incarceration is any indication. James and I used to despair that he might not give up his irresponsible 'dating' habits. Lily would lecture him about his bouncing from one girl to the next."

Ms Prince shifted her spectacles more firmly on her nose, blushing. "He tried to go after me. Aurora told him off…"

Aurora laughed, "I told him that you preferred willowy witches to yapping little boys."

Ms Prince swallowed, "Actually, I'm not really interested in either."

Septima looked upset.

"I only pretended, everyone in our house knew I belonged to you. They thought it was great to deny Black what he wanted; besides, they thought he must be desperate to go after Irma. I was Bonded to you after all, and we both know I choose bonds that wouldn't allow cheating." Aurora Sinistra tried to reassure her.

Septima sighed, "I should have known better."
Aurora sniffed a bit put out, "You should have."

"So…" Filius said trying to get them to come back to the point, "Minerva is taking a leave of absence, Severus is taking over as Deputy Headmaster Pro-tem, I'll be stepping in as Headmaster Pro-tem, Ethan Bones hopefully will be coming in as our Transfiguration professor and Remus will have to take over for me as our Charms instructor depending on whether we can find someone to fill either the Charms or Defence posts?"

Pomona nodded, "That's what it seems like. It will be interesting to work under you Filius, seeing as how I never saw you are the future Headmaster. I always expected it would be Minerva who would in time, and the Board of Governors permitting, one day take over for Albus when he retired."

Minerva smiled, "I once thought that too. It was one of those dreams I had when I was a young professor." Her face paled and her smile faltered, "Back when I once believed that Alastor might become Head Auror…" Now, that would never come to pass, if he ever recovered from his imprisonment in his own trunk. Not to mention the vile accusations that she fervently hoped were false but was terribly afraid might be true. How could her Alastor have done such terrible things?

Severus checked his timepiece, "It's getting closer to class time. I'll be sure that an owl gets off to Madam Bones during my free period to see when her brother can start."

"I'll have a set of family apartments prepared for Ethan and his family. With his son so young and recently ill, of course, he wouldn't want to be separated from his family. I'm sure it will do Susan some good to able to visit her brother. If will give Elijah time to get comfortable with Hogwarts, even though he'll be starting a year late due to his illness."

Filius nodded, "I have no objection. It's been a few years since we've had a little one running around. I have no objections to having professors with their families."

Severus felt his heart ache, little ones… how he wished for them; a child with Lucius' ice blonde hair and silver eyes. Later, a little one with Remus' honey coloured hair and amber eyes but perhaps, also a child with his own raven-coloured locks…

Remus saw the flicker of pain in his mate and reached to squeeze his hand, to offer him a bit of comfort.

Filius moved towards them and reached up to lay a hand on Remus' forearm, "I am terribly sorry if my words caused you pain." Absently, releasing Hagrid from his sticking charm but refusing to end the silencing charm. It would wear off in time to teach. If not, no great loss, he shook the thought away, "Remus…" he began nervously, "About your…"

"Furry little problem?" Remus offered, even after all these years James' code for his lycanthropy was the kindest way to put it.

Filius was surprised and then nodded, "I'll be happy to fill in for you."

"I'll have to take you up on that that next week. Severus locked me in the cellar of Lucius' London house before Harry returned to Hogwarts but I would appreciate it."

"Same requirements as before alright? Potion and warded rooms?"

Remus nodded, "Of course."

Filius smiled, "Then I don't see how we could ever have a problem with you continuing to teach here. I remember you were quite skilled at charms if memory serves."
Remus laughed, holding out his hand to Severus, "True."

"Though his true talents lay not in teaching Charms or Defence." Severus said accepting the hand graciously though he had no need of it.

"Oh?" Filius said with an eyebrow raised.

Severus nodded, "According to Louis Ollivander, he has a natural talent for wand matching and has studied wandlore in depth enough to match a wand to an individual. He matched Fred Weasley-Prewett and Neville Longbottom to their current wands."

Filius was intrigued, "Wandmaking?" he held out his own wand, and "I'm surprised, I never would have guessed. What do you make of mine? I know Severus had a wand that wouldn't suffer another to use it."

Remus nodded, "That's because Sev wields an Acacia wand, they are difficult to master but ultimately rewarding for they only chose to bond to the most talented of wizards of witches. They boost his abilities at potions, mental magic and spell creation." He accepted Professor Flitwick's wand and took a few moments to examine it, "Hm…Rowan… I was considering a wand of this wood for Draco. Rowan is a dense wood. It's associated with protection, especially against enchantments and beguiling. Rowan wands are strong for Charms, Divination and Transfiguration. It has an affinity for Ancient Runes, though it is strong all-around magically. It makes quite an excellent dueling wand. Users are often highly intelligent, visionaries or highly intuitive. Rowan makes a strong wand for Ravenclaws." He grinned down at the diminutive professor who had once taught him, "I'd say it would have served you well. You're highly skilled at charms and you are not only formidable in your field, you also were one of the best duellists in Britain. You did win quite a few awards in duelling against some of the best in the world before coming here." He turned his attention back to the wand, "Ah Hippogriff Feathers, they're notably strong for Charm work. They are known to make for a very versatile wand, which is renowned for adaptability. Hippogriff Feather wandcores demand respect from their wielder. Often misuse will result in unpredictable faulty magic. Although not most powerful, but prove largely reliable. Hippogriff feather cores are most often found with Gryffindors but it is not unheard of to be found in the hand of another House." He handed the Headmaster Pro-tem his wand back, "I doubt I could have chosen a better wand for you."

Filius was pleasantly impressed as well as surprised, "You are knowledgeable." He took his wand back, "You're welcome to spend your free time dealing with wand making and wandlore. I'm sure Severus can find a suitable location to do your research. The Forbidden Forest has many different types of wood and there are a few magical creatures that you might procure ingredients for wandcores from."

"Thank you Filius." Remus was excited, teaching might have the possibility of getting monotonous or stressful but he was going to be allowed to research...

"It's nothing really. When Dippet was Headmaster, he used to insist we do research as well as teach. Claimed it kept the mind sharp. It wasn't difficult because Dumbledore, Horace and I were keen to spend our free time researching. I think it's a practice that should be encouraged." Filius said as he left the Room of Requirement.

Then Remus and Severus were left alone.

Remus was excited and couldn't keep from hugging Severus excitedly, "I'm allowed to Research Wandmaking and you're Deputy Headmaster Pro-tem. This is brilliant!"

Severus laughed to himself, Remus was like a kid their first time in Honeydukes…
They'd have to go back to teaching soon…best to get something to eat first…

Chapter End Notes

Lucius and Sirius I arrived in Courtroom 10 which lay in the bowels of the Ministry just moments prior to the beginning of the Pettigrew trial.

Amelia Bones took her seat at the forefront of the dais, "Pettigrew, are you still resolute against having an advocate?"

Pettigrew answered sullenly, "What's the point? I'm guilty, aren't I? You'll judge me the same anyway. The best I can hope for is a life sentence in Sirius' old cell." The balding man was sweating.

Lucius would prefer that for Remus and Severus' sake, that he was Kissed.

Sirius I, King of the Chuvash knew this loathsome scum was responsible for Harry being an orphan. If James had been a Chuvash he'd take pleasure in killing this rat of a man. He'd settle for Riddle, if he could find enough evidence to back up the accusations of atrocities.

"The charges, Madam Umbridge," Amelia requested.

Umbridge's eyes sparkled with maniacal glee, "Petrus Stephan Pettigrew is charged with passing privileged information to He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named and taking the Dark Mark. Also three counts of conspiracy to commit murder, violation of the role of Secret Keeper, as well as two counts of accessory to murder and one count of accessory to attempted murder. As well as thirteen counts of murder and one count destruction of public property."

Amelia's eyes narrowed, "Your plea, Pettigrew?"

Pettigrew snorted, "I'm guilt of all of it. What's the point of denying it? You've got the memory of my telling the telling the Dark Lord where James and Lily were hiding. You've got my wand. I took him to the cottage in Godric's Hollow myself. I was hoping he'd just kill the baby. James got all weird when Lily became pregnant and more so after they had Harry. As if one baby was all that important."

Fudge was clearly appalled, "A baby not important? Especially a firstborn and heir to a pureblood line? Are you mad? My heir may not have been my first-born but he was very important to me. As any parent worth their weight in Galleons would say! Lucius?"

Lucius was surprised to be addressed so informally mid-trial, "Yes, Minister?"

"When Draco was born, how did you feel?"

Lucius blinked, "How did I feel when Draco was born? There was this little person who shared my blood. My son, my heir and he relied on me to provide him with food, clothing, affection and education. I may not have fulfilled my duties at first as much as I intended when I first held him. I did see to it that he received the best food, the best clothing and the best education. Perhaps, he lacked in parental affection and discipline, but he always had someone he could turn to when he was upset. He
was cared for when he was ill. Now that he is a teenager, we have a better relationship. He has two parents who love him dearly and would die for him. He's come close to death twice through no fault of my own and we've done our best to care for him. I should have sent him to Durmstrang because they have a more rounded education but Severus refused to let me send him away. He reminded me that it would look odd if a Governor didn't send their child to Hogwarts. If I wanted Draco to have a better education, I would have to lobby for educational reform, which I have been doing. I want Draco to have the best possible education."

Fudge smiled wanly, "I'm sure I couldn't have gotten a more honest speech if I'd asked another parent. You lobbied to have Hagrid removed, Dumbledore as well. After Draco was attacked by a Hippogriff, you lobbied to have it put down."

Lucius nodded relaxing, Pettigrew had actually managed to anger the placid Minister for Magic, who was a little too mouldable he took his opinions as easily or as transient as which way the winds blew.

Amelia was also clearly incensed that a child's life was so worthless, having her older brother and parents slaughtered along with her nieces and nephews had to have made an impact. Although, it was said that she was close to Ethan's children, Susan and the son whose name he didn't know. Her hands shook with fury, "Clearly, you have no sense of guilty or awareness that your actions were wrong or even heinous. As you have plead guilty and refuse to have an advocate who could argue for a lesser sentence, it is up to the judgment of this Council to sentence you as we see fit. Is there anyone who would wish to argue on behalf of the injured parties?"

Sirius I rose, "I would like to speak on behalf of the Black Family."

Umbridge gave him a sickly sweet smile, "Where is Madam Tonks?"

Sirius I glared at her, "My niece is home sleeping off a terrible shock. Her name is as we both know Black-Tonks. I wish to speak on behalf of my nephew and namesake, who was due to this poisonous worm's lies incarcerated unjustly for over twelve years and was on the run for over a year because he was trying to catch this person. He was almost driven mad because he was a magical guardian of the infant Harry who this useless creature intended to see dead. My mate has over the course of our relationship given birth to fifteen children, not all survived infancy, much less made it to adulthood. Each one was precious to me and I would have died for them if I could. As a father, I can understand why James Potter would done anything to protect his wife and child. I've seen my mate in a fit of rage kill a monster that kidnapped our youngest. I can understand why Harry's mother Lily died protecting him as well. These persons, the stories I heard about them from my brother's descendants, Andromeda and Sirius assure me that they were honourable people. Who would fight to their last breath to protect their only child. Andromeda confided in me recently, that on October 15th the year she died that Lily had still been experiencing morning sickness. When she died, it was not commonly known but Lily Potter was five months pregnant with a girl. A girl she intended to name Caroline. If even one of them had been a child of my race, I could tear his head off his shoulders. A child born or unborn to us, is a life. According to the views of my people, this loathsome excuse for a wizard is responsible for three deaths and the attempted murder of another. That child was to be Severus Snape's godchild.'

Silence reigned.

It was Lady Augusta who spoke, "Lady Potter was pregnant?"

Sirius I nodded, "She was. That was why she was trying to track down Severus who was her childhood best friend. Sirius was the only person whom they trusted with their son and that they could get a hold of during the short window they had to perform the Wiccaning."
Lucius couldn't believe it, the reason Lily was trying to contact Severus was because she wanted him to be godfather to her child? She had helped him mourn the loss of his own, had she known her time was short? That she might have to trust another with her child?

"Is there anyone else who wish to make a statement before we proceed to sentencing?"

Lucius stood and smoothed the wrinkles out of his robe, "I would like to speak on behalf of my mates, who due to their duties as Hogwarts instructors, could not be present. Severus was Lily's best friend, for their entire lives. He loved her like a sister and he may not have know he was to serve as a godfather for her child but his magic did. He would have killed Pettigrew if I'd let him cast a single spell." His eyes flashed, "It would not have been a quick death, for he would not have used the Killing Curse. It would have a slow and painful death. Which," he said his eyes filled with loathing, as he looked at the shackled rat of a man, "is in my opinion no less then you deserve. However, I did not want my mate to have blood on his hands, anymore then Harry Potter wanted it on Remus or Auror Black's hands. As much as I'd like him to suffer by spending years in Azkaban, even being Kissed sounds too good for him. The worst punishment I can think of is to put him in Bellatrix's cell, especially if he has iron bracelets that lock away his magic. All you have to do is tell her that this is the person responsible for the disappearance of her Lord. If he hadn't taken the Dark Lord to the Potters' home, he'd be the same as he was when she saw him last."

Amelia stared at him, "As much as I would personally like to consider it, that is not an punishment that this Council can pass. The options are life imprisonment, Kissed and death by beheading."

Sirius I blinked, "What happened the punishment of drawn and quartered?"

Doge was incensed, "Drawn and quartered? Placing a person wearing iron, tied with strong rope weaved with iron to four Abraxan and letting them fly in opposite directions? Are you crazy? That punishment was banned for being too cruel."

Sirius I shrugged his immense shoulders, "I think it would be quite appropriate given his crimes. If enough evidence can be given in the case of your Dark Lord, that shall be my verdict- drawn and quartered."

Umbridge nodded, "As do I. I think it is a fitting punishment for this man's crimes. After all, Lady Lestrange's cell is lined with iron and the bars are iron, she's in the deepest of the cells."

Augusta scoffed, "You should have let Auror Scrimgour file his Rite of Vengeance to avenge my son on behalf of his godson. I would be more assured that my son and his wife's attackers were dealt with justly. I had to step down from the case due to my relationship with the victims."

Amelia winced, "That wasn't my doing, it was Crouch's. He wanted the Death Eaters that were captured and proved to have joined not only of their own free will but to have done heinous things to suffer. I would have allowed Scrimgour his Rite."

Sirius I raised an eyebrow, "Rite of Vengeance? That's not a Wizarding Rite."

"No," Amelia said slowly.

"I see, it's not common knowledge then." He chuckled amused, "A child of my race with a powerful godfather like that? Perhaps, you don't know how powerful your grandson could be. He has a pure soul, but..." Sirius I's voice trailed off.

Lucius made a mental note to question the Chuvash King; did it have anything to do with Scrimgour being a Vampire? That was not common knowledge, he'd laughed off Xeno's claims in his paper the
Quibbler until Luna said he was one. Not mention the very apparent hostility between Remus and Scrimgeour in their apartments last night. A vampire would make an excellent Head Auror. They could be awake for hours, were deadly in a fight and nearly impossible to kill. Remus would be easy, enough silver delivered straight to his blood or to his heart would do the trick. Not that he would do or allow such a thing.

"We shall deliberate." Amelia said, enclosing their dais with a powerful privacy charm.

Sirius I leaned over, "That Scrimgeour, if he were among his own, he might be like me. Odd that he would be allowed to exist outside the confines of their closed covens. Unless…” with the Dark Lords Grindelwald and Voldemort putting the secrecy of the magical kindred in danger of being outed to the Muggles they might have decided they’d best have eyes and ears. Just how old was the Head Auror? There was a lot of silent shouting and fist shaking behind that privacy bubble.

Dumbledore hadn’t attended, that would be interesting.

Madam Bones, Lady Longbottom, Lord Doge, Madam Umbridge, Lady Griselda Marchbanks, Fudge, Kingsley and Ogden were all present. Crouch had not been replaced and hopefully, Dumbledore would be removed soon.

The privacy spell was ended.

"It is the decision of this Council that the accused Peter Pettigrew be summarily stripped of his Order of Merlin, his inheritance at the time of his death be added to that of Potter for his involvement with an attack on the heir on an Ancient Line. His title shall be stripped and granted to Potter to pass onto his descendant. His mother; thankfully died last year when she heard that Black had escaped and thus avoided the knowledge of her son being a coward and traitor. He is therefore set to be executed no later then the sixth of January. I expect that will allow all parties concerned to attend." Amelia announced.

Lucius was more then satisfied.

"The method of execution chosen was beheading. There have been fine individuals in the Pettigrew Line and it is a shame that it should die with you. All that magic and the souls tied to the line shall never return from the Veil." Augusta said soberly, "I knew your father and grandfather, I was your grandmother's cousin and I am ashamed to have such a relationship to a person such as yourself.

"Who shall remove his unworthy head from his shoulders?" Sirius I asked.

Amelia shrugged, "That is a decision left up to the Azkaban guards."

"I offer myself, Chuvash have different rules of conduct and I see no difference in putting down this person then putting down a mad and dangerous dragon."

Amelia shook her head, "As much as I am tempted to allow such a thing, it's not something we can do. He is not a person of your race, he is ours and it is our duty to punish him for crimes against our own."

"Ah, but he did encourage one of my own to kill innocent humans, which is not allowed by either of our races. He wanted the death of my brother's descendant and would have seen him killed but for a realization at the last second that your Dark Lord couldn't kill a child." Sirius I went on diplomatically, he wanted Pettigrew's blood.
"I see, that is a convincing argument but even to allow peaceful relations between our two people, it ought not be allowed. It would be unseemly to allow the leader of another people to kill someone who caused more harm to our own. Just as us judging He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named when he is yours. Though his crimes were against us and Muggles, we can't try him because he is a Chuvash." Amelia finished.

Sirius laughed, "My dear lady, you shouldn't be heading a judicial council, you should be Minister for Magic. Your talents at diplomacy are being wasted. One day you should be Minister for Magic. The Wizarding World could use a person with your sense of honour and justice."

Amelia blushed.

Kingsley clapped his hands in agreement, "Right indeed. Madam," he inclined his head, "Would you like to make the announcement or shall I?"

Amelia was too overwhelmed by the approval of a King that she should ascend to the position of Minister.

Understanding at once, Kingsley stood, "Lord Malfoy, it is the decision of this council in a vote of six to two with one abstention that you take up the seat vacated by that of Lord Crouch. Do you accept?"

Lucius was surprised, him? Serve on the Council of Magical Law? He was a solicitor; he was already on the Hogwarts Board of Governors and was on the Committees dealing with international relations and finance but justice? He swallowed it was an awful lot of responsibility. He nodded; "Yes..." if he missed once in a while, it was alright. There were always nine members of the Council, only important cases had a full panel, most cases, it was before one judge. During a case before the 'full council' there must be a quorum of at least six present. Decisions were made by majority rule... he could pick and choose his cases. It wasn't often that he was handed something like this, being selected to serve on the council was considered for life- most retired rather then die, but it was an honour. He wasn't the youngest really; Amelia was a few months younger then he for they had been in the same year. She was young when she was selected, while Griselda and Ogden were the eldest, they also were part of the Education committee. He'd have more of a chance to discuss why education reform was imperative.

What would Severus, Remus and Draco think? He, Lucius Malfoy former reluctant Death Eater, a member of the Council of Magical Law...

Sirius escorted the shocked young Lord from the Courtroom.

Chapter End Notes


A/N: I know I practically blew up those who have me on subscription the last few days because I posted so much. Bet this quick update was a surprise. Thank you for all the
reviews.

For those of you extremely curious to certain questions such as what Fred's inheritance is, what was in the rest of the letter from Gringotts' Remus didn't read said. What happened when Sirius I questioned Riddle and extracted memories, whether Riddle is mentally salvageable, more insight into the side couples- Viktor and George as well as Charlie and Blaise etc, perhaps what is going to happen when Andromeda wakes- what happens in Sirius I's manor or other scenes that don't fit in this story but might be of interest. So I'm working on a set of chapters regarding these and more- something like Rise of the Dracken: The Scaled bits.
Chapter 37– Prank War Plotting

Harry purchased all of the Slytherins’ nasty tasting Bott's every flavour bean. Blaise's keen nose picked out the good ones and passed them to Vince who put them back in the boxes. Harry also added a few of his trick sweets from Fred and George's gift; the puking pastels, fever fudges and nosebleed nougats, to name a few.

Blaise was eager to try transfiguring, at least the appearance of the nasty tasting sweet, to that of a lemon drop. Having never heard of a lemon drop before, he wasn't surprised when Harry told him it was a Muggle sweet and that lucky for their purposes, Dumbledore was addicted to. He was practicing on other sweets until they were satisfied, he'd accomplished this.

Harry tasted Blaise's first attempt, he shook his head, "Too lemony. Think about our first Transfiguration lesson, the mouse to goblet. Do you remember how many of the goblets were furry and had tails?"

Blaise nodded.

"Remus told me, that's because we were distracted. The spell only works properly if you focus. However this isn't class, it can't be a perfect Transfiguration. So feel free to let you mind wander some. Remember, it only has to look like a lemon drop, but it's supposed to still taste like dirt."

Blaise sighed, as interested as he was in this prank, doing a Transfiguration half-arsed irked him. Mind wander? Then Charlie filled his mind, just as he was starting the transfiguration.

Then, the sweet transformed.

Harry instantly popped it in his mouth and tasted it, he grinned, "Perfect! At first you taste lemon but then it changes to its original flavour."

Blaise was excited and proud even as he set to work transfiguring each nasty tasting or trick sweet into a lemon drop and adding them to growing pile in the candy dish that the house elf Dobby brought.

XooooooX

Draco and Sophronia were huddled together with the other members of their House's leadership; the prefects as well as their King, Adrian.

Neville was reluctant to leave Slytherin because Adrian was here. Although, he knew he should be helping Gryffindor.
Draco was sipping his cup of chocolate, "So tell me where should we begin? The honour of our House is at stake…"

Sophronia smirked, "Well, obviously, we must use Fred and George's pranks. Greg and I did sell quite a number of them to various Slytherins."

Draco nodded, "Of course, however, I would like us to harness all our wits and cunning."

Adrian might be the purported leader of Slytherin, by virtue of being of the bloodline of Slytherin, but he was far from comfortable with it. In his opinion, Draco however seemed to thrive on it, he was a natural leader once one cut away all the narcissistic bull shite.

Sophronia chuckled, "Well, why not use some of our prank ideas to punish Granger?"

"Like what?" Adrian asked, as King of Slytherin, all pranks done as a House must pass his approval.

"Putting temporary hair dye in the girls shampoo." Sophronia was eager to prank Granger, although she had been looking forward to getting Pansy back. However, that sadistic, mad wench was headed to Azkaban, which made her revenge fall to the wayside.

It would be easier to get away with pranking all of the Gryffindor lionesses rather than singling out Granger.

"How would you accomplish that?" sniffed Adrian's counterpart, a Sixth Year Girl's Prefect named Druella Rosier.

"Easily, we've already got the Polyjuice. Fred and George always keep a large supply on hand because they never know when they might need it. I'll just use an elf to borrow some hair from Ginny, Luna and Susan's hairbrushes. I'd stroll into their dormitories via house elf, to bypass passwords, add the dye and sneak out again. We were going to use bright, flamboyant colours like hot pink, neon green, florescent orange and peacock blue."

Adrian laughed, "I approve. What else?"

The girls' prefects were thankful that their hair wouldn't be affected by the prank for they preened.

Sophronia wanted to give them a bit of a shove off their pedestals but had to hope, her best friend would do it for her. Knowing that peacock blue would look amazing with those silver Malfoy eyes, she made a mental note to put the blue dye in Luna's shampoo. Green would wash her out and pink was so not Luna's best colour. As for the colour orange, Sophronia detested it. "Well," she said finally speaking, "George just finished something we called Canary creams. He puts a bit of this potion onto custard creams and it makes you into a giant canary for three minutes after you eat it."

Sophronia added.

"Oh," said Draco, "we have to use that." Then he snickered, "I've got a wonderful idea. Gryffindors and Hufflepuffs pride themselves on being so nice. I think I'll ask Dreca to retrieve some of papa's Veritaserum. Just imagine what fun it would be to listen to those two Houses afflicted with compulsive truth telling."

"Why not the Ravenclaws?" Sophronia asked, already suspicious of the answer.

"Too dangerous to give to Luna. Besides, it's one thing to let the Beauxbatons delegation participate in the Prank War to prank us. It would be quite another to prank them intentionally, and I doubt that Madam Maxime would countenance it well."
"True," Adrian nodded.

"What about Trap spells?" asked Cassius Warrington, the Seventh Year chaser who had taken Adrian's place on their House team, when he refused to intentionally cheat under Flint's captaincy.

"Or… maybe a plant like Devil's snare that just ties you up? There's a lot of ivy growing on the castle after all. It wouldn't be hard to charm it to restrain students or tie them up." Neville blurted out.

Draco nodded, "That might be fun. If you think you can do it."

Neville blushed, "Of course, I can." He was after all, naturally gifted at Herbology and he was finding Charms embarrassingly easy with his new wand.

Adrian smiled at the shy Gryffindor before offering an idea himself, "What about giant conjured spider webs? We can charm them invisible." Adrian was enjoying this, planning a Prank War was the best way for him to ease into the Authority of the Leadership of the House.

"Papa's got this great nonverbal spell that I think could be integrated into a trap, it pulls you upside down and holds you by your ankle." Draco said thoughtfully.

"What about Dumbledore's robes?" Giselle spoke up; she was the Fifth Year Girls Prefect. "Could we charm them into something less hideous or ostentatious?"

"Or," Sophronia added, "exchanging his hats for one of Fred's inventions; we have hats that shrivel up your ears or the one that makes his head disappear."

The list of prank ideas and how to accomplish them went on. With a few of them sneaking away to put things in order, well Draco and Sophronia, leaving Adrian to hold court by himself.

XoooooX

Fred grabbed the Quidditch team and the rest of Harry's year, meaning Dean and Seamus of course. Ron was useless, while besotted Neville and Harry were going to be on Slytherin's side sadly. Oh, he couldn't forget Lee. He shouted across the common room, "Lee! Get your mopey arse over here. We've got to plan."

Since the girls' dormitories were off limits and Ron's were mostly empty, he decided to kick the boy out of them.

Once the fourth year boys dormitory was locked and privacy charms were up, Lee spoke, "Plan what?"

"Pranks," Angelina said grinning, "One, two, three, four. We've declared a Prank War."

Lee's face split with a grin and his eyes twinkled, "Prank War?"

"Yeah. Viktor is getting help from George. So we've got to out think him." Fred had every intention of letting his Sídhe side out. He had a score to settle with Granger, Ronnie and Dumbledork.

Seamus snickered, "Prank War huh?" twirling his wand.

Fred snickered, "Indeed, if there is any truth to the rumours that you have a leprechaun ancestor you sure could use one about now."

Seamus frowned, still playing with his wand, "I do…we just don't talk about it."
"Well, I for one don't blame you. I've got strange creature inheritances in my family too. They are perhaps, overfond of pranking." He summoned some leaves of the vine that grew outside Seamus' old window, "I thought it might be fun to leave Galleons around the school in odd places." He stared at the leaves and they seemed to turn to gold.

Seamus gasped, "How did you do that?"

Fred shrugged, "It's just natural." He was not about to admit that he'd just made Fae gold.

Seamus summoned sand, "I can do that too but I can't use leaves."

Fred watched as the bits of sand also became gold, he recognized the magic and grimaced, "Leprechaun gold."

Seamus nodded, "All of us O'Shaneseys can make it." He frowned, "However, Fergus was forever paying debts with it. I just thought that Leprechaun gold might be fun to have strewn around the castle as well. This merely vanishes for sand has too little magic to support the change."

"This will revert to its original form. I call it Fae Gold. I got the idea from a book." Not daring to mention that he could make it just as easily as perhaps a true Sídhe.

"How did your family end up with a leprechaun ancestor anyway? Sounds a bit odd…" Lee asked curious.

Seamus laughed, "It's rare in our family to have girls, it's mostly an all boy family. It happens among some pureblood families like the Weasleys. About three hundred years ago, my ancestors had a daughter Moira. She were small and slim, not more then four foot, ten inches. Rare for a girl to be so short when fully grown, but she were. She had the greenest eyes and long curly red hair; she was also the sweetest of creatures so they said. Moira was eternally shy and they didn't send her away to school. Well her parents had a neighbour, whom they didn't know was a leprechaun. He caught a glimpse of the lovely lass one night. He was flitting around with his lantern; she was wearing just a shift with a flimsy silk robe. He lost his heart as he watched her brush her hair. He seduced her and she became pregnant. He disappeared soon after and pretty Moira wasted away from grief. Leaving her beloved bereaved parents to raise her son. Moira died clutching a gold pendant that was crafted into a four-leaf clover. Some say he planned to return and others say he took what he wanted. We've seen neither hide nor hair of him since so we say. Ye might say I'm named for my ancestor the leprechaun Shamus."

"So my friend the leprechaun, you fancy joining me in pranking?" Fred asked.

"Aye." Seamus said his grey-green eyes twinkling in merriment. "So we use some of yer pranks to prank them all. Plus our Fae and Leprechaun gold masquerading as Galleons…"

The Gryffindors continued plotting.

Angelina was excited; it was the first time she'd ever collaborated on a prank. She was a bit wary of participating because of her prefect status but she was excited and wanted to join in regardless.

Dean was thrilled to be included by the House Quidditch team. Since becoming best friends with Seamus, he'd learn to love Quidditch despite his natural enthusiasm for the Muggle sport football.

He'd played on his elementary school team before receiving his Hogwarts letter. He remembered a prank his stepfather- his mother had married a family friend when she discovered she was pregnant with him. His biological father had disappeared. So Damien Thomas was the only father he had. He
remembered him laughing about a prank he pulled in high school, "I've got one."

"Spill." Fred said eagerly.

"I don't know my birth father and I'm the first wizard in my family but I'm close to my mother's husband. He's never treated me differently from my sisters. He's like you Fred only grown up. They used to do pranks when he was a kid at his high school. I remember one; they greased up three pigs, labelling them 1, 2 and 4. Perhaps, we could do something like that." He couldn't wait to owl his dad and tell him about borrowing his prank.

"Oh that sounds like fun!" Angelina's eyes twinkled, "Oh but can I label them in Runes instead of numbers? That might be more fun since it will take them some time to figure out the marks are Runes and then realize that they are numbered."

"Not pigs though," Fred said thoughtfully.

"Sounds interesting mate." Seamus smirked, "I'd use nogtails though. Me seanathair raises them. He's an odd one he is."

"What? Your granddad raises nogtails?" Angelina was shocked.

"Aren't they demons? I remember Professor Lupin telling us about them in class last year." Fred was a bit surprised; "They bring bad luck to a farm."

"Me máthair and aintín Áine lecture him for it. He said his leprechaun blood should balance the bad luck with good. He also raises albino bloodhounds for the Ministry."

"So letting three nogtails loose in the castle could be relatively easy to deal with?" Angelina had to be wary, being a prefect and all.

Seamus smirked, "Oh yes. How soon do you want me seanathair to bring both?"

Fred smirked, "Tomorrow. Can he bring them by half past six? We can sneak down early, Angelina can mark them with her runes and we'll set them loose."

"Me seanathair sometimes pops in to visit me. He'll think it's quite fun to have a part in a prank war. He usually travels with his favourite hound Conan anyway. His nogtails keep their distance from the hounds but they've learnt to mind them. Not sure what his use of them be. He keeps them far from the home farm, so they can't suckle his sows. Thus, be bringing bad luck upon our farm,"

"I do think we still owe Ron a good prank." Dean said nonchalantly.

"Oh yes." Angelina had no love for him after hearing how he'd treated George.

"What is he most afraid of?" Alicia asked softly.

"Spiders." Fred said immediately, "We didn't like him much when he was little. Was a brat from the start, following us around all the time and was a right little talebearer. We tried to trick him into an unbreakable vow not to do that, but we were caught. More's the pity. We turned his precious little stuffed bear into a spider when he was cuddling it. Molly made us sleep on the kitchen and bathroom floors for a week for that. Locked the kitchen cupboards too."

"That woman was a rotten little blighter!" Angelina said indignanty. What nerve she had separating Mr. Weasley from her own brother and stealing their kids to raise as her own. Obviously, she treated her own kids differently, you'd have to be blind not to know she disliked Fred and George. Always
lecturing and harping at them, never once did she offer to let Percy, Fred or George have a friend for
the summer. If Fred or George could have had a friend over, Lee would have been over in a
heartbeat. To her knowledge, neither Bill nor Charlie ever had friends over either.

"What can we do to that imbecile Ron?" Alicia asked, George might not be able to love her back but
calling her friend a high-class whore was so heinous it didn't bear thinking.

"We've learned some interesting Transfiguration spells. We're pretty decent at Human
Transfiguration. I'm sure we can find a spell or Angelina could modify one. Hermione hasn't really
been too fond of Ron since he slapped her. It might be fun to turn her into a spider at the House
Table." Fred sneered.

Angelina chuckled, "You are ruthless."

Perhaps, he was 'ruthless', but that Ron and Hermione needed a good knock off their personal
pedestals.

"We'll win hands down." Lee pontificated. "We've got Fred."

"Yeah." Seamus and Dean seconded; after all, Fred and George were legendary.

"You forget, Durmstrang has George." Fred reminded them.

"You didn't sell all your product, did you?" Angelina asked, a bit worried.

Fred smirked, "And leave our House with nothing? Perish the thought." he glanced at Lee, "My dear
fellow, would you please give us the list of known products?"

Lee bowed, "Why certainly, boss. Fainting fancies, Fever fudge, Nosebleed nougat, Puking pastilles,
canary creams, Ton-tongue toffee, Punching telescopes, Extendable ears, Portable swamp, Anti-
gavity hat, Headless hat, Billy's hat of horrors, Weasleys' Wildfire Whiz-bangs, Demon box, Creepy
crawlies, Nose-biting tea cups, Frog spawn soap, Mysterious Moonlight madness, Weasley's weather
in a bottle, Weasley's snowstorm, Weasley's wet weather and Tiny twister Midnight."

"I say, we convince an elf to replace all of Dumbledork's hats with our Wheezes hats. The Demon
box needs proper testing. I think we should leave it in his personal rooms with the lid off. Perhaps,
we should replace the Hufflepuffs' telescopes with our own. We should have enough for one year,
maybe two. As for the Portable Swamp, I say we place that on the third floor between the Charms
Corridor and the Defense classroom."

"Maybe, we could add dogbugs to the swamp that might be fun." Lee snickered.

Alicia protested, "Too much trouble."

"Between our demon box, hat swapping, portable swamps." His eyes twinkled, "We just finished the
Peruvian instant Darkness powder. Peeves has a soft spot for us. I'm sure it wouldn't be too much
trouble to ask him to grease the hallways or to toss our Instant Darkness Powder around." Fred was
pleased with himself and said in a singsong voice, "Oh Peeves, my old friend."

There was a loud sound like a raspberry and then Peeves popped in.

"Peeves bin wonderin' when his ole pal Fred be callin' him."

"Peeves, would you like to help us win the Prank War?"
Peeves' eyes glittered with malice, "Help? What be in it for Peeves?"

"More reign to torment students?" Fred offered, the things he came up with when letting his prankster side that bordered on the malicious, thanks to his inheritance.

Angelina looked at him and tried to catch his attention and shook her head.

Peeves snickered, "Peeves be in. What Master Fred be wantin’?"

"Oh, just a few little favours."

"What favours be those?"

"Greasing Hallways. Tossing powder to make it darker then moonless nights. Oh and tossing one of my tornado in a bottle in the library to torment Madam Pince. Be sure to break the bottle, my favourite poltergeist." Fred purred.

Peeves chortled, "Greasing Hallways? Master Fred be wanting Peeves to do that?"

"Oh, can you come up with a new song? Something as terribly malicious as Potter you Rotter. Oh and do make it for our dear Dumbles." Fred said irreverently.

"Oh Dumbles you Bumbles! You think you're so grand! Have you forgotten you're not quite a man? Your glamour slipped once! Peeves saw it all! Peeves sees all! Peeves sees all! You're not a leader you're less then a door! One can see through you rotten old coot! How do you feel now that we're givin' you the boot!" Peeves broke into mocking laughter.

Angelina sighed sometimes Fred was just awful…

Between the House Quidditch Team, Dean, Seamus and Peeves, it looked like Gryffindor was off to a great start.

\[XoooooX\]

Luna was eager to consolidate her ‘authority’ over her House and fellow Ravenclaws. Despite her desire to remain relatively anonymous, circumstances had forced her out of the shadows and to reveal herself. The revealing of her status as a Daughter of Ravenclaw and an honorary Princess of Slytherin to the acknowledged leaders of the Four Houses had been both necessary and nerve-wracking. The arrogance of Rodger Davies and the primness of Prefects like Felicity Eastchurch and Penelope Clearwater did not endear her to her House.

Once inside Ravenclaw Tower with the door closed behind them, she attempted to cast a powerful compulsion charm only to crash against another. Muttering in the language of the Veela Queen's Court, Luna tore the pre-existing charm apart.

Dumbledore!

She could read the runes making up the compulsion charm without trying.

After all, the Veela Court spoke a form of Runic and wrote in Runes.

She turned the meaning of the runes that made up the pre-existing Compulsion charm around in her
head. Quickly, their meaning was made icily clear.

That manipulative Bastard tried to turn her House against her! He'd pay for that! By Rowena's Diadem, she'd see he was punished.

Hell hath no fury like a Veela, when their wrath has been incited. Creature of Light didn't prevent that.

She weaved a new compulsion charm that not only prevented any Housemates from removing her things and hiding them, but to ensure they didn't discuss her true status outside their House. She'd remind them about the concept of House Loyalty and that Professor Flitwick wanted them to be a Family. Something that little compulsion charm of Dumbledore's, made them forget.

Rodger cleared his throat, "Excuse me."

The quiet chattering and scratching of quills on parchment ceased.

"Thank you." Rodger said pompously, "May I present, my Lady Luna Lovegood; the descendant of Rowena herself, the first Headmistress and blessed by the castle herself."

Ravenclaws had long insisted that Hogwarts Castle was a living entity, more sentient then wands. They believed it was a hovering beneficent presence that existed to protect and shelter those who lived in its walls.

"How do we know that's true?" asked an older girl, probably a seventh year.

Luna removed the Glamour, revealing herself once more in her court attire that left her shoulders just bare enough to see some of the magical birthmark. She pulled the white silk of her long tunic so the entire feather was visible. "For those who don't know the older families have magical birthmarks to proclaim them as born to them. I however have two, that itself is rare."

"What second family's birthmark do you have?" Cho asked politely.

Luna smirked, "Malfoy. My father is Lucius' Malfoy's cousin. He was disowned and was Bonded to my mother so he took her name." She removed the Glamour on her left hand holding it up so they could see the Malfoy birthmark that resembled a flame.

"How rare is it to have two birthmarks?" Stephen Corner asked.

Padma Patil answered, "Quite rare. When a girl joins her magic and blood to her Bondmate's line, her children belong to that line. It is rare that a family only had girls, thus the Bondmate takes her name. When discussing family ties it is customary to I was born for one line and born of another. I was for the Patil line and of the Karr line; my mother was Parma Karr before her Bonding to my father."

Rodger sniffed, "The four Houses have declared an alliance, under the authority of the direct descendants of the Four Founders. They've declared by ancient tradition that the Hogwarts Prank War, which was sanctioned by the Founders themselves, only if all Houses agreed to be enacted during winter to liven things up."

The Common room was filled with whispers.

Luna said sharply, "I agreed to the Prank War. The Honour of Our House is at stake." She gestured for Cho, "Hand that out, it's just a few of Fred and George's products. I'm sure you can figure out how to use them. After all, we're the House full of the best and brightest."
Titters filled the Common Room.

"Now, being a wise House, despite our lack of Slytherin cunning, I'm sure we can come up with some pranks." Luna said sharply, she really hated having to lord it over them all. She half wished she was Sorted into Slytherin where her title of Princess would still be honorary, but she would have no voice in the Council. The Slytherin House Council usually existed only in name; it was rare to have a King, Queen and Prince all in the House at the same time. Usually, it was just a Prince and a Queen, or sometimes just one. There hadn't been a King in Slytherin for two generations. The last one was in the Forties she believed. Before that who knew?

Felicity asked quickly, "What kind of Pranks?"

"Rules are simple. No damaging the school and no maiming students or putting them in grave danger." Luna replied.

Marietta asked softly, "It's alright to precipitate?"

Luna knew Marietta Edgecombe, Seeker Cho Chang's best friend was a shy girl; the last choice she would have chosen for a Prefect but perhaps, Professor Flitwick wanted to give her confidence. "It's loosely overseen by prefects and Heads of House. In Slytherin House, Pranks were be overseen and approved by their council. In our House it will be myself, Felicity and Rodger who will approve pranks to be done as Ravenclaws."

Felicity looked surprised.

"You are a prefect aren't you, Eastchurch?" Luna asked sharply.

"Yes…"

Luna restrained herself from rolling her eyes; she closed them briefly begging her ancestress for patience. "I'm not going to take away your authority completely. We are going to strive to prove our worth as Eagles. Now, to be beaten by Slytherin would one thing. To be beaten by lions or badgers is something I won't countenance."

"Gryffindor's got the Weasley twins. We'll never will." One of Rodger's fellow Chasers moaned. Page, Luna thought and a coward through and through. "We will not give up without a fight and for your information Page, Gryffindor is suffering from the loss of George Weasley-Prewett whom I believe is aiding the Durmstrangers."

Rodger winced, "A pity they are participating. They've learned spells we've never heard of."

A first year wailed, "They'll use Dark Arts! All Durmstrangers are Dark Wizards."

Luna scoffed, "I doubt George would allow that. Not all Dark Arts are bad. Most are merely frowned upon. As long as they aren't used to hurt someone such as the Unforgivables I don't care if they do. Now, does anyone have an idea or do I have to let my Malfoy side do all the plotting?"

The House visibly winced.

Felicity Eastchurch seemed to tremble.

"I promise you that between my cousin Draco and my best friend Sophronia that we'll be in embarrassed if we don't come up with something good." Luna said looking around the Common Room.
Terry Boot, a Fourth year spoke up, "Well, we could charm all the rugs to sing."

Luna let out a sigh of relief, "That might work. Which rugs and how?" 

Terry swallowed, "Some of us have got friends in the other Houses. They've got rugs in their common rooms..."

"Very well, if there are no objections you can be responsible for making that work." Luna said authoritatively.

Cho smirked, "How about making a few book look-a-likes? Then we can replace the intended victims' books with decoys, which are charmed to spout out an embarrassing story once per hour for the entire day. No story is repeated. I think this prank should be pulled on the Slytherins."

Luna chuckled, "A woman after my own heart. Makes sure one gets to Sophronia and Draco. They will appreciate it. Give one to Theo and Tracey Davis." She had little love for Tracey Davis, who was one of Sophronia's former tormentors and a stuck up wench. A step up from Pansy in any case, but still not a pleasant person in Luna's opinion. Of course, she approved of pranking her best friend and 'boyfriend'. She just hoped Theo had a good sense of humor about her sending pranks his way. Sophronia and Draco would laugh about it.

Cho smirked, "Love to one up Malfoy." She'd lost the snitch to him every time they flew against one another.

A whiny voice spoke, "Not that I expect you to listen to me but..."

Luna bowed slightly, "What would you like to contribute Myrtle?"

Myrtle blinked, "You really want to hear?"

Luna nodded, "Of course. You're a Ravenclaw, aren't you?"

Myrtle nodded, "I was... we've got a bit in common us two. Nasty housemates bullying us."

Luna shrugged, "That's all in the past. I bet the instigator of that was the same person. Tell me about your idea."

"Have you ever heard a Muggle alarm clock? They're loud and shrill. Just about give you a headache."

Luna tried to think; she'd never heard one.

Padma spoke up, "Pavarti is always complaining, that Granger and Tolipan have those Muggle alarm clocks. They're apparently really loud. Granger has like three and they end up going up ten minutes apart. She's not an easy riser. Their dorm isn't fond of her in the mornings."

"I see." Luna said thoughtfully. "Tell me more about your idea Myrtle."

Myrtle wasn't used to being treated as an equal, much less worth listening too. She shyly went on, "Well, you get a lot of Alarm Clocks. I can ask Peeves to steal them from their owners."

Luna's lips twitched.

Myrtle continued, "Use some copy spell to make more clocks and then charm them invisible with sonorous charms. Hide them around the castle set to go off on at the same time. Some lord awful hour like three in the morning."
Luna burst out laughing, "That's positively brilliant. We've got to do that. We should hide them in the other dorms like their common rooms. Maybe sneak some into the professors' apartments. Not sure I'd like to do it to Professor Prince-Malfoy, but defiantly Professors Dumbledore, Hagrid and Flitwick. I'm sure our beloved Professor Flitwick would find it hilarious… eventually."

Myrtle appeared to blush, "You really think so? You're not just teasing…"

Luna calmed herself, "It's the best prank I've heard yet. You were truly meant for my House." Luna walked over to the castle wall nearest her, "Grandmother Rowena's blood went into this Castle." She summoned her silver knife for potions and cut her hand, "I give this offering that it might mingle with hers. I know she had a hand in the creation and ever changing architecture of the castle. Perhaps, we can get a bit more fun. More walls pretending to be doors or doors pretending to be walls? Stairs that turn into slides?"

The castle seemed to hum again.

Luna grinned, "That should make things interesting." She glanced at Myrtle, "I'm sure you don't always enjoy flooding just one bathroom. Perhaps, you could flood one in each of our rival Houses?"

Myrtle sniffed, "No problem. I never did like those nasty snakes. One of them killed me."

Luna's eyes narrowed, "We'll discuss that later."

"Any request as to which bathrooms to flood?"

"Slytherin Fourth Year girls. Gryffindor and Hufflepuff Fourth Year Boys."

Myrtle snickered, "You want me to flood boys' bathrooms?"

Luna knew that Myrtle just outed herself as a bit of a pervert…

XoooooX

The entrance to the Common Room in the Hufflepuff basement was the closest of all the Houses to the Slytherin's Dungeons.

That short distance gave the Badgers an advantage, just not as much as an advantage as Slytherin had, because the 'war council' was in their Common Room.

Cedric walked into their beloved Basement with its yellow and black decor: it was fluffy with zillions of overstuffed armchairs, giant fluffy cushions and plush carpet your feet disappeared into.

"Cedric!" the younger years worshiped him and thought having a Hogwarts Champion was the greatest of honours. Their House had never had a moment of glory like this…

Cedric had always wanted siblings, but was an only child, so he doted on the younger years treating them as younger brothers and sisters. He enjoyed helping them find classes, explaining difficult concepts, tousling the girls' hair while clapping the boys on the shoulder or hugging them. He gave Deborah a smile before clapping his hands for attention. "We say all the time that Badgers stick together through thick and thin. We've had some stars in our House: our beloved Head of House
Professor Sprout, the most renowned Mind Healer Ted Tonks, and his daughter whom some of us remember fondly- Auror Dora Tonks. Then there is well me,

The House shouted with one voice, "Our beloved Cedric!"

"Our House's honour is at stake, my brother and sister Badgers. You see, the other Houses have finally taken a page out of our philosophy and buried the hatchet. To celebrate, we've declared a prank war!"

The shouts of joy and excitement about the Houses getting along, House loyalty during Quidditch Matches was alright by them, but treating other Houses like they were as useless as spoilt potion, was beyond callous.

"The rules are, no harming the castle."

There were nods of agreement; the Castle was their home most of the year, it would be as heinous to some of them as destroying their Head of House's beloved greenhouses.

"Plus, we can't maim or kill any students."

There were chorus of agreement with that one.

"So about this 'Prank War' you really agreed to it, Deborah?" Zacharias asked his elder sister.

"What have I told you about that tone, Zacharias? You're a descendant of our illustrious Founder, couldn't you at least attempt to appear to possess at least one of the qualities she prized?" Deborah said exasperated, "Yes, I did. The blood of Helga Hufflepuff flows through my veins, when the Houses of Ravenclaw, Slytherin and Gryffindor are in agreement, how could I disagree?" not that she would be telling that arrogant cad of a brother that she hadn't felt as if she'd had a choice. Especially ,when three Descendants of the Founders declared themselves in an alliance…

"Four United Houses? Why anything is possible," Cedric said pleasantly, "We have our work cut out for us. The Gryffindors have Fred Weasley. The Slytherins have Malfoy and Ms Prewett; while Pucey doesn't cheat himself, he must possess some cunning or else he wouldn't have been Sorted there. As for our eternal rivals, we must not let Ravenclaw win."

Ernie MacMillan teased, "Not going to let your girl win?"

"Cho is not my girl, as you put it. She's her own person. I doubt she would sabotage her House's pranks anymore then I would."

"That's our Cedric, honourable and good looking." Susan gushed.

Hannah Abbott, another Fourth Year couldn't help adding, "You forgot he's sweet."

"He's also sexy! He's such a better captain then Ravenclaw's Davies." Maxine O'Flaherty better known as Max said smugly, hard to believe by looking at her that she was a Beater. However, that's exactly what she played on the House Quidditch team.

"Let's hear it for our Cedric!" Her partner Anthony Rickett, better known as Tony, shouted.

Cedric coughed slightly and turned red as the cheering and applause grew louder.

Deborah held up her hand, "Peace. You're embarrassing him. We've got to come up with some ideas. Helga's wand, if only Tonks were still here. We'd win hands down, even if Gryffindor's got
Fred and George."

"George is helping Durmstrang. They've got less people then we do." Cedric reminded her, as he flashed a grin.

Deborah swallowed, his easy charm and brotherly caring ways stole a lot of hearts, not only in their own House but also in the others as well. "I suppose it's fair," Hufflepuffs prided themselves on their sense of fair play after all, "With him, they've got thirteen, which is a powerful number."

Cedric nodded, "They did buy a lot of stuff through Fred. A whole bag. It seemed quite large as if he anticipated the order."

"Yes, it looked fuller then the other two, it probably had more things." Deborah said thoughtfully.

"Why didn't you bring any Weasley products back with you?" Susan asked Deborah.

"I felt, it would be more interesting to rely on ourselves. If you have some of their products, I don't object to use using them." Deborah said with a shrug. "But self-reliance is a virtue we pride ourselves on after all."

Cedric felt a wince about poor Tonks, to be hurt so bad yesterday and for him not to know. He'd had a crush on her once; she was so fun and full of life. He swallowed, "Does anyone have any ideas?" he'd keep the Weasley products for himself for now.

Deborah had admired Dora Tonks as well. Knowing that their Headmaster had done such awful things like mentally assaulting students, insulting them by inferring that they were high class whores, performing illegal abortions but nothing was more dreadful then what that horrible man attacked one of their own.

Cedric was thoughtful, could they handle it? It was an awful things to bring up, some of his housemates were quite young, mere children. Some like Justin Finch-Fletchley had lived through the terrifying days of the attacks by the chamber's monster.

"What about making a few balls like a Quaffle, putting them in a hallway with the geminio duplication charm?" offered Tamsin Applebee.

A Muggleborn, another Chaser on the House Quidditch Team, Heidi Macavoy spoke up, "I've been reading a Muggle book I got for my birthday from Mum. It's called Alice in Wonderland. In it, she eats one mushroom and it shrinks her and another makes her either normal size or a giant if she didn't eat the first one."

Malcolm laughed, "We should do that. Be interesting to cast the growing charm on one of those tiny Gryffindors. Maybe the one with the camera."

Susan was upset, "You mean the one who was petrified like Justin? I don't think that's very nice."

Malcolm snorted, "This about chaos not being nice."

"So who do we shrink then?" Deborah asked.

"How about that Slytherin bloke Warrington? He's huge and he's downright nasty on the pitch." Herbert Fleet, their Keeper offered.

Cedric shrugged, "Alright. The kid with the camera is acceptable, but don't cast the growing charm on the little brother."
"What about putting Valerian root in pumpkin juice?" Justin offered.

"Or," Zacharias added half joking, "using the Melofors hex and giving a bunch of people pumpkins for heads."

Deborah sighed, "Zacharias! That spell puts a jack-o-lantern on your head. It doesn't exchange your head for a pumpkin."

"It might be fun." Tony said shrugging. "Just imagine Davies running around with a Jack-o-Lantern he can't take off. It would knock him down a peg."

"Or casting a fog charm in the North Tower, so it's impossible to get to Divination." A third year whose name escaped Cedric added.

"What about casting the Caterwauling charm in the library? If anyone goes into the Restricted section, they'll set it off even if they have permission." Deborah said quietly.

"All wonderful Ideas. Go to it Badgers!" Cedric said in a jovial tone, "We'll show them we're not a lot of duffers! This is for Helga, Ted and Dora! We'll make them proud!"

In the end, he chose not to tell them about her injuries.

XooooooX

Viktor managed to make it back to the Durmstrang ship, Thor's Hammer without being noticed by their Headmaster Karkaroff. He made his way to his cabin, which he shared with George, he like the headmaster had his own cabin and instead of a berth he had a old-fashioned four-poster bed that was securely fastened to the floor.

However he paused, knocking on the door of Nikolay Tymoshenko, better known as Kolya and Kazimir Ivanovski, whom they called Vanya, who was also his cousin's cabin. He knocked on the door.

The gruff response was Russian of course. Despite being a school on the coast of Durmsøy, an unplottable island just north of mainland Finnmark, Norway. There was a Wizarding community called Durmsøy that grew outside the walls of the castle, similar to the nearby Wizarding village of Hogsmeade.

Unlike their Hogwarts counterparts, who would call the weather cold, the Durmstrangers were warmer then they were normally used to at this time of year. It wasn't as bitterly cold, nor was it as dark, for in the winter sometimes, they didn't see the sun for days due to being so near the Arctic Circle. Some counted their blessings at the honour of being chosen as a candidate for their Institute's Champion. Though they were no doubt jealous that they hadn't been chosen by the Goblet of Fire; however, they were just as fiercely proud of their champion as Hogwarts or Beauxbatons were of theirs.

"Yes?" the two fellow seventh years looked up.

Viktor smirked, "Meeting in my room. Ten minutes." Kolya was a companion from childhood well since first year of course, but to a eighteen-year-old, a six-plus year companionship was long.

"Of course, Viktor." Vanya nodded, "Anything I should tell them?"

Viktor chuckled; he was more relaxed amoung his own then strangers, "Bring an open mind and all their cunning." Being a Chuvash, he was essentially part dragon and therefore, had more than a little
"As you wish Viktor." Vanya said rising from his work.

Viktor headed to his cabin, whistling.

Before he reached the cabin, the door was opened.

Viktor felt a wave of desire but suppressed it, he smirked and lifted George's chin, kissing him.

The slim but muscular redhead submissive nearly choked on a moan. His arms coming up to wrap around his neck.

Viktor reluctantly broke the kiss, "I'm gone little over an hour and you miss me that badly?" softly hissing in Parseltongue.

George flushed, "Of course, I'd miss you..." hissing back.

Viktor chuckled, "I'm glad of that."

George muttered, "I'd be a poor submissive, if I didn't miss you."

Between Quidditch and his studies Viktor had never before counted the lonely hours until he was away from George. He sniffed, running his hands over George to be sure he was safe and healthy, that nothing had happened while he was away. He cursed himself for rushing out and failing to cast proper protections on his mate. His formidable father would take him to task for it.

George could faintly smell the scents of many persons, both familiar and foreign, even that of his own twin. Fred's scent was stronger, as if he'd actually embraced Viktor. He growled slightly.

Viktor chuckled, pinching the back on George's neck. "None of that dragule. If I hadn't been interested in anyone before you, what makes you think I'd be sexually attracted to another since I've made you mine?"

George swallowed, rubbing himself against Viktor, half apologetic and half needing to put his scent on his mate.

"Much better." Viktor said ruffling his hair, "Now that the potion's worn off and I look like myself, we can talk." He pulled the bag out of his pocket and removing the shrinking charm. He handed it to George, "I trust you to know what these are and how to use them."

George opened the bag and found it full to bursting with Wheezes products; he was surprised, "Where did you get these?"

"Bought them off your brother."

George was perplexed, "Why?"

"Oh, just something about a prank war to torment that rotten Headmaster you've got with pure chaos. All four Houses agreed to it. That's why Fred snuck me into the castle. The Slytherins asked for the Beauxbatons and us to help. Thought we'd come up with some good ones since we've received a more diversified education."

George dumped the bag out on their bed, he blushed, thinking about the sex they'd had in it. How Viktor had comforted him after the disgusting words Dumbledore and Ron had described their relationship. He swallowed, pushing the thoughts away as he looked through what Fred had sent,
"Hm…snowstorm in a bottle, nose-biting tea cups, mysterious Moonlight madness, Weasley's weather in a bottle, Weasley’s wet weather, Portable swamp, Tiny twister Midnight." He laughed, "Fred, you devil!"

Viktor wasn't expecting that reaction, "What?"

"He sent me more Polyjuice, my potion for canary creams, a demon box, and Wildfire Whiz-bangs."

There was a knock on the door.

"Come in." Viktor said quickly. "What else did he give me dragule?"

"Vials of quick silver and Bodimun essence." George smirked. "I guess he expects me to finish those decoy detonators. This is You-No-Poo. We haven't field tested it yet."

"Quicksilver and Bodimun essence? That's like a bomb. What's you no poo?"

George chuckled, "A sweet that makes you practically live in the loo."

Viktor snorted, "Do give that to your illustrious Headmaster."

A smile flickered across George's face, "Here and I was planning on slipping puking pastilles into his morning croissant."

The rest of the Durmstrang students had filed into the room by now.

"George, this is Nikolay, we call him Kolya and you've flown with Ivanovski, he's called Vanya. Vanya’s girl, Ekateirna Petrova, better known as Katya. The Headmaster's nephew, Vlasii Poliakoff, he likes to be called Vasya. His roommate, Kjell Lindberg." Viktor blinked, "Zeki? I didn't expect to see you."

"As the Headmaster's aide, I had to see if I needed to inform him about your activities."

Viktor sighed, "That would be no fun." He muttered in Russian. "I thought we could join in the chaos. Hogwarts had revolted against their Headmaster. It's been urged on by some individuals such as Malfoy and Fred."

Zeki Mahmet uly Şahin- the son of the Iraqi ambassador who served as Igor Karkaroff's aide was thoughtful. "They've declared a rebellion?"

Viktor smirked, "The Four Houses have United; perhaps, for the first time in at least a hundred years. They are using the perfectly legal Prank War to cause as much chaos as they can. They've asked if we would like to participate. They believe that despite our relatively small numbers that our superior education will be an asset. We also have my mate's detailed knowledge of the castle, the inhabitants' habits, as well as his inventions."

George picked up his snowstorm in a bottle, "Any of you know a charm to extend a spell?" changing his mind and taking the second one as well.

There was collective laughter.

Vanya nodded, "Of course."

"Good. I need someone to make sure these end up broken and extended. I want one in front of the Greenhouses and the other in front of the castle. I'd lock Hagrid in his cabin but then no one could take care of Beauxbatons' Abraxans."
Another voice spoke, "Enrich Pappenhausen." Bowing slightly, "I can handle it."

"The nose–biting teacups. I think we should use a powerful switching charms to trade those for Dumbledore's," George sighed, "It would be best if they looked like his tea cups though." He smirked, "Oh, Dobby!"

There was a pop and Harry's loyal house elf Apparated into Viktor's crowded cabin. "Master George be wanting Dobby?"

"What do Dumbledore's teacups look like?"

Dobby held his hand up and a sort of mirage appeared, hovering over his hand. "Look like this, why?"

George spun his wand in his hand before aiming it at the nose-biting teacups and altering their appearance. He whistled when the entire lot of them matched the hazed two-dimensional image floating over the house elf's hand. "Now comes the problem of getting them into his Tower."

Dobby laughed, "That be easy for a house elf." He waved his hand; the teacups vanished and then reappeared. "Done. These Dumbledore's teacups."

George flicked his wand, the portal snapped open. He glared that the teacups, they flew out of the cabin upon reaching the open air they shattered. "Slip veritaserum to my brother, will you?" he stared at the Wheezes on the bed, "Whizbanges at one in the morning. The decoys going off at three. Mysterious Moonlight Madness at breakfast. The tornado in Dumble's office." He snickered, "a portable swamp in the Headmaster's tower. If only I had dogbogs…"

Zeki shook his head, "When Hogwarts wants chaos, you deliver."

George growled, "That man has done nothing but torment my family. He encouraged my aunt to trap my father into a bonding. Used love potions and memory charms on my dad. Twice kidnapped my papa. Kidnapped my four brothers and myself. He mentally assaulted my brother in person, attempted to wipe the memory of his lover and best friend as well as murder his child. Trust me when I say I have no respect for the man."

"He tried to kill an Auror last night." Viktor said tightly.

There were hisses of shock.

"He had another falsely imprisoned."

"Dragule, peace."

George took a calming breath.

"What else do you want?"

"As much mayhem as we can produce."

Katya walked to the open portal and muttered a charm.

The twelve boys blinked and the Whomping Willow was gone.

George stared, "What did you do?"

"Transplanted it." Katya laughed.
"Where is it?" Viktor asked worried.

"I'll put it back."

"There's a secret passage to Hogsmeade open now."

Katya waved her wand.

A large twin needle pine tree appeared over the spot left by the missing Whomping Willow.

George kissed her cheek, "You're brilliant! They'll be shocked."

Katya blushed, "It's nothing. I'm studying Herbology. I'm planning to be a tree healer. Sometimes, one has to transplant a tree to properly treat it."

"I've got a nasty hex." Vanya offered.

"What is?" George was interested.

"It's called the Somnambulist Curse." He smirked, "Trust me, it's nasty. It makes you sleepwalk but only if you're fully human. It doesn't work on those with magical creature inheritances."

"How long does it work?" George was interested having never heard of it.

"About three nights. It only works if you're asleep." Vanya shrugged.

George pointed out Ravenclaw Tower, "Can you cast it so it affects anyone living in that tower?" he liked Luna, but he disliked most Ravenclaws. Namely, Davies and Clearwater.

"Sure." Vanya muttered a spell and the Tower glowed once. "Done."

"Sleepwalking Eagles that will be interesting." George said rubbing his hands together. "Erich be a gentleman and make it snow."

"If Master George be wanting something in the Headmaster's Office I can throw it there." Dobby offered.

George tossed him the Tiny twister Midnight, the demon box and the Portable swamp. "The clear bottle toss in his office. It will give him a tornado. The Demon Box needs to be under his bed." He whispered a charm; "It will open itself at midnight. Throw the brown bottle on his bed. I hope he likes sleeping in a swamp."

"Why not conjure a lot of snakes? We can make them non-poisonous. I was thinking boas and hypnotizing cobras." Viktor added.

"Do it. We can ask Peeves to drop them on the Grand Staircase. I also need him to set off the Mysterious Moonlight Madness at breakfast."

Viktor conjured the snakes, they would only last an hour. He ordered them not to hurt students, they could hypnotize them or restrain them but they were not to hurt them.

"Time?" Vasya cast his equivalent of the tempus, "just before nine."

George chuckled. "This will be sweet. Fred better give me this memory, so we can all enjoy it." as he set about to call Peeves.
Fleur made it back to the Beauxbatons carriage as the Polyjuice potion ended returning her own stunning looks. At least, that Giselle was a blonde. She summoned the other girls, reluctantly including her sister Gabrielle because sometimes a nine-year-old could have some sneaky ideas. Once they were all sitting on her enlarged bed, she began to talk, thankful the English spell had worn off, so she could talk in her beloved French.

"The 'Ogwarts students are playing tricks on each other. They want chaos. They asked if we wanted to play. I said yes. Perhaps, we can come up with some ideas together."

"Fleur, can you turn some of them into statues?" Gabrielle asked shyly.

Fleur kissed her sister, "That sounds like fun." Starting with that stuck up boy from Ravenclaw, the one who ogled her and that crazy redhead who followed her around.

Only seven of the twelve students that were chosen to represent Beauxbatons, did Fleur even trust with this little adventure besides her sister. Of those were Jacinto Faria, Maitagarri Elizalde, Graciosa Esquibel, Maria Sofia Morales, Albertine Lefèvre, Berenice Mercier and Désirée Dubois.

"There is always gender switching as well as making statues." Jacinto said smirking.

Fleur sighed, "Oh Feria, you can't just change someone's gender because they annoy you."

"Well, if an arrogant young man thinks it's oh so easy to be a woman, I say let them walk in a lady's high heels for a day." Gracioasa said with a lithe of laughter in her voice.

Albertine scoffed, "You just say that because he turns all his rivals into bodacious blonde girls of average height. He at least has the foresight to make them less lovely then you."

Maria sighed toying with her thick black hair, "Not all of us are blessed with Fleur's perfection of feature." Her voice was thick with jealousy, "Gabriella will grow up just like her."

Fleur pursed her lips, "Gabriella will be far more sweet-natured then I am. I'm, how did you put it Maria? An Ice Queen? You said I was so self-absorbed that I would make a better statue then a person."

Gabrielle was shocked; "You said that about my sister? Fleur is so nice and pretty."

"Be quiet, pet. She's jealous. All beautiful girls are jealous of each other. It's in their nature. It's not my fault I'm Veela. I can't change it. I don't deliberately set out to attract every boy within miles."

Jacinto chuckled, "You don't attract all men. Those in love already or bent are exempt from your charms. You are a beautiful lady and would make any man believe they'd Bonded to a Queen. You would make an excellent Queen."

Fleur shook her head, "I want to be liked as a person and not because of my Veela pheromones. They make most males silly." She glanced at Jacinto, "If you really want to, do it."

Jacinto smirked, "I do. Perhaps, it's time to change tactics. Maybe instead of gender switching charms, I should attempt body switching. That would be magnificently comical."

Gracioasa tittered, "How will you choose?"

"I'll just look for the most unsuitable. The troublemaking younger brother and the overbearing sister.
The Quidditch obsessed boy and a study conscientious girl. I always know who to make walk a kilometre in someone else's heels."

"So, we're making people into statues. Jacinto is going to attempt to switch bodies. Though he may have to just change their gender." Fleur may not be Queen of the Veela, but she was the acknowledged 'Queen' of their School just as Viktor Krum was obviously 'king' of his own.

"You're going to make girls into boys, Monsieur Faria?" Gabrielle asked quietly a bit overwhelmed at being allowed to join her sister and her schoolmates in this 'game'.

Jacinto laughed, "One should never be afraid to look at things from another perspective. Guys would be less likely to do mean things to your sister that upset her if they knew what it was like to be a girl. If a guy ever tells you 'Girls have it so easy', laugh at them. They're a fool. Being a guy or a girl has its pitfalls as well as its benefits. As Fleur would say 'Beauty isn't always everything'. Some guys would see your smart sister and see only a pretty face. They would never try to know who she really is. They'd keep her around like a portrait to look at or ignore as they wanted."

Gabrielle frowned, "That's not nice. Fleur is really really smart. Isn't that why that Goblet chose her?"

Jacinto tugged on her braid, "You're smart just like she is. I bet it did know she's the best. Personally, I think my Gracioasa is stunning, and she's smart too. I've liked her forever. Your sister's really nice and beautiful, but my heart likes someone else. I'm man enough to admit your sister's a real stunner, with both brains and beauty. Whoever she ends up Bonded to, better be a decent person and appreciate her for her mind as well as her looks. Trust me little bird, because a girl like your sister deserves the best. It takes the right kind of bravery to enter a tournament like this and stand up to a dragon. I expect you to grow up just like that; smart, brave and determined but you better keep that smile." He tickled her.

In their own place, Beauxbatons students were less restrained. They didn't have to make any impressions. They knew each other, had spent at least five years together and had at least a begrudging respect for one another.

Beauxbatons had a Champion, they all might have come here wanting to be that Champion but they knew that they had been weighed and measured. Fleur was their best, she would shine and it would have nothing to do with her looks. Fleur Delacour was not only their best-looking student; she had the highest marks. She could set her sights on anything and exceed at it.

Fleur's nose wrinkled in distaste once she'd recovered from the praise her schoolmate had told her sister. "Those suits of armour are so depressing, I think 'Ogwarts needs some redecorating."

Albertine nodded, "Yes, those suits of armour are dreadful."

Graciosa smiled grimly, "What this place needs are some nice statues of Nymphs, Dryads and maybe a fountain. Just cosmetic changes…"

Fleur laughed, "Gabrielle and I will turn people into statues, Jacinto will do his usual and you ladies can transfigure every suit of armour you see into whatever lovely object strikes your fancy. Though for your own protection, I'd suggest not making a statue of yourself. It's a little narcissistic and we don't want to 'sign our work' as it were. We're in it for laughs and because we were graciously invited. We are not a finishing school that teaches girls to look pretty and stay quiet. We are well educated, Beauxbatons has just as many famous names who graduated from it as 'Ogwarts.' She said vehemently, "Even if we're a younger institution of Education."
They heard the booming voice of Madam Maxime, their headmistress.

After the gross embarrassment Durmstrang had suffered at the hands of Hogwarts' Headmaster and his purported nephew, their Headmistress had been extremely uptight. She was more then usual over conscious and looked for slights to her person and their School.

So the gathered students and their guest hurried to gather up their cloaks, they were after all hungry.

Chapter End Notes

A/N: For those of you extremely curious to certain questions such as what Fred's inheritance is, what was in the rest of the letter from Gringotts' Remus didn't read said. What happened when Sirius I questioned Riddle and extracted memories, whether Riddle is mentally salvageable, more insight into the side couples- Viktor and George as well as Charlie and Blaise ect, perhaps what is going to happen when Andromeda wakes- what happens in Sirius I's manor or other scenes that don't fit in this story but might be of interest. So I've posted the first five scenes under the title of Unlikely Heroes: Fallen Feathers, Mirrored Scales for your enjoyment. in case my Unlikely Heroes readers don't have me on Author alert I thought I'd posted about it here. It's dedicated to my favourite reviewer Child of the sea96, one of many I promise.

I'd welcome chapter suggestions for it. So far I've posted Fred's inheritance, Severus' Nightmare, The Gringotts' Report, Lucius and Severus' Bonding/Draco's Adoption and Percy moves/dumps Penelope. I hope you enjoy them if you decide to read.
Every student, Hogwarts and Beauxbatons alike, who knew of the Prank War walked into the Great Hall in anticipation and a little dread. Pranking is always fun, unless you're the one getting pranked.

Fred was a bit sad that George and the Durmstrang lot were going to miss this. He had to remember to borrow Angelina's owl, so they could see it. He couldn't wait to see Dumbledore's face when Peeves began to sing.

Breakfast started; well, everyone began to eat albeit slowly.

There was an aura of something approaching.

Then, it happened…

Ravenclaws started to drift off over their porridge.

XooooooX

Zacharias fixed his sister with a glare, "Deborah, I think you're so damn obsessed with being just like Helga, you don't even know who YOU are."

Deborah snorted, "You are the most arrogant little weasel. You wouldn't know how to be nice to anyone. No girl with a lick of sense would even like you."

"You on the other hand are such a coward! The whole house knows you've got the hots for Cedric but he's off gallivanting with that stuck up Ravenclaw Seeker. Maybe, he'd rather not try courting a mouse who is afraid to have an opinion!"

XooooooX

[In French]

Jacinto smirked, oh that was such perfect fodder. He touched his wand looking right at the pair, "soulus transferus." That shouldn't be too bad…

Graciosa saw that look and followed his line of sight. That could end badly, but it would funny.

Gabrielle tugged on her sister's sleeve, "Fleur, what are they yelling about?"
Fleur glanced at the pair, "They're brother and sister, I think. For some reason, they think it's best to insult each other in public."

"Are they saying mean things? The big girl looks like she'd going to cry." Gabrielle said softly.

"Her brother called her a coward and shouted who she likes for everyone to hear. She's really embarrassed." Fleur leaned over to squeeze her sister's hand.

Gabrielle looked up at her big sister, "Will we be mean like that someday?"

Fleur shook her head, "I think its part of the game. Probably veritaserum, or something like it. I'm sure they'll be sorry later."

Gabrielle looked at them, the boy didn't look sorry at all. Even if something that made you say mean things like that, you should feel bad. She had to hope Fleur was right. That boy was mean. She'd sooner give away her pony then make Fleur look like she was going to cry.

XoooooX

"Oh look." Ron drawled from his place at the table.

The House avoided him like the plague after he'd embarrassed them all by insulting George and Percy. They might not all like Percy, but he was one of them and Gryffindor had a habit of closing ranks.

Fred ignored him.

"It's the House Man Whore. So Fred, whose bed did you crawl into last night? Did you finally take Angelina to bed? She's been panting after you so bad it's pathetic. Lee, how do you feel about your friend stealing your girl? Alicia, what's it like being thrown over for some Dark Wizard? Bit of a let down, huh? Your ideal guy whoring himself out."

Fred spun around, "What the Hell man? Where did you learn such language? Why can't you do us all a favour and keep your trap shut?"

Lee was speechless at first, "You are scum of the lowest order. Sure, I like Angelina but there's no need to bring it up. I've always known Angelina liked Fred. Not that I understand why. If after six years I can't get her to change her mind, what's the use of getting mad? We've all been friends too long to let something that minor break our group."

Alicia was shaking, her eyes filling with tears, "You stop that! George isn't like that. Sure it hurts he doesn't like me the way I like him! I want him to be HAPPY! Forcing him to be with me or making him feel bad about liking Viktor would be wrong. Viktor's good for George. I've never seen him that happy before. Viktor likes George. He supports him. You're family. You should be welcoming Viktor not hurting them."

Lee was closest and hugged her, his voice icy, "Ever heard the phrase don't kick someone when they're down? It's cruel. I don't know what the hat was thinking when it Sorted you here. You are no Gryffindor. You're a bigger coward then a Hufflepuff. You're lowlier then a flobberworm."

"If I'm a flobberworm what does that make Cheater Potter?"
Fred sneered, "He was found innocent and released from that magical contract. You're a fool Ron. Were you pretending the whole time to be his friend?" he was highly suspicious that some form of veritaserum was being used. He disliked pumpkin juice and thus was exempted. He'd smelled something off about it.

Ron chortled, "Friends with that pompous poor me, little glory hound? Ha! I was along for the ride. Best friend of the Famous Harry Potter! I got a lot of compensation for it. Why else would I spend so much time with a dirty little Halfblood and his Mudblood shadow?"

The Great Hall was silent as that sank in.

Fred dryly, "Now would be a good time."

There came a shrieking of maniacal laughter.

A bag was dumped on Ron.

Ron screamed.

Crawling all over the twit were tarantulas.

Fred took advantage of the idiot boy's shrieking to turn Granger, who was sitting across from him, into a giant spider.

XoooooX

The Smith siblings went from screaming at each other to silent.

Mid Zacharias' rant, he'd grown taller and soon realised he was looking into his own face. He looked down and screamed… like a girl.

Deborah fainted in Zacharias' body…

Hufflepuff was disturbed because spontaneous truth telling had broken out like a disease.

Cedric sipped his coffee, must be the Pumpkin juice. Deborah had a crush on him, huh? One the whole House minus himself knew about? He wasn't always aware of his 'charms', he was nice to everyone and he didn't notice much if girls liked him. Cho was a swell girl and a keen Seeker, but he'd never been too keen on dating. If she hadn't snogged the hell out him after a game he might not have guessed she liked him. Deborah? She was sweet, always eager to help someone but awfully shy. He wouldn't call her a coward, that was too harsh. In his opinion, Zacharias was a prat. He did need to be taught a lesson, but that wasn't the Hufflepuff way.

The ending was rather surprising…

Zacharias fainting and Deborah screaming? He wondered what that was about…

XoooooX
Peeves let out another crow of mocking laughter as he soared to the ceiling; he broke the bottle from George and flew around spreading it.

He began to sing his malicious little ditty, now that Dumbledore had finally arrived, he could have some REAL fun.

"Oh Dumbles you Bumbles! You think you're so grand!
Have you forgotten you're not quite a man?
Your glamour slipped once! Peeves saw it all!
Peeves sees all! Peeves sees all!
You're not a leader you're less then a door!
One can see through you, you rotten old coot!
How do you feel now that we're givin' you the boot!
Peeves sees all! Peeves sees all!
Oh Peevesy weevesy is lord of all he sees!
Dumble the Bumble is King of the mud
His court be the oaf and fool!
Praise the great and mighty Peeves!
Who dances with elves
Plots with leprechauns
Speaks with dragons
Pulls feathers from Hippogriffs
And rides Abraxans!
Dumble the Bumble King of mud
Brother to the goat lover
And the mad mad Ariana.
Don't forget the spider hating RON!"

Peeves paused and threw tarantulas before continuing his mocking song.

"Oh Peevesy weevesy is lord of all he sees!
Dumble the Bumble is King of the mud
Praise the great and mighty Peeves!"

XooooooX
Severus heard Peeve’s new song with both horror and admiration.

Remus did his best to keep his lips from twitching.

Pomona, Filius and Minerva wondered if they should try to shut him up.

Then again, the Professors rationalized that Peeves was ‘an uncontrollable spirit of pure chaos.’ He had ‘come with the castle’. None of them could control him so it was useless to try.

Dumbledore turned redder and redder as he listened, as red as his former hair. Who did that despicable poltergeist think he was. He reached for his wand and closed on empty air. He raged, he’d kill whoever stole his wands and the Auror. Whoever they were they’d covered their tracks well. Wandless magic wasn’t his thing, he was almost Muggle without it and it made him more then furious. There would be no HUMBLING of Albus Brian Percival Wulfric Dumbledore. Dumbles the Bumble was he? King of the MUD? Were they crazy? They thought they could give him, the Defeater of Gellert Grindelwald the boot? Hogwarts was his KINGDOM! He ruled supreme here! He was angry, that never boded well.

Glamour? Half the time he forgot he had one; he’d been using one most of his life. How dare that pathetic Peeves bring his idiot brother and ill sister into this! He didn’t not like being reminded that he was part of Ronald’s true family, that boy should not have been conceived. Who would want to carry the child of someone who Glamoured their goats to look like their dead sister? Or someone who wouldn’t have sex with someone unless they were Glamoured to look like Ariana. He wished that Ariana’s magic had killed both her and their mother. Then he wouldn’t have met Gellert because he would have been off with Elphias. Elphias was boring compared to Gellert but he was loyal and Gellert was younger.

He’d never forgiving Aberforth! What right had he? What right did he have to tell Gellert the things he did? Albus wasn’t the disgusting one, Aberforth was. Things would have been better if neither was born. He was seething. He’d kill that damn Poltergeist! That disgusting creature was going too far.

The Slytherins were watching eagerly.

There were snoring Ravenclaws…

The Hufflepuffs were so busy telling unwanted truths they were in state of pure chaos.

Draco was stiffened. He hadn’t expected that. He’d expected something more on the order of you ask someone a question and they gave a whole answer that was nothing but the truth. The truth serums he’d put in Gryffindor and Hufflepuff’s pumpkin juice was stronger then that. It made them incapable of not voicing their thoughts. Draco swallowed; he must have grabbed one of papa’s experimental potions. Was Papa going to be angry with him?

Fred saw the bottle that Peeves broke, so George did send a surprise courtesy of Durmstrang. They’d never mass-tested it before…this was unconventional to put it mildly. What would the reactions be? They did self-test all products but would it still affect him now that he wasn’t exactly human anymore?
He counted down until he saw the effects.

XoooooX

Luna watched her Housemates keel over at the Table. Not all but enough. Rodger drank Coffee. Everyone who touched the Pumpkin juice soon fell asleep.

Rodger blinked, "What happened to them?"

A spell bounced off her glamour and hit Cho Chang.

Their House's Seeker must not like Pumpkin juice either, because she wasn't snoring.

Luna blinked, they, Cho and Rodger started acting really weird…

Cho's hand started to rover over her body partly in shock and partly grossly perverted.

Rodger reached out and slapped her, "Don't you DARE! I'll hex your Bollocks off!"

Cho pouted, "What's the fun of being a girl if I can't?"

Luna knew what had happened, someone tried to switch her with Rodger only to have it backfire a bit. It switched Rodger with Cho instead. Luna tried not to laugh, that was an epic choice and bound to end badly. "If I were you, I would go see Professor Flitwick. He'll sort you out."

'Cho' fondled her own knockers, "Why would I want to?"

'Rodger' drew a wand and tried to cast something with it only to have the spell fizzle and die. 'He' muttered, "Rowena grant me patience."

'Cho' laughed, "Haha, you can't stop me."

Luna sipped her tea, "No, she can't. However if you can't use your alter's wand, both your marks will suffer. I'm not even sure if you can use your own wands in those bodies. If you have any hope of fixing this without it impacting your marks, I would see Professor Flitwick."

Both looked at her with horror. It took them two heartbeats to attempt to leave the House Table. Only to have difficulty motoring around…

XoooooX

Then it happened…

Seamus tossed a platter of scrambled eggs at Ron's blubbering face.

Dean followed with a jug of 'tainted' pumpkin juice.

Colin and Dennis both threw their porridge at him.

Soon, all of Gryffindor started throwing breakfast items at the disgraced Gryffindor.

Fred didn't feel any different, the usual 'madness' didn't affect him. That was very good for testing purposes but bad for other reasons.
Who knew if the Moonlight Madness was actually stronger than they had realized? They'd never dosed this large a group.

Ravenclaw was mostly sleeping minus Luna, Cho and Rodger.

One strawberry landed smack in the middle of 'Rodger's' head.

Luna raised an eyebrow at Fred and received a shrug. This had something to do with that bottle Peeves was carrying. It had to. She watched as 'Rodger' turned, grabbed something and threw it at 'Cho'.

Then 'Cho' just had to retaliate.

Luna encased herself in a shield that would just protect her from flying food and drink.

Severus was watching as Gryffindor descended into madness. Food fight? How utterly juvenile! Then, he saw Remus clenching his hands and growling.

Remus' eyes were gold, rather than amber and his fury was more than palatable. Salazar's Cauldron! What was it Remus said? Creatures weren't affected? Remus' fury was directed at Dumbledore. Remus might be angry with him, but he would not allow Remus to attack someone, even if that person were Dumbledore. He was far too feral for his liking. Remus reminded him too much of Greyback at the second. He summoned Treca and ordered her, "Take Remus to the London house, number 7 Malloy Place. The basement, NOW!"

Treca's surprisingly strong hands grabbed Remus just as he seemed about ready to leap on Dumbledore. Something about the bottle Peeves broke did this. Remus didn't just go feral for no reason.

The bottle had broken over the Gryffindor table surprisingly enough.

The 'madness' spread from Gryffindor to Ravenclaw.

Fleur saw the food and drink fly and shielded her sister.

Feeling a shield go up, the others tried to do the same.

Not fast enough...

Jacinto pulled Graciosa into a kiss that was so not appropriate for a nine-year-old to witness. He growled, and seemed to cart her off.
Fleur wondered if she should be worried.

Then Gabrielle started to squirm.

Fleur tried not to let her go.

But Gabriella wiggled and got loose. She started to run around and laugh like crazy. Her arms out like wings. She yelled, "Whee! I'm going to fly! I'm a bird!"

Fleur winced, Maman would not be happy.

The other girls weren't Veela; one was a nymph, but the others were merely magical humans.

The human Beauxbatons witches turned ugly boys into stone statues and other females into ice sculptures.

Fleur groaned, what Sister Magic's Name was going on?

XoooooX

Once Ravenclaw and Beauxbatons succumbed Hufflepuff was next to fall.

It was pure chaos. As if personal thought voicing wasn't bad enough, retaliations soon involved food or fists between the boys.

Cedric hadn't been affected by the pumpkin juice, but its hard not to be affected when fifteen girls pounce on you. He was terrified! He didn't know whether to be frightened or flattered.

XoooooX

The madness hit Slytherin.

It took longer to affect them.

Adrian did not succumb.

Blaise started to overheat and went to move out of his seat.

Adrian reached over and grabbed his hair, giving it a sharp tug.

Blaise instantly was cowed; he was like a punished dog.

Neville pulled out his wand, singing spells to himself as he started to decorate the Great Hall with vines.

Adrian snapped, "Neville, give me that!"

Neville looked at him and was like a little boy, caught playing with something dangerous. He reluctantly handed over his wand.
Adrian glared at the two would-be submissives, "You will sit still or I will tie you down."

Harry was just bouncing around in his seat but it was Draco who lost it.

Draco joined the little girl from Beauxbatons in 'flying'.

Adrian's temper was rising as more and more of his House was acting like children or gnomes, He snapped, his voice thick with Authority. "Slytherins! You will sit DOWN!"

All of their antics ceased.

Giselle had leapt into Bulstrode's lap and they were snogging, with Bulstrode's hands roving over Prefect Goyle's body.

Sophronia had launched herself at Tracey and was attacking the girl: pulling her hair, destroying the pressed perfection of her uniform and tossing her glasses across the Great Hall.

Asteria Greengrass was scurrying after Draco Malfoy, while her elder sister Daphne was panting after Adrian.

Slytherin's vaulted indifference and self-contained nature was collapsing, before Adrian snapped at them.

Adrian roared, "Slytherins, you will sit down and behave this instant!"

Harry stilled and crouched like the abused boy he was.

Adrian's order affected everyone in Slytherin minus the energetic Veela Princling Draco Malfoy...

XooooooX

Severus knew something was up after he'd had Remus hauled out. It just disintegrated.

Gryffindor started a food fight and it spread to RAVENCLAW of all the Houses.

XooooooX

Luna finally had enough, snapping at Cho and Rodger, "SIT DOWN THIS INSTANT! ROWENA PRESERVE US! CHANG! DAVIES! I SAID SIT DOWN!"

The two glared at her and sat reluctantly.

"That will be enough nonsense out of you both. You will remain seated until Professor Flitwick can sort you out. A fine way to behave. You're acting like you are four-year-olds."

With Rodger Davies and Cho Chang silent and pouting, it was a lot quieter.

The best thing about being Lady Luna, Descendant of Rowena were moments like that, when you could order someone to behave. Much better then being a princess in Slytherin. All though those
baths Sophronia raved about would be nice. Oh well, Sophronia would invite her anyway regardless of her unofficial status there. She was just as much a Princess of Slytherin, as Dora Tonks was a Queen in that House.

XoooooX

Severus watched the situation deteriorate further, one of the Beauxbatons students whisked a schoolmate off like a satyr. Then all but two of those girls pulled out their wands and started randomly casting spells.

Then the little one, the Veela the Queen had mentioned, was running around trying to fly. Her sister looked shocked, but wasn't using her wand. The whatever it was wasn't affecting her.

Gryffindor had a food fight and a hoard of spiders. The only one not affected was Fred Weasley - of course. Probably one of his inventions. What is Slytherin's name was going on here?

Most of Ravenclaw was sleeping, thank Salazar. Although Chang and Davies were acting odd. One minute, they were normal, then Chang was copping a feel of herself. Davies pulled a wand on her and failed to cast. They were lectured by Luna, the Veela Seer, they started to head over to the Head table when they ended up caught in the middle of the Gryffindor food fight. So Hufflepuff had gone crazy, fist fights? In HUFFLEPUFF? What were those girls doing to Diggory? On second thought, he didn't WANT to know…

What were the adults going to do anything about this?

Dumbledore was glaring at Peeves and muttering under his breath.

Pomona was coaxing a vine to grow on the table…

Flitwick was in shock…

There was a loud noise.

Severus turned to see Hagrid and Madam Maxime looking and acting like a pair of Muggle boxers.

Then, he heard both Adrian and Luna order their Houses to behave..

Harry, Neville and Blaise were like punished puppies who messed and they were trying to gain forgiveness.

Was Adrian holding Neville's wand?

XoooooX

Fred finally decided he'd had enough chaos; so, he weaved a powerful compulsion charm, "LIONS! SIT DOWN! THAT IS ENOUGH!"

Gryffindor stopped mid-madness.
Fred spelled away the whole mess at their table, the spilled drinks, tossed food and almost banished ALL the spiders to the Forbidden Forest. He changed his mind sending one to sleep in Ron's wand pocket. He undid the spell that made Granger a giant spider.

The cacophony was finally loud enough to rouse Deborah. She looked around and saw her calm Housemates about to, were they going to rape Cedric? That was blasphemy! They were Hufflepuffs, not rampaging monsters. She put her hands on her hips, "THAT IS ENOUGH! ZACHARIAS! YOU STOP FIGHTING WITH TONY! GIRLS YOU WILL GET OFF CEDRIC RIGHT NOW! WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU ALL? HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN WHO WE ARE?"

Sheepish girls crawled off Cedric. They moved to the far end of the table.

From the moment she raised her voice it took five minutes to stop them all cold.

Deborah had a sense of satisfaction; a coward was she? She'd done what no one else did. She'd reigned in her House. Maybe being nice wasn't always the right choice. Sometimes, you had to know when to be firm.

The House chaos had stopped somehow…

Severus finally decided the most prudent course of action dealing with Hagrid and Madam Maxime was to knock them out with a heavy sleeping spell. They looked like they were involved in one of those rough and violent animalistic courtships that involved dangerous fighting. He used the sleep spell because Hagrid's thick skin made it difficult to cast spells at. Sometimes, Severus wondered if he wasn't part giant or something.

Pomona was stunned but lightly, using his wand against fellow teachers wasn't quite his idea of a pleasant morning.

He used a short hex that gave the victim a light shock on Filius to get him out of his shock.

He ignored Dumbledore as he used an altered switching spell to exchange the air in the Great Hall for some cold fresh air from outside.

He had to stun Septima and Aurora when they decided to start snogging at the Head table.

It took a while before everyone began to act anything close to normal with the exception of Draco and the girl, he thundered at Draco in a way he never had. He'd always been reluctant to punish him. Now as his blood parent he had it, "Draco Lucius Malfoy, you stop that this instant!"

Draco stopped immediately, sinking to the floor with tears in his eyes. He'd disappointed papa, he was a naughty child…
The shouting finally woke Fleur up, she yelled at her sister, "Gabriella Evette Delacour, you get over here right now! I'll call Maman."

Gabrielle stopped trying to fly and walked back to her sister, hanging her head as tears filled her eyes.

Fleur didn't know what had happened except that everyone had acted like they'd gone crazy. Was this supposed to be part of the Prank War or had something gone terribly wrong? She glanced up looking for her formidable Headmistress only to see that all she could see of her was her enormous black pumps. The sounds of loud snoring filled the Great Hall, Madame Maxime was sleeping…?

XoooooX

Whatever happened, Severus wasn't going to rest until he figured it out. Something made Remus extremely feral to the point where he was going to attack Dumbledore. That wasn't in Remus' character at all…

Chapter End Notes

Chapter 39- Prank War Round One Aftermath

Severus finally had Filius coherent and they went to assess the status of the students.

Filius went to check on his House first.

Severus knew that Fred Weasley had something to do with this and he would find out what.

XoooooX

Filius approached his House table; most of them were snoring peacefully. He glanced at Luna Lovegood who appeared to be a bright spot in this madness. "Ms. Lovegood what happened?"

"First round of a Prank War. I think it ended up a little more chaotic then anticipated. Someone dosed most of them with a sleeping potion in the Pumpkin Juice. Although it could be something as simple as Valerian root. They'll sleep it off. It's Cho and Rodger that had the issue. I believe someone switched them. Not sure how exactly but I'm sure you could determine it." Luna said politely.

Filius swallowed, this wasn't exactly what he'd expecting over an hour after hearing he was Governor Malfoy's choice for Headmaster. He started casting detection charms to determine what had been done to these two.

Unlike Gryffindor, no one had thought to bespell the stains or spilled breakfast things.

XooooooX

Severus glared at Fred, "Don't even try to tell me you didn't have a hand in this."

"Technically I didn't. I'll claim instigating the whole spider/Ron thing but I had nothing to do with the truth thing."

Severus moved forward, trying to appear menacing, "What about that bottle Peeves broke? Don't even tell me it wasn't one of yours."

Fred shrugged, "It was but I didn't make it and I sure didn't give it Peeves. It was experimental. If I'd known it would do anything like this I would never have sent it to George."

Severus glared at him; he seemed to be telling the truth. "How did you get them to stop? Why weren't you affected?"

Fred was really nervous, was it his inheritance? Was that why it didn't affect him? He swallowed, "We always test products on ourselves first. It didn't do anything like this to me but it was a closed environment, only two test subjects. This was a larger space. It must have gotten stronger. I didn't think it would anything like this. I swear! I used a compulsion charm to make them stop. I don't know why it worked it just did." Moonlight madness would need to be either reworked or the concept thrown out…
Severus was sure he was telling at least a partial truth. He took a step closer, "Nearly every student was excited and apprehensive. Did they all know something was happening?"

Fred shrugged, "I kept it mostly to the House Quidditch Team. I did include Thomas and Finnigan though. I don't know if the other Houses informed everyone. I think Slytherin all knew but I can't be sure."

"Explain this 'prank war'." Severus said sharply

Fred sighed, "It's an old Hogwarts tradition. It used to be a yearly ritual to stave off winter blues when storms kept them indoors. It could only happen if all four Houses agreed to participate, although. Slytherin invited Durmstrang and Beauxbatons to join us. Durmstrang got George. That Moonlight Madness sure was potent. Got to hand it to my twin. I think his group and Durmstrang took the first round."

Severus sighed, "Is there any way to call it off?"

Fred shrugged, "Ask a Ravenclaw. Hogwarts rules aren't my thing."

Severus snorted, "You just live to break them."

Fred bowed, "I live to serve. What's life without a little chaos?"

Severus rolled his eyes; he noticed Lovegood's seemingly innocent but bemused expression, "Lovegood!"

Luna turned towards him, all sweetness and light, "Yes?"

Severus cursed under his breath; he KNEW she was involved in this. Why did she dare act so innocent? It reminded him of Lily when she was planning a surprise, "Tell me what's going on."

"A little entertainment that got out of control. Most were just minor. I think Hufflepuff put a sleeping potion in our Pumpkin juice but it might have simply been Valerian root. Slytherin obviously was responsible for the truth potion or whatever it was. It didn't behave like a normal truth potion. It must have been one of your experimental potions. Perhaps, they grabbed it by mistake? If Fred says the chaos wasn't him, you probably should believe him."

Severus closed his eyes, "Merlin help me but I do." He admitted grudgingly.

Luna's lips twitched, "Good. A food fight in Gryffindor. That was…unexpected. Fist fights, screaming matching and whatever they were trying to do to poor Cedric. It seemed like Hufflepuff totally lost it. Rowena's staff, I'm glad most of them," gesturing at her slumbering housemates, "ended up passing out before the madness took hold. Although Slytherin was a surprise. It must have broke over Gryffindor but got stronger as it travelled from table to table so it took longer to affect them." She started to giggle, "My cousin Draco was hilarious. Trying to fly, he was acting like he was four rather then fourteen."

Severus closed his eyes; trying not to smile, it was sort of funny. It would be more 'interesting' if he hadn't had to have Remus removed. "Can we just end this and declare Durmstrang the winner?"

Luna laughed shaking her head, "Of course not. Do you stop a Quidditch match five minutes into a game because you don't like the score? You wouldn't. It's not about winning professor. It's about using your wits and thinking around corners. It's entertainment. It must run its course. You can supervise you know. You are a Head of House. It's part of the game. It's up to Heads of House and prefects to oversee. It may have been extremely chaotic but no rules were broken that I can see. No
part of the castle was damaged during breakfast. Nor was any student in danger of death or maiming. A few epikseys and bruise balm then Hufflepuff will be right as rain. Most of us are too restrained. Pranking is a sense of freedom, with two simple rules it's all fun."

"Oh I'll be supervising." Severus said dryly, "You can count on that. This 'moonlight madness' is not to be used again. I forbid it Fred."

Fred shrugged, "No problem Professor. As entertaining as it was to watch, it's too potent to ever sell. I'm going to tell George to go back to his notes and see what went wrong. Unless it's subdued we couldn't sell it." He shivered, "I can't imagine what might have happened it was set off in Diagon Alley."

XoooooX

Remus paced, punching walls. He had been unceremoniously dumped in this sealed chamber by a Malfoy elf. The elf was currently hovering out of his reach. What the hell happened?

One moment the Great Hall was completely normal, he'd been eating his breakfast as usual. Then the Hall was quieter, he'd glanced up to see most of the Ravenclaw House was sleeping.

Then came the loud truth telling at the Hufflepuff and Gryffindor tables, which led to shouting. His ears had been ringing…

As that was reaching fever pitch, Peeves showed up singing a ghastly song about Dumbledore that insulted the Headmaster and praised the narcissist poltergeist. He could smell the anger, hatred and even embarrassment steaming off Dumbledore. What was that all about?

Peeves broke something and he'd been fine one minute and the next he was about to leap on Albus. He'd wanted to rip him limb from limb, to make the headmaster pay in blood for the death of Severus' child. He punched the wall and slid down it, pressing his forehead to the cool stone. Damn it! He wasn't a violent person…he spent so much time and energy reining in his wolf that to have nearly lost it…

What the hell was in that bottle Peeves broke? It had to be responsible. He hated to blame other people or things for his mistakes but he knew it wasn't because he was a werewolf that he'd wanted to kill Dumbledore. Wanting and actually doing were two very different animals.

Was he going to be alright? Would he be safe? This was ridiculous…

He couldn't believe he'd lost control in front of Severus.

How embarrassing…

By Godric's Sword, he was grateful that his mate's quick thinking had saved him from a bloody mistakes that would have landed him in Azkaban or Kissed.

XooooooX

Slowly, everyone in the Great Hall was returning to normal. Hufflepuff boys like Zacharias and Tony who had been fighting were helping each other up and dusting the other off. Smiling sheepishly, they shook hands and declared themselves friends.

Gryffindor minus Ron weren't worse for the wear, they were a little hungry and due to the food fight they remembered half ashamed they'd wasted a lot of food. Fred watched bemused at the blushing girls and the nervously chuckling guys. Not that he really cared but the bag of tarantulas being
upended over his head still visibly shook Ron. Although Hermione, a former 'friend' turning into a giant spider in front of him probably wasn't his favourite experience.

XooooooX

Ravenclaw hadn't quite woken up yet…

Filius had managed to reverse the charm that switched Chang and Davies.

Rodger couldn't help staring at Cho in a way that was clearly undressing her with his eyes.

Cho felt ill thinking about Rodger, her captain and a prefect, in her mind and touching her body like that.

Luna whistled the Ravenclaw House song penned by a former student, entitled 'Ah to be an Eagle and soar forever'.

XooooooX

Fleur examined her sister and found her in perfect health. Nothing she found could explain her sister running around like she was three again; unable to sit still and run around pretending to fly. She reprimanded Gabrielle in sharp French, admonishing her that she'd misbehaved, that Maman would be disappointed. That Gabrielle had promised Père that she would behave. Fleur fervently hoped that Madame Maxime hadn't seen before taking a nap.

Her schoolmate the Nymph had been unmoved, if she herself was an ice queen, the Nymph was a stone person.

Fleur was sure that mocking poltergeist had something to do with it. Why did they allow such a creature to remain? If one tried to take up residence in Palais de Beauxbatons it would be expelled immediately. Madame Maxime wouldn't put up with it.

She'd thought this 'Prank War' would be like a game. It seemed funny to hear what the other students said to each other or the Hogwarts students whose table she shared fall asleep after drinking juice. She'd smelled something off about it and refused it. She hadn't even allowed Gabrielle to have any. Although, Gabrielle napping at breakfast would have been preferable to her running around like she was three again.

XooooooX

After setting Davies and Chang to rights, Filius went around checking on the other students. He shook his head when he found the statues of Gryffindors and Hufflepuffs. He cancelled the charms and then noticed that the Smith siblings were acting odd. Deborah was being snooty and looked like she'd been in a fight. While Zacharias looked worried, he was fussing over Cedric. He sighed, "Smith!"

Both heads turned to him.

"I might be able to help you out of your little predicament."

Deborah muttered, "Thank Merlin." Or would that be Zacharias?

The one fussing over Cedric, patted his shoulder, "I think you'll be alright physically. You need a nap I think." They stood and walked over to Professor Flitwick.
Filius swished his wand and muttered the proper incantation, "There. Is that better?"

Deborah looked down to see her own hands, a smile crossing her lips, "Thank you."

Zacharias mumbled something and then walked off.

Deborah sighed, "I wish that boy would learn some manners. I believe he still fails to understand the concept of being gracious. I thank you for both of us. It was more than a little awkward being in his body instead of mine. I don't know what spell was used but I am eminently grateful you switched us back."

Filius flushed a bit, unused to praise from a beautiful young woman. "No trouble at all Ms. Smith. Why don't you hurry back to Cedric? He still looks in shock poor boy."

Deborah nodded, "I shouldn't wonder. Fifteen Hufflepuff girls trying to strip him in the Great Hall to do Helga knows what to him. She was almost glad she'd been in Zach's body, so she wouldn't have done anything unseemly to their beloved Cedric. He didn't deserve that…

XoooooX

Severus was finally satisfied that things were winding down, he cast a Sonorus charm on himself, "Students will return to their House. Today's first lessons have been cancelled. You are expected to read the next chapter in your texts. Prefects will be expected to meet the professors in the Staff room in one hour."

He could see that his light stun was wearing off; he made his way to Septima, Aurora and Pomona, "Are you ladies quite alright?"

Septima reached up to feel her hair was out of place.

Aurora notice her robes were unusually wrinkled, "What happened?"

Severus sighed, "The four United Houses decided to resurrect an archaic past time. The Prank War."

Pomona raised an eyebrow, "Oh really?"

"It seems," Severus admitted reluctantly, "that Hogwarts has lost the first round. One of the pranks was a little more powerful then it was intended to be. It affected students and professors in a variety of ways. My apologies, if you checked, it was my magical signature that cast a light stun on you. I'm not sure if you'll have any memory of the events proceeding being stunned but I was hoping to prevent you from embarrassing yourselves." He glanced at Pomona, "Pomona, you might wish to check on your House, they had a break out of fist fights, shouting matches and poor Cedric was attacked by fifteen young women."

Pomona's jaw dropped, "My House? Fist Fights? Shouting Matches? Cedric attacked?"

Severus nodded, "I believe Prefect Smith managed to get them to stop before any really harm was done." He pulled out a bottle of dittany, "Here. You can treat their injuries if you must. I think someone switched the Smiths. So although I believe it was the brother who was fighting, it will be the elder sister who carries the bruises."

Pomona was still in shock as the short dumpy looking witch made her way to check on her House. Whatever possess them to act so dreadfully, she was fearfully disappointed.

Severus turned to the former Ravenclaw couple; "We'll be meeting in the Staff room in an hour. I
suggest you both go off to freshen up. You'll want to breathe fresh air. If you can't remember its probably for the best. I was probably the only one who noticed. As the future Deputy Headmaster I can surely be trust to keep my mouth shut."

Mocking laughter was heard.

"You Severus? Deputy Headmaster? What Headmaster would be so foolish? I'm starting to wonder if allowing you to teach or become Head of Slytherin wasn't one of my more foolish choices."

Severus snorted, "You thinking hiring me was a mistake?" his black eyes flashed with anger and some hatred, "I'll tell you what your biggest mistakes were; murdering my child, turning a blind eye to the abuse I suffered at home and at Hogwarts, letting Lily be MURDERED, letting Black be sent to Azkaban for something he was innocent of and sending Harry to that horse-face woman who BEAT AND STARVED HIM!" Severus gave Dumbledore his best Slytherinesque look, the one where he was clearly dirt beneath his shoe. He learned that expression from Lucius who had turned a shy abused Halfblood son of a bloodtraitor into the most Slytherin of Slytherins. Not that he hadn't been subjected to that exact expression from Black, Mad Bellatrix and crazy Narcissa.

"My, my Severus you have a lot of anger in you. Is it safe for you to continue to teach here?"

Severus turned his back on the man; although he knew Dumbledore was wandless he still cast a powerful shield charm. It was his way of saying 'screw you' to the man who had tried to destroy him.

If he could he would have left Madame Maxime and Hagrid to sleep off the sleeping spell but as the future Deputy Headmaster he owed the large Headmistress not only an explanation but also an apology. He was wiry, he still bore his scars but he was stronger then he looked. He knelt besides Madam Maxime, cancelling the sleep spell and tapped her forearm, "Madame?" He said in perfect French.

The large woman bolted up, shock permeating her features as she nearly knocked him over. "What has happened to me? Why am I laying on the floor?"

Severus stood slowly and against his better judgment reached down to help the woman up. Which she graciously accepted.

Severus bowed, holding up his wand in a manner that was clearly apologetic and not threatening, "Would you allow me?"

The shocked features of the woman didn't appear to object.

Severus spelled away the dust and stains, used a spell Lucius was fond of to make wrinkles in clothing disappeared. He bowed, "My apologies Headmistress. It seems that the children in our care attempted to have a little fun at each other's expense. Rest assured I shall be lecturing them most severely."

"A little fun? Our expense? Please explain more clearly Professor."

Severus held out his hand in apology, "It seems that the students of the three schools agreed to participate in an archaic pastime, it's called a 'Prank War'. It consists of jokes and tricks. At least four were pulled at breakfast and it seems that even your students participated. I believe they turned some Hogwarts students into statues and managed to switch their bodies."

Madam Maxime mumbled, "That idiot Jacinto Faria! I know he had a hand in your 'switching' it's a much disapproved of past time of his. I'll be speaking to him severely."
Severus bowed again, "It is not my place to tell you how to discipline your students. However I would point out that no harm was done. No one here is displeased with them. In fact, I'll admit the four students that he may have switched were probably affected in a positive way. I believe they needed to walk in each other's shoes for a while. As for the statue issue, I'm afraid your young ladies weren't in control of their actions. One of the pranks was an invention that reacted very differently when it was released in this room. There will be inquiries as to why it reacted that way but I'm positive your girls weren't in control of their actions. I have to commend your Champion and one of her schoolmates, they remained in control of themselves."

Madam Maxime knew at once that it was the Veela and the Nymph he was referring to, "Thank you. Why was I on the floor?"

Severus bit his lip, "My apologies, you and our Care of Magical Creatures professor who coincidentally cares for your beautiful Abraxans were starting to fight. I knew he has extremely thick skin, which prevents one from using stunning spells against him. So I merely used a strong sleep spell. You can see he is beginning to wake. I did not think you would appreciate being responsible for damage to Hogwarts property. I was sure you wouldn't forgive me if I used anything other then a sleeping spell."

"This 'Prank War' as you call it. You're sure my students agreed to participate?"

"Indubitably." Severus agreed, "The nature of it is that once it has begun it must run its course. However, it has been a long time since we have had this past time enacted. The Hogwarts professors will be amending the rules and question the participating students. When we have finished, we would like to speak with you and Headmaster Karkaroff. If the students are still interesting in continuing I believe we will have to agree to new rules."

"Very well. I will question my students. When you discover why your Professor and I were fighting you will inform me."

"Of course Madame. At this point I can only speculate. I hope you two," he pointed to Hagrid; "don't have something in common that might explain this." He leaned up to whisper, "It was not an ordinary fight, it was more of a fight for dominance. Like it was part of a violent courtship if you pardon me Madame. I shall not repeat this but I thought you should know. The prank used that was responsible for this has been banned." He bowed again, "Good day Madame, I shall be informing you as soon as I have more answers."

Her frightened face as she looked at the yawning Hagrid wasn't helped by her soft reply, "See that you do." She stalked off to collect her students only to realize two were missing.

Severus looked up to see the Great Hall almost cleared; he hurried to Hufflepuff's table to confer with Pomona and Filius.

Filius heard him coming, "Ah Severus. Do we know what happened?"

Severus sighed, "I have suspicions. The staff and Prefects will be meeting us in the Staff Room at ten. Pardon me. I must make two stops before then."

Filius looked around, "Where is Remus?"

Severus stiffened, "I had to have him removed. That Moonlight Madness of the Weasley-Prewett twins affected him badly. I'll have to have him examined. I hope that being removed quickly stabled his emotions."
"Yes. I understand. Go check on Remus." Filius said reaching up to pat his arm. "We'll hold off the meeting until you return."

Adrian had kept his court around and even managed to get Draco to his side after their Head of House reprimanded him. He called out to their Professor, "Sir?"

Severus turned to see the chastised Court of Slytherin, "Yes?"

"I'm worried about them. I don't know what was in that bottle Peeves had,"

Severus sneered, "Moonlight Madness. Fred and George found a way to bottle the madness some people experience during a full moon I suspect. Some were more affected then others."

"I think you should have some of them looked over to make sure it doesn't leave any lasting effect. Like Draco, Harry, Neville and Blaise." Adrian said firmly, they were going to become Veela or Chuvash upon their inheritance. He'd rather be safe then sorry…

Severus nodded sharply, "Escort them to my quarters. I'll summon Healers."

Luna said quietly, "You should let me floo call Anastasia Morino. She's a Court Healer. I'm sure Blaise having been raised partially in the culture knows a Healer. Although you could always ask Sirius, I'm sure he would call for his personal healer."

Severus nodded, "I'd like you checked out as well. I want to know why it didn't effect you and Fleur but it affected Draco and the little one."

Luna laughed, "That's simple. Think about it. Name the one thing the Beauxbatons Champion and I have in common. Draco and the young one have the opposite in common. Had they their inheritances they wouldn't have been affected. Same with Harry, Neville and Blaise, compared to Adrian. He made them behave. They haven't the inheritances yet but its in their personalities, their blood to obey a dominant. It doesn't matter that Adrian isn't their dominant. He naturally has the authority to make them mind. Just as Adrian had the authority to force Slytherin to behave."

Adrian flushed, he didn't like thinking about his directions as forcing. He wasn't really keen on the idea that he was a descendant of Salazar Slytherin.

"My Apartments. I'd like you all checked out. The entire court, even the guardians."

"Fred as well?"

"I want him to be checked by a healer and then explain his moonlight madness." Severus said sharply before stalking off his robes fluttering behind him like wings.

Chapter End Notes

Troll?

A/N: There it is the Aftermath. I hope you enjoy it. Anyone want to hazard a guess why Severus wasn't affected? Why it affected some more then others?

Reminder for new readers about Unlikely Heroes: Fallen Feathers, Mirrored Scales it contains stories/scenes that fill out the secondary characters that didn't fit in the main storyline so for those you are fond of the Weasley-Prewett family more of their combined story will be told there. I know I've been ignoring Oliver/Percy, Septimus/Cedrella as Arthur/Gideon in Unlikely Heroes, so I'm working my way up to it. I'm still in early November in the side story while in the main story line is in early December.
Chapter 40- Unexpected Revelations

Sirius I, King of the Chuvash escorted the still shell-shocked young Lord back the apartment at Hogwarts that he shared with his lovers Severus and Remus.

He settled Lucius in a comfortable armchair and poured him a drink from the concealed bar. Professors after all wouldn't want it to be known that they indulged a little after dealing with children and teenagers all day. He handed the glass that held two fingers worth of firewhiskey. "Here. Drink that."

Lucius drank it and then stared at the glass as if it had all the answers, "Me? They want me to take Crouch's place on the Council? I've always wanted it…I'm only argued a handful of cases, Harry's and Blacks as well as a few on my own account. Me? I'm on the budget and foreign affairs committees…"

"You wanted it. I wonder who will be replacing Dumbledore."

Lucius set the glass down, "It would have to be someone with time in the Wizengamot and with a background in either law enforcement or law. Amelia started as Auror, Augusta was appointed due to her son being one, they wanted Frank but Frank felt it was a conflict of interest. Out of respect for that Augusta would recuse herself from any case he was involved with. When Dumbledore is finally brought to justice I'll have to recuse myself because I'll be trying a case against him." He laughed sardonically, "I'll enjoy that. It will be a joy trying him under the archaic laws. I can think of all sorts of lovely things to charge him with, line theft on behalf of the Princes, murder of a firstborn, abuse of a pregnant minor- he threatened a very ill teenager with an abusive Muggle father to expel him and make him return there. That would upset even the most stoic of persons."

"Of course. I'll be bringing or Andromeda will bring a host of other charges on behalf of the Black family. There are charges regarding the Potters which either you or Andromeda will be bringing."

The door was open by a breathless Severus.

Lucius was on his feet at once, "Sev, what's wrong?"

"Wrong? Nothing wrong. Except our brilliant students decided to stage a prank war and involve the visiting schools. George Prewett-Weasley joined the Durmstrang students. Unfortunately for us he decided to use something called Moonlight Madness. It had an adverse affect on Remus. I had to have him removed from the Great Hall, because he went feral and was about to attack Dumbledore. I had him taken to Number Seven, Malloy Place. It just devolved into chaos. The witch couples nearly had sex in the Great Hall. Some fought like children. Others ran around like toddlers. Gryffindor and two Ravenclaws had a food fight. Some students were put to sleep while some others were turned to stone; two sets of students had their bodies switched. Peeves was his own usual nonsensical self if you add in the bag of tarantulas he dumped on Ronald Dumbledore."

"What affected did it have on my kin?" Sirius I asked worried.
"It seemed to have no affect on Adrian. He was able to order Slytherin to behave. Neville like Sprout tried to redecorate the Great Hall with plants but Adrian demanded his wand. Blaise and Harry attempted to leave the table yet Adrian brought them in line."

"I wonder," Sirius mused, "If they obeyed because they are submissives or because of something else."

"I'd still like them to be looked over by a Chuvash Healer. I'm sure you have one affiliated with the Court? I want all the students to be properly examined but I worry most for those with creature inheritances."

Sirius looked at him strangely, "Your glamour is bleeding light."

Lucius stared at him, "What glamour? That's how Severus always looks."

Sirius stepped towards Severus, "It didn't affect those with active creature inheritances huh? So tell me Son of the House of Prince what your inheritance was."

Severus turned pale, shaking, "What are you taking about?"

"You have a glamour anchored to your skin, why?"

"Some things are private." Severus snapped.

"So private your own mates don't know them? Tell me what a human wizard needs two mates for. Why do you need a creature of light and a creature of dark as mates?"

Severus stiffened, "I am that which I appear to be."

"Thou liest. I can feel your magic. It's old. It feels older than my own. What are you Severus?"

Severus glared, "None of your business. I'm the same person I was yesterday."

"Yesterday you weren't exposed to something that turned a werewolf feral, made humans rowdy and affected Veela and Chuvash younglings." Sirius snarled back.

Lucius was shocked; did Severus have a creature inheritance? Could his mate have kept something besides the forced abortion of their child from him?

Severus sneered, "Maybe I keep this a secret for my own protection? So no one has anything more to hang over my head? You disappeared from your family to keep your inheritance a secret! Let me keep mine."

Sirius snapped, "My mate knows all my secrets, even ones that only the King should know. You insult your mates by keeping it a secret."

Lucius finally managed to speak. "Did Lily know?"

Severus groaned, "Of course not! If it weren't for Pomfrey's gossiping ways Lily would never have discovered my pregnancy."

Lucius let out the breath he didn't even realize he was holding, "Thank Salazar. I don't think I could handle it if she knew."

Severus felt guilty; "You know how I hate for anyone to have leverage over me. I've seen what people have done to Remus. I know how your father reacted. There was no way I was letting
anyone know a secret like that. It would be far to easy to kill me."

Sirius I looked thoughtful, "That explains it then. Though I wonder how you managed to escape their notice? Someone as powerful as you are should have been taken to their Court."

Severus stiffened, "I beg you sir. Speak no more about it. I would not have it spoke of. I would sooner die."

Sirius I ignored him, "I wonder if that was why he used that spell. Perhaps he worried anything else might not work."

Severus glared, "What are you talking about?"

"It's been ages since a witch or wizard conceived so young. Fifteen? Coupled with your advanced magical abilities…"

Severus froze, "He couldn't know…Albus could have killed me easily. I wouldn't have known…"

"He wanted you completely dependent on him. Afraid to defy him because he knows you're stronger."

Severus whispered, "Don't say anything more. I don't want to consider it. What matters are my students! I want them examined to be sure that 'Moonlight Madness' didn't hurt them."

"Fine! " Sirius I snapped. "I'll summon one of my healers."

XooooooX

Luna sighed, sneaking away to send a message to the queen. It was apologizing for revealing herself but assuring her that it was necessary and that all possible precautions were being taken.

She also requested that one of the court healers come immediately to Hogwarts. They were in the middle of a prank war. One of the pranks got out of control, affecting her cousin and Miss Delacour's sister. Due to their active Veela both herself and Miss Delacour were seemingly not affected but she would appreciate it if it were confirmed.

The letter of course was in Runic, the language of the Veela Court.

XooooooX

Harry was still shaky from Adrian's harsh verbal commanding to behave himself. He hadn't been bad had he? He didn't really remember…

Draco however was fuming because Papa had yelled at him publicly.

Neville was hurt, not because Adrian had yelled at him but because he'd disappointed the King of Slytherin.

Blaise however was furious, why did Adrian think he had the right to command him like that? Adrian was not his dominant! He was not subject to the whims of every dominant! Just his own… what he remembered from before Adrian forced them to obey was an overwhelming need for Charlie.

XooooooX

Lucius remembered vaguely about a healer who worked for the werewolf support services. He'd
gone to school with them, and been in the Slug club, he was a decent potioneer but not as wildly
talented as his Sev. He kissed his mate, "You check on Remus. I've got a healer to find."

XooooooX

Severus entered the floo after Lucius but heading for Number Seven, Malloy Place

He hurried down to the basement to check on Remus, he rapped on the door, "Remus?"

An achingly familiar voice answered, "Sev? What the hell happened?"

Severus parted the wards and entered, "How do you feel?"

"Embarrassed. Did I hurt anyone?"

Severus shook his head, "No. Our brilliant students decided to declare a six-way rather then four-
way prank war. Most of it was harmless stuff like Hufflepuff putting valerian root in Ravenclaw's
pumpkin juice. Slytherin, I believe through Draco got a hold of an experimental truth potion I've
been working on. It had Gryffindors and Hufflepuffs telling unasked for truths. Fred and George
used some of their inventions. Durmstrang managed to participate. However, their involvement
revolved an item called 'Moonlight madness'."

Remus blinked and then horror filled his face, "You mean it managed to replicate some of the wild
behaviour some persons exhibit during a full moon?"

Severus nodded, "That's how Fred explains it. Now some reacted more then others, in Gryffindor
with the exception of Fred, it merely resulted in a food fight. It broke over their table after all. It
seemed to get stronger as it passed tables. Most of the Ravenclaws were asleep due to valerian root
but it made Chang and Davies a bit crazy. Hufflepuff dissolved into screaming matches and fist
fists." He sighed, "And I'll not get it into how it affected Slytherin."

"That bad huh?"

"Draco was running in circles trying to fly."

"It affected a Veela?"

"He's not come into his inheritance yet. It affected the young Chuvash as well. Yet had seemingly no
affect on those with active creature inheritances." Severus said shortly, ignoring his own hidden gifts.

"How did you escape its hold?" Remus seemed curious.

"That's neither here nor there. Someone had to have a level head. Mostly because Dumbledore was
muttering threats regarding Peeves and Flitwick was in shock."

Remus looked both chastised and disappointed, "So you don't trust me either."

Severus snorted, "With a past like mine, you don't trust anyone completely, not even your lovers."

Remus sighed, "Must be lonely."

They sat in silence.

XooooooX

Lucius made his way into the Department and Control of Magical Creatures with great reluctance. In
his opinion, the only reason that the Ministry bothered with werewolves out of the humanoid creatures was because they failed to have an organized structure that allowed for policing one's own. They had no overall leader such as the Veela Queen or the Chuvash King. The vampires had a coven or two in each country. It was said every seven hundred years the leaders of the covens converged to chose another leader. That is if the present leader was beaten or killed. The Fae communities mostly lived apart, it wasn't really that it was illegal for non-humans such as goblins and house elves to use wands it was that humans needed them to focus their magic. Creatures such as vampires, Chuvash and Veela were naturally magically grounded; only those who lived among the Wizarding kind would use wands.

Lucius ignored the other members of the Department as he made his way to the division that housed werewolf support services.

He bypassed a secretary, "Sir! I mean my lord you can't go in there! Damocles is in a private meeting."

Lucius ignored them rapped on the door once and opened it, casting up strong privacy wards and locking the door.

Two heads snapped towards him looking a little guilty.

Lucius eyed them both, before turning his attention to the one behind the desk. "You are Damocles formerly Belby of Ravenclaw? Creator of the Wolfsbane potion"

The wizard behind the desk frowned, "I really hate that name. It makes it sound like a poison. I was once a member of the Belby family but no more. My name is Damocles Martin. This is my Bondmate Corey."

The man rose and held out his hand.

Lucius saw the familiar amber eyes, "I can see why they were so foolish as to disown you not that I agree with it." Accepting the hand for a firm shake.

The werewolf named Corey looked surprised, "I would have thought you would have hated me and mine."

Lucius shrugged, "Perhaps I might have, had I not been born with creature blood myself. I wish I had the pleasure of the luxury of visiting. However, I must know at once if it is true that you are a healer Damocles who specializes in werewolves."

Damocles was speechless at first, "Yes? Why?"

"I have a lover, a professor at Hogwarts who is a lycanthrope. The students there declared a prank war. Unfortunately one of their 'pranks' was a creation called moonlight madness. Remus is a gentle bookish person who might have been better suited to Ravenclaw then Gryffindor."

Corey interrupted, "Lupin? Was exposed to something called moonlight madness? What did he do?"

Lucius grinned, "Nothing, my Bondmate Deputy Headmaster pro-tem Severus Prince-Malfoy had him removed from the Great Hall and taken to my London home. We warded a room in the cellar for him during full moons. I'd like to have him examined."

"How did it affect him?" Damocles asked getting his coat.

Lucius sighed, "It merely made him a bit feral he was clearly intent on ripping Dumbledore to
shreds."

Corey looked aghast, "You've got to be kidding. Lupin? He's less violent then a stubborn two year old."

Lucius swallowed, "We share a mate, Severus. Severus became pregnant while in school. He was forced to have an abortion. An exam by a competent healer revealed that he was in truth cursed infertile. Remus and I are terribly angry with Dumbledore."

Corey growled, "If someone did that to Damocles I can't imagine what I might do."

"You forget. My family tried."

Corey spun to face him, and then calmed. "They failed, thank Merlin. I'd come with you but Theseus hates being cub sat. If Carys was older we could leave her in charge but she's always got her nose in a book."

Lucius saw the looks on their faces, "They're your children."

Corey grinned, "Stubborn little mites. Carys is right as rain. Not a drop of lycanthrope in her. Theseus though he's got the temper, prefers rare meat and understands canines. He's always bringing home strays. When he begs your heart melts, 'please can I keep him?' Hard to say no to that cub... well I'll be off."

Damocles stood kissing his cheek and then took out his healer kit. "As worried as I am about being able to bottle a full moon's affects I am curious about these inventors."

Lucius gestured and the door opened, "After you examine Remus I'll be sure to introduce you to at least one of them."

Chapter End Notes

A/N: For those of you extremely curious to certain questions such as what Fred's inheritance is, what was in the rest of the letter from Gringotts' Remus didn't read said. What happened when Sirius I questioned Riddle and extracted memories, whether Riddle is mentally salvageable, more insight into the side couples- Viktor and George as well as Charlie and Blaise ect, perhaps what is going to happen when Andromeda wakes- what happens in Sirius I's manor or other scenes that don't fit in this story but might be of interest. So I've posted the first five scenes under the title of Unlikely Heroes: Fallen Feathers, Mirrored Scales for your enjoyment. In case my Unlikely Heroes readers don't have me on Author alert I thought I'd posted about it here. It's dedicated to my favourite reviewer Child of the sea96, one of many I promise.

I'd welcome chapter suggestions for it. So far I've posted Fred's inheritance, Severus' Nightmare, The Gringotts' Report, Lucius and Severus' Bonding/Draco's Adoption and Percy moves/dumps Penelope. I hope you enjoy them if you decide to read.
Lucius returned at once to Number Seven Malloy Place with Healer/Potion master Damocles at his heels.

Damocles looked around, "Far superior to anything my brother has claim to."

Lucius knew Lord Belby, having gone to school with both brothers. He inclined his head gracefully, "Thank you. Come this way."

He proceeded to led his companion toward the specially warded room in his cellar.

Severus had studied every ward and spell for their mutual protection before casting them on this space.

Damocles cast a few charms to identify the wards, he seemed thoughtful, "Quite secure. You said Lord Prince had him removed here when the gas affected him?"

Lucius nodded, "It's what I was told. Severus was clearly worried for him." So was he, but he wasn't quite ready to admit that to a virtual stranger.

Damocles made the wards part for them.

They entered to find Remus grumbling and Severus pacing.

Remus' eyes narrowed, "Aren't you one of the Belbys? A former Ravenclaw?"

Damocles winced, "I was once known by that name. However I was disowned for falling in love with and bonding to a werewolf who was younger then myself. I have had no contact with them other than howlers. I'm a healer; I work with the Department for the Control and Regulation of Magical Creatures, specifically in the Werewolf Support division. I'm mated to Corey Martin, who is our liaison with a small pack. They trust me because I've done the unimaginable."

Remus blinked, "The unimaginable?"

Damocles smirked, "I bonded to a werewolf, I let him take his pleasure with me and I've born him two children."

"Are they subject to the moon?" Remus asked curiously.

"No. My daughter Carys shows no signs of lycanthropy, while my son Theseus merely acts like he's been wounded and shows few signs."

"There are few female werewolves..." Remus said thoughtfully.

"In my experience, the only way to pass on true lycanthropy to one's offspring is for two werewolves to mate. Few werewolves mate among themselves if they can help it, thought honestly a mating is
usually beyond their control. It is a choice that magic and fate make for them. Now let me see what the moonlight madness did to you." His lips pressed together in concentration and his eyes narrowed. "You show traces of nightshade. Inhaled, slight scarring on your nasal passages, your throat and lungs. It went directly to your brain. Mandrake leaf properties. Ergot? Where would a pair of teenage boys get rotten wheat? There are faint traces of a herb that affects witches like a lust potion."

Severus snorted, "That would explain why two witches couples nearly had sex in the Great Hall or why over a dozen female Hufflepuffs nearly sexually assaulted the Hogwarts Champion."

"Hm…" was Damocles' response.

It was some minutes before he stopped his examination.

"It seems to be dissipating from your system. I doubt what little there is left would affect you at present. You were removed from the affected environment before it could have a disastrous effect."

Lucius interrupted, "Would there be an explanation to why certain persons wouldn't be affected?"

Damocles was thoughtful, "Humans would be more susceptible of course. I suppose that those with other Magical Creature blood might have more of a tolerance." His eyes narrowed, "A steroid…you said this 'Moonlight Madness' made some highly aggressive?"

Remus winced.

Severus nodded, "Remus was reacting as if he was about to tear Dumbledore limb from limb. Hufflepuff dissolved into fist fists of all things. Sophronia Prewett attacked another member of her House."

Damocles snorted, "Some have no reaction to steroids, while others exhibit mild aggression. A smaller percent show serious violence. Obviously these talented teens had no idea of the consequences their creation would have. This combination could have detrimental results especially in large groups. It takes only a small amount to affect one. Remus merely needed to breathe it in once for it to immediately begin affecting him."

"Am I free from its influence now?"

Damocles patted his shoulder, "Yes, I believe so. I can't say for certain whether it affected you because of your lycanthropy. Yet the werewolf's innate desire to settle serious conflicts with violence might have attributed your desire for vengeance especially when combined with nightshade that negated your control. A strong calming draught," handing one to Remus, "that doesn't make one sleepy yet is particularly suited to one with your condition. I brew this for use when I must deal with a new lycan. They have a tendency to be quicker to anger or melancholy so closely following their first moon change."

"If you've learned all you can at the moment Damocles, I suggest we return to Hogwarts."
Severus nodded, "The Staff and the prefects are going to be meeting soon."

The wards restraining Remus were lifted and they made their way to the nearest floo to return to Hogwarts.

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Meanwhile…

Sirius I stormed through his house as Grim pound to find his eldest son emerging from his Great something niece's chamber. "Good." He said gruffly, "You still are here. How is she?"

"Her body is healing. The bones are mostly mended; I had some blood replenishing potions on me. I gave her one. I'd ask Merope to send some more."

Sirius knew Merope Fairchild was another Chuvash, one his son had met and bonded to years ago. He shook his head, "We're going to Hogwarts. You can get some from Lord Prince. He's the best Potions Master in Britain."

"What happened to her?" Eli asked.

Sirius growled, "That arrogant bastard Dumbledore set a trap for her and he almost killed her. I'll settle him. I want his blood. If I thought I could slaughter the entire family without making an enemy of the British Ministry, I would. Come the students at Hogwarts had the foolishness to start a Prank War. Some of our kin were affected by a prank and I want to be sure that they don't suffer harm for it."

Eli followed his father to the floo, "Tell me what it did. Were they adult Chuvash or no?"

Sirius scowled, "The adult one, Adrian is a descendant of Salazar Slytherin and he seems to have suffered no ill affects. The younger ones, the untransformed were affected but differently I heard. Now you know our kind well and I trust you over any other healer."

Eli felt a rush of pleasure due to his father's confidence. "You want me to go to Hogwarts?"

Sirius had never sent his children to his former school, he'd wanted to keep them out of Wizarding politics and away from that nonsense. Especially if they heard how he'd met his mate, their bearer. He didn't want them shamed knowing that their bearer had been thought a squib and sold as a sexual slave. Raising them in Chuvash society and rising to the uppermost of its ranks gave them higher standing then as the children of Lord Black and his slave. They weren't born bastards according to the Chuvash but according to the Wizarding standards they were. He'd never gotten around to filing papers at any Ministry to make the mating between him and Elijah 'legal'. He sighed, "I had my reasons for not sending you there. Now my reasons are being torn to shreds."

Eli stared at him like he'd admitted something mad. "Torn to shreds?"

"It seems my abandoning my Wizarding relations has done them more harm then good. Half the family is insane. Two are in Azkaban, many sided with the last Dark Lord. One was falsely imprisoned and another has been viciously abused. It's dwindled from the large clan I left. My branch is larger than Phineas', it's pathetic." He tossed floo powder into the fireplace and shoved his eldest son in. "Hogwarts, Head of Slytherin's Apartments!" before diving in after him.
Lucius was shocked when he emerged into Severus' Hogwarts apartments to see his Queen. He fell to his knees, "My Queen? Why have you come?" to his knowledge the Queen of the Veelas had never left her compound, especially not the current Queen, Ruxandra Sorina Vulpes.

The tall statuesque woman was surrounded by no less then ten of her guards, "Rise my child. I received intelligence from one of my children that something had happened to two of my children."

Severus winced, Luna! She sent for the Queen? Was she insane? Was this her way of getting back at Lucius for trapping her in the Tower?

"Is it safe for you to leave the palace?" Lucius asked politely.

The queen stared at him, "I am well protected. I need to know if my children are in danger. Was this an attack?"

Severus was the future Deputy Headmaster Pro-Tem, he bowed, "My Lady may I speak?"

The Queen of the Veela regarded him and then nodded, "You may."

Severus bowed again, "It was no attack. Our students which included some of your subjects; young Lovegood, Malfoy and the Delacour girls decided to enact something called a Prank War."

The guardians of the Queen reacted as if they'd been slapped.

Severus held up his hands in a gesture that was hopefully submissive, "The name is a misnomer, it's a game, one that went out of fashion decades ago. I'm not even sure how the students discovered its existence. It's called a war because it's every House for itself and against the other three. They play tricks on one another. Some are as simple as putting something in their drinks at breakfast that puts them to sleep. However one prank had unforeseen reactions, it was created by two students, rather brilliant students who are descendants of King Sirius of the Chuvash's brother. They created something they called Moonlight Madness. It caused a variety of reactions, including a shocking one in my mate Remus. We had to summon a healer who was very familiar with werewolves. He has some suspicions as to why it caused the students to react to it the way they did. He has accompanied us in hopes of discussing this with other healers as well."

The Veela queen regarded the unfamiliar man behind Lucius and his mate, "You are?"

Damocles bowed, "Damocles, formerly of the House of Belby and now mated to a werewolf named Corey Martin. I'm a certified Potions' Master, first class and a healer. I created a potion erroneously called Wolfsbane that allows werewolves to be aware of what happened to them during a full moon and they had some control of their actions."

Lucius noticed that the queen was impressed.

"I see. So tell me why it would be called 'Wolfsbane'."

Damocles scowled, "Wolfsbane is a plant with magical properties that Muggles falsely claim to prevent and in some cases cure lycanthropy. Unfortunately, to a werewolf Wolfsbane is actually poisonous, something like intaking melted silver through food or into the blood, or having a silver
implement stab them through the heart. My potion doesn't cure lycanthropy, though it merely lessens its control over a werewolf's mind. My study of Werewolves led me to believe that a person is governed by one of three controls; their emotions or lust, their rational minds or their more primitive natures. Primitive natures revolve mostly around fighting or running, so they can become uncontrollably aggressive. When one is controlled by their primitive natures that strongly, then they can have no memory of their actions and it makes them almost animalistic. I managed with the right potion to give them at least their memory. My mate was kind enough help me with my research. It finally became very effective for him, having a better affect in the final result then I imagined. I proposed the research to the Potions Society of Britain and they granted me some money and their permission to test it on other werewolves. I was careful; I recorded Corey under its influence during a full moon as well my own memories. A sparse handful agreed to let me use them as test subjects; I managed to perfect a version that was more effective with a larger population sample. Finally, I had created a potion that has helped many werewolves feel like they had more control over their condition."

"Very interesting. So you have a theory based on your examination of the one werewolf known to have been exposed to it?"

Damocles nodded, "As a Healer, a Potions Master, the mate of a werewolf and a member of British Ministry's Department of Werewolf support I have more then usual knowledge of most concerning that condition. I was able to determine some of the more volatile ingredients, they have a tendency to affect persons in a variety of ways."

"Such as?"

The queen indicated the person who had emerged from behind her, a person wearing a blue tunic, "Court Healer Apollo Grannis."

Damocles smirked, "It would be unprofessional of me to venture an opinion before you examine your own patients. I am not familiar with Veela prior or after coming into their inheritance. My hypothesis maybe wrong, I would hate to taint the objectiveness of your exam by giving an opinion too soon."

The floo crackled behind them.

The King of the Chuvash, Sirius I emerged accompanied by someone who wore the forest green robes of Healers from the Paris Hospital. A rather young looking wizard…

"King." The Veela Queen inclined her head in greeting.

"Queen." Sirius I bowed. "My son, Elias Black, he is a Healer of the St. Healer Academy in Paris."

Damocles bowed, "Damocles Martin, I'm a healer who specializes in treatment of werewolves. I work for the Ministry."

"A colleague? I'm grateful for any insight you might have on this 'Moonlight Madness' father mentioned." The young man they assumed was a Chuvash and therefore his years weren't obvious in his face.

"We have a Veela healer, a Chuvash healer and a werewolf healer, perhaps now we can understand what went so wrong in this 'Prank War'." Lucius said pleasantly.

"I hope so." The Veela Queen said sharply, "I do hope my children weren't unduly influenced into this 'game'."
Severus sighed, "Knowing my son, I'm sure it was very much Draco's idea. Though his cousin might have discovered the existence of the Prank War being Sorted into Ravenclaw as she was."

"If you're sure."

Severus snorted, "I'm sure. I know Draco sometimes better then he does. He's very much like Lucius in looks and personality."

She nodded, "For now I'll believe you."

"We should examine the students." Eli said quietly.

"Yes," Apollo said nodding.

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Guessing that it was nearly time, Luna left her House in the 'capable' hands of Prefect Eastchurch and Davies.

Meanwhile, Davies kept smirking at Chang while Cho glared at him.

Luna carefully made her way to the teachers' 'common room'.

Inside were the Chuvash; Adrian, Neville, Harry and Blaise.

Fred was pacing and looking extremely disconcerted and he seemed to be muttering under his breath.

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Severus led their guests into the staff room.

Ruxandra, the Veela Queen saw only her seer and young Malfoy, "Where are the Delacour girls? I thought they would be here as well."

Severus bowed stammering, "My apologies if appears that I misled you. Their Head Mistress removed her charges to their Carriage."

"A castle this size and they were refused shelter?" the Veela Queen was incensed.

Filius bowed and coughed, "Not refused to my knowledge my Lady. If it were agreeable, I would gladly offer whatever accommodations were required. As you keenly observed there are many available apartments and empty classrooms."

The Hogwarts staff looked abashed, it had failed to register that their guests not staying in Hogwarts might be rude. Why were their guests not staying in the castle itself? There were plenty of rooms the Durmstrangers and Beauxbatons students could use.

Lucius bowed, "I am ashamed, as a member of the Hogwarts Board of Governors we should have
with the Headmaster have opened our doors for our guests. The ship has many rooms and was clearly built to accommodate sleeping berths and classrooms. I suspect they even have a galley of some sort. As for the Beauxbatons' carriage, I wonder if it's interior isn't wizard space like a tent so it's inside is far larger then it appears from the outside. Classrooms and living quarters should have been arranged. I will stipulate that when we discuss how we can improve the Triwizard Tournament that the host school will be required to accommodate their guests.

Filius nodded, bowing, "When I am officially named Headmaster Pro-tem I will be apologizing on behalf of the Hogwarts staff. We will graciously open our doors. We have plenty of empty bonded student apartments and staff ones as well. I will have them clean and readied. I will have to bring some gift to Karkaroff."

The staff and the students coloured in shame.

The healers had ignored them while they examined the assembled students.

Eli was examining the young Chuvash while Apollo was seeing to Luna and Draco.

Damocles was muttering to himself while scribbling on a bit of parchment.

Severus hid his hands in his robes but Lucius could tell his mate and long-time lover was wringing his hands. He took a step closer and silently rested a gentle but comforting hand on his mate's back.

"Your majesty," Apollo said bowing, "I've finished examining the two Veela here. Might your grace send for the Delacour sisters?"

Ruxandra waved a hand at one of her guard, "Anton dear, go fetch your cousins."

Lucius' eyes widened, cousin? The Delacours had a relation who served the Queen? That was a bit of Court news he didn't know. The Veela were cliquier then the Chuvash, it really mattered who you knew. Malfoys while prominent in the Wizarding world had never really been blessed to ascend the upper echelons of the Veela Court until Luna of course. Though he doubted her abilities as a Seer came from her Malfoy ancestors, it had to be from her Ancestress Rowena…

During his musing, the Veela guard slipped out.

Having four Chuvash to examine and being a perfectionist, Eli took longer to examine his patients. He gestured for Severus, "Who created this?"

Severus said in a tight voice, "Fred! Get over here."

The depressed Gryffindor Beater glumly made his way over, "Yes Professor?"

"I believe this healer would like to ask you a few questions."

Damocles spoke up but not breaking his focusing on his notes, "As would I my Lord."

Fred looked at the two healers, "What do you want to know? I didn't have much input in Moonlight Madness' creation. It was my idea sure. I'm the idea man but it's George who makes it work."

Running a hand nervously through his hair.

Severus smirked, "He probably tweaks your idea and then tells you it was all your idea to do it that way."

Eli tilted his head, "George is?"
Fred smirked, "My twin, my brilliant studious genius twin."

"He's part Chuvash so he's one of mine. A submissive though, odd since they are supposed to be rare."

Eli snorted, "Pah! Father, a male capable of carrying children naturally who has a Chuvash inheritance will be submissive. If this George and these three younglings are submissives it's because they were born capable of having children."

Sirius I shrugged, "If you say so, you're the healer."

Eli grumbled, "I know so." before ignoring his father.

"You say you self-test?"

Fred sighed collapsing into a chair his magic conjured, "Yes, we ALWAYS self-test our product ideas. Which can result in a mess but we work around that. We never sell anything we're not sure of."

Angelina coughed, "What about your product testing on the younger years Granger was complaining about?"

Fred glanced up at her, "My idea and I take full responsibility for it. No one was hurt though. It's common to test products on a larger test pool to be sure of their safety. It only lasts a bit and we did pay them."

Angelina rolled her eyes, choosing to be silent on it after saying her piece.

"This was the first test on a larger group for your 'Moonlight Madness'?"

Fred nodded, "Like I said before, if I had any idea that it would affect people like that, I would never have put it in the bag I let Viktor buy from me. He's my soon-to-be brother I wouldn't want him in trouble for something we created. It was my idea but George made it work."

Damocles reeled off a list of suspected ingredients.

Fred blinked, "I think those were part of his receipt. Granted brewing isn't my strongest talent." He chewed his lip, "I wonder if our mistake was transforming it into a gas."

The healers stared at him.

Damocles was horrified; "You brewed that as a potion and then transformed it into a gas? Are you mad?"

Fred shook his head, "George swore it wouldn't change the properties. I trusted him. The spell I used was like boiling..."

Severus paled, "You inadvertently strengthened the mixture then. You fool of a Gryffindor!"

Fred glared, "I trust my brother's brewing. He's a veritable genius not that you would know, given you habit of looking down your nose at anyone who wears red and gold."

Remus snapped, "Fred! That's enough. I can certainly understand taking the word of someone whose talent exceeds yours. If Severus told me something similar I would believe him. However, Sev is a certified Potions Master, First Class and George is not. From the reaction I've heard from two celebrated potioneers I would say that George made a mistake."
Damocles growled, "His first mistake was not properly researching the affect of certain ingredients on certain groups. Nightshade affects persons differently, particularly if burned or boiled. It can cause some persons to become violent, sex-crazed, childish or a host of other reactions. It reacts to magical creatures differently, as Remus discovered himself, regrettably."

Sirius I's sharp eyes caught the slight shimmer of a skin-anchored glamour, his eyes darted from Fred to Severus. He narrowed his eyes, curious. What did the older Weasley-Prewett twin have to hide?

Eli knew his father had realized something but focused on the task at hand, "What was your reaction to the Moonlight Madness?"

Fred shifted nervously, "Now or before?"

"Both."

Fred sighed, "Not much. George went a bit wild with his cauldron throwing random ingredients into it…"

Eli nodded, "So our reaction to it would depend on us as individuals? Adrian wasn't affected though there were traces of it in his system. His body metabolised it before it could affect him. How did the young ones react again?"

Adrian spoke up, "Neville tried to decorate the Slytherin table with plants. He's a veritable genius at Herbology."

Neville flushed.

"Harry seemed to find it impossible to keep still. I don't know what he might have done had I not ordered him to behave. I was concerned because it seemed like Zabini was getting ready to leave and he…" Adrian grimaced, "…was highly aroused."

Blaise blushed but due to the darkness of his skin it wasn't noticeable.

The Veela Queen spoke, "Will young Malfoy or Lovegood suffer any ill affects from this prank?"

Apollo shook his head, "Not that I can tell. The gas they breathed is dissipating. It seems that Mademoiselle Lovegood's body burned off the gas before it could reach either her brain or her heart. As for young monsieur Malfoy, it went straight to his head…"

The prefects of some of the Houses were present; Angelina and Kenan Towler for Gryffindor, Pucey and Giselle for Slytherin, Cedric and Deborah for Hufflepuff while two lesser-known Ravenclaw were standing in for Davies and Eastchurch; Head Boy Gerald Vaisley and Andrea Butterworth.

The French Veela guard returned with his cousins, the Delacours.

Apollo broke off to examine them before returning to converse with the other two healers.

The three healers conversed and then stilled.

Eli broke the silence, "We've decided that the 'Moonlight Madness' is no longer capable of affecting them. We would recommend that it is never used again and if they wish to use this that they return to the potions lab. They should consult a certified potions master before they turn it into a gas. It can't permanently harm them but it is very unsafe at present for werewolves."

Remus shifted uncomfortably.
Fed let out a sigh of relief, "They are all going to be alright? Thank Merlin."

"The Prank War can continue?"

Severus sighed, "According to the rules, it has to play out for a proscribed length of time. However Moonlight Madness can't be used ever again. It's a banned product Weasley. I mean it."

Fred swallowed, "I'll be disposing of the rest of them."

"You will be submitting a list of all products in the possession of your fellow students which will include the proscribed affects. I would rather not ban all of your inventions."

The pro-tem headmaster and the current Heads of House broke off to discuss the first round.

Filius announced their determination, "Round One goes to Durmstrang, for which they will receive one hundred points. Minerva if you would be so good."

McGonagall created six hourglasses to keep track of Prank War points; four in the appropriate House Colours while Durmstrang's was black and red. Beauxbatons was blue and gold.

Instead of the rubies in the House Points hourglasses, these were pearl-like.

Filius continued, "Thank you Minerva. Fifty points to Gryffindor for Outstanding magic in a variety of magical fields. Seventy five to Slytherin for their creative use of potions."

"Though they lose fifty House Points for pilfering an experimental potion that wasn't quite ready yet." Severus said glaring at Draco.

"Fifty Points to Beauxbatons for brilliant Charms work in their statue and consciousness transferring spells. Twenty-five points to Hufflepuff for their valerian root."

Cedric and Deborah sighed.

The parties concerned were excited.

Fred was pouting now because George had helped Durmstrang steal the first round.

"First classes today are cancelled but the rest of today's lessons will be observed." Filius said sternly. "Any homework that was due first lesson students have until dinner to be sure that it is turned in. Enjoy the Prank War. Dismissed."

The students left jabbering away with excitement.

The Veela Queen was a bit more animated now that they had an authority figure only audience. "How can you guarantee my people's safety?"

Filius swallowed, "The rules forbid any lasting harm to students or the castle. Because 'Moonlight Madness' was more dangerous then expected it is banned. Even if they create a safer receipt it is still too dangerous to be used. You are welcome to check in on the Prank war as often as you wish. Preferably after Dumbledore has been escorted off the premises."

"Dumbledore is Headmaster yes?"

Severus scowled, "He murdered a child of a Chuvash and cursed as you know the mate of Lucius. I believe Veela Mates fall under the protection of your court regardless of race. Dumbledore is accused of multiple crimes some of which are still in the process of investigation."
"Why is he not gone yet?"

Lucius bowed, "My Queen, may I speak?"

"Of course my child."

Lucius bowed again, "His crimes are just coming to light. We have been organizing a group of persons who know of his misdeeds and are ready and willing to vote him out. His behaviour has gotten more out of hand and he has even gone so far as to attack an Auror who shares blood with the King of the Chuvash after he was repeatedly warned to leave them alone."

"I do hope someone rips the man's head of his shoulders."

In popped Peeves singing at the top of his lungs.

"Oh Dumbles you Bumbles! You think you're so grand!
Have you forgotten you're not quite a man?
Your glamour slipped once! Peeves saw it all!
Peeves sees all! Peeves sees all!
You're not a leader you're less then a door!
One can see through you rotten old coot!
How do you feel now that we're givin' you the boot!
Peeves sees all! Peeves sees all!
Oh Peevesy weevesy is lord of all he sees!
Dumble the Bumble is King of the mud
His court be the oaf and fool!
Praise the great and mighty Peeves!
Who dances with elves
Plots with leprechauns
Speaks with dragons
Pulls feathers from Hippogriffs
And rides Abraxans!
Dumble the Bumble King of mud
Brother to the goat lover
And the mad mad Ariana.
Don't forget the spider hating RON!
Oh Peevesy weevesy is lord of all he sees!

Dumble the Bumble is King of the mud

Praise the great and mighty Peeves!"

Severus sighed, "Peeves are you still singing that ridiculous song?"

Peeves blew a raspberry, "Snaky Snape what doing? This be Peeves new favourite song. Ho-ho-ho his butt-headship be bright red and cursing! His face be red and his eyes aflame. Peeves be wanting to make him mind. This be Peeves' castle. I rule here. I be here before any of you be born."

"What is this?" The Veela Queen sniffed.

Severus bowed, "My lady, this is Peeves. Our resident Poltergeist and a unfortunate gift that came with the castle. The current theory is that he is a manifestation of the area's wild magic when mixed with the blood of the founders. He is amoral; he is not a ghost or a true spirit and is not exactly alive either. Generations of professors have tried to ascertain who or what he really is. Unfortunately, he lives to create trouble and it seems that during Prank War he lives to reign supreme."

Peeves blew another raspberry and floated through the wall opposite the one he arrived through.

"I see. I will be returning to my Castle but I will be stopping by to be certain my children are safe during this 'prank war' of yours."

"Of course my lady."

The Veela Queen and her attendants left.

Severus sagged; he was extremely uncomfortable around her. "She'll be coming here? Often? Salazar's Cauldron…" no offence to Sirius I, King of the Chuvash but one Leader of a Magical Race was difficult enough.

"She can be rather intense, can't she?" Sirius I chuckled, "She is rather young, she's only in her early twenties. She was appointed at the age of fourteen. Chuvash have to fight for the position. The retiring King announces he is resigning and there is a tournament of sorts. They are tested in a variety of ways, the tests are chosen by the current king to choose his successor. In some cases it is a relation, but often it is not. The Veela Queens have been prophesied, each one is marked in a way that corresponded to the prophecy. Every queen is expected to visit a female Veela within a week of her birth. When the successor is found, they are raised in the court. Taught magic by the Queen and a careful selection of tutors. This queen is known as the vixen, her surname is Vulpes, which is Latin for fox. Though the Court speaks Runic, the prophecies were given in Latin, according to the Veela Court historian Rowena ruled them in her youth. Some reigns are longer then others. They normally assume the crown at age sixteen or seventeen unless the Queen passes before then. The crown will not pass to a Veela whose hands are stained with blood."

Lucius was intrigued, "What else do the prophecies say?"

"Rowena was a Seer who would be queen, or more accurately as corvus videns. It would explain her ties to more ancient magic for the Veela court is known for its preservation of it. She had experience in leadership and would have met the other founders through her interactions with other magical races. Godric Gryffindor though not a Chuvash King was very powerful in court. Chuvash and Veela have been friends time out of mind."

"Who is the next Queen?"
Sirius laughed, "You don't expect me to release that secret do you? The prophecy to the next queen is entrusted to the newly crowned Queen. It is her duty not only to guide her people but also to search for her successor. A Veela Queen rules for between twenty and twenty-five years approximately. The next Queen is due to be born soon."

"She hasn't been found yet?" Lucius was surprised.

Sirius I smirked, "There is always a celebration when the princess is announced, I have yet to receive the invitation from Queen Ruxandra."

"So the Queens do not attend schools ever?" Filius was curious.

"No, but some take what they learn from their own instructors and like Rowena become highly thought of professors." Sirius shrugged.

"I'm going to return to the Manor to check on young Dora father and then I have been asked to look in on a client." Eli said politely.

Sirius waved a have dismissively "Of course. Run along now. Thank you Eli."

"Goodbye father." The slightly younger Chuvash said before leaving.

Damocles handed a copy of his own take on the 'Moonlight Madness' and its affects on Remus to the younger Potions Master, "Here. This should prove interesting to you. I'll be returning to the Ministry now."

Lucius held out a hand, "Thank you Healer Martin."

Damocles shook his head, "Please call me Damocles."

Remus shook his hand as well, "Thank you."

Filius straightened, "Interesting day. If this is what every day of my tenure as Headmaster is like I shan't be bored."

"With a Prank War going on Filius as well as a Chuvash King and Veela Queen stopping by unannounced, I don't think boredom would ever be a problem." Severus said as Damocles left.

"I'll go arrange with the House elves to have those rooms and classrooms prepared. When I think how unwelcoming Albus has made us appear, I can't stand it. I'll have to come up with something to gift Karkaroff with to make up for his horrendous treatment by my predecessor."

The professors broke to ready themselves for classes.

Chapter End Notes

A/N: There it is the Aftermath. I hope you enjoy it. Anyone want to hazard a guess why Severus wasn't affected? Why it affected some more then others?

Reminder for new readers about Unlikely Heroes: Fallen Feathers, Mirrored Scales it contains stories/scenes that fill out the secondary characters that didn't fit in the main storyline so for those you are fond of the Weasley-Prewett family more of their combined story will be told there. I know I've been ignoring Oliver/Percy, Septimus/Cedrella as Arthur/Gideon in Unlikely Heroes, so I'm working my way up to it. I'm still in early November in the side story while in the main story line is in early December.
Chapter 42- Round two?

The problem with completely cancelling first lessons on the first day of a Prank War is that students will run around setting up pranks.

The Grand Staircase was full of multi-coloured balls that were something like a cross between a Bludger and a Quaffle. There were enough of them to make not touching one was an impossibility, while the consequences of touching one was that they all had a geminio duplication charm.

The castle had definitely accepted Luna’s gift of blood, it had become even more maze-like than usual. The other staircases periodically became slides, the trick steps moved, the secret passage entrances seemed to have changed places, walls were doors and doors were walls. Even the classrooms seemed to be not quite where one left them. If there were balls on the Grand Staircase’s stairs, there was an entwined amount of conjured snakes on the landings. The snakes were harmless but rather annoying when they entwined round one and you practically rolled down the stairs wrapped up in a snake.

Hallways were greased.

Peeves popped up randomly blowing a dust-like substance and making it pitch black.

XoooooX

Once she’d returned to the Ravenclaw Tower, Luna had sweet-talked all of her Housemates who had personal elves to pilfer all of the Muggle alarm clocks in Hogwarts from the Muggleborns and Muggle-raised students. The Ravenclaws had already donated theirs to the ‘cause’. Those who were extremely heavy sleepers had begged their roommates to wake them in time for breakfast in exchange for their cooperation.
Professor Sprout was less than amused at the Snowstorm blocking the greenhouses.

Fred was laughing, it had to be George…

“Weasley!”

Fred gave her his best innocent face, “What professor? I swear on Godric’s sword I never left the castle until I followed you to class.”

The dumpy woman was shaking with annoyance, “I know you had something to do with this.”

Fred bowed, “I’ll admit the creation was my idea. Bottling a snowstorm was brilliant. However I am merely the idea man. It was George who made it. My twin is a veritable genius.”

“If you had a hand in its creation, then you end it right now.”

Fred couldn’t resist a snicker, “My apologies professor but my brother Forge was far too clever to make something that could be ended just with finite incantium. I suspect he managed to extend its life. Since I haven’t any idea what spell he used being in a veritable seclusion with the Durmstrang students, I doubt I would be much help.”

Professor Sprout threw up her hands, “I want a four foot essay on a dangerous plant of your choice. It’s due next class. For those of you who think you’ve got time for pranks you’ll be sorely disappointed. You can thank the Weasley twins for this assignment.”

The students who were spending a free period in the library were at first annoyed with the familiar cackling and raspberries of Peeves.

Then came the loud rush of wind and the panicked, infuriated scream of Madam Prince.
“MY BOOKS!”

A small tornado, whirlwind had started right in front of her desk and not even her vast knowledge of spells could cancel it.

It grew snatching books, scrolls, scraps of parchment, inkpots, quills, school bags, school ties, and shoes. Anything smaller then Dennis Creevey was soon roaring in the whirlwind. Sixth and Seventh Year girls ran holding onto their hair and screeching. While most of the boys were stunned into silence…

Who should be in the library studying?

Lee Jordan, he was more then content to watch and take copious mental notes.

“YOU! Jordan! You did this! I’ll turn you over to Filch!”

Lee shook his head, “I had nothing to do with this. I’ll even take veritaserum. I was just here to study quietly for my NEWTS. Peeves. I bet he found a way to torment you. Everyone knows how protective you are about the your books. Can’t you hear Peeves? It sounds like he’s in the heart of that whirlwind.”

Madam Prince let out an exasperated sigh, “Peeves! Leave my precious books alone!”

The loud familiar voice was distorted, “NOTHING DOING! Peeves be having fun. Oh Peeves is king of all he sees. All praise the great and mighty Peeves!

Xxxxxxxxx

Lee wasn’t lying when he said he hadn’t set up the prank. He did know what caused it, a Weasley Wizard Wheeze product. He wasn’t sure at the moment whether this was Fred’s or George’s idea, well the creation he meant. Lee knew Fred had asked Peeves to set off the whirlwind by breaking the bottle. Now it was interesting to see the whirlwind tearing through the library and snatching up anything smaller then Dennis Creevey. Therefore the rules were observed, no person or property was likely to be hurt. It was merely an annoyance product. It was funny to see how upset Madam Prince
was over her precious books. He was extremely grateful he wasn’t in class. He didn’t have Herbology having choosing not to continue the subject. He didn’t need it for his future career, he wanted to be a Quidditch announcer and what did Herbology have to do with that? Nothing that’s what…

He had all but been promised a job at Weasleys Wizard Wheezes until he was hired by a team or if he was really lucky was allowed to join the United Quidditch Announcers Guild of Britain. To be accepted or invited to join that august body was like being asked to join that Potioneers’ society that George was always going on and on about.

What was it called again? Oh yes, the Most Extraordinary Society of Potioneers. One Masters like Professor Snape, err Professor Prince-Malfoy and the guy who created Wolfsbane, Damo-something were no doubt members of. George was as obsessed with brewing as Fred was with sex. Only First Class Potioneers were invited to join the society, you had to do something profound like create a potion or draught etcetera that took the Wizarding World by storm. It was George’s dream to be noticed by them. As dreadfully as the Moonlight Madness affected everyone surely being capable of brewing something that replicated the sheer madness of a full moon had to count for something.

As much as he liked working with his best friends Gred and Forge, he wanted to be a Professional Quidditch announcer. If he were chosen to give play by play on one of the Quidditch stations on the Wizarding Wireless, he would have it made. He sighed, even then Angelina wouldn’t like him back. She’d been in love with Fred for years; and they were all too good friends to let a girl come between them. Alicia was a great girl, and he really liked her. Not romantically but he’d hate to see her emotionally shattered because George was a poof. It didn’t take a genius to see that George was really falling for Viktor Krum of all people. It was almost shocking to realize that Viktor liked George back.

He smirked to himself; he’d have to be blind or totally obtuse not to know that his best friends were striking. They’d both changed their fifth year around their birthday. He wouldn’t be surprised if they’d come into an inheritance. No one was quite like Gred and Forge when it came to secrets. Maybe some day they’d trust him with those secrets but for now he was content to help Fred mastermind the pranks to end all pranks.

Speaking of pranks, how long was the Tiny twister Midnight supposed to last anyway? It’d been twenty minutes now and it showed no signs of weakening. Had the twins cast a charm that extended it?

Not that he particularly liked Madam Prince but the poor woman looked very unwell. What kind of life had to she had to care more about books then people? Did she actually have friends? He hoped the Weasley Wizard Wheeze product fizzled out soon. If it didn’t, he had a terrible feeling the woman would end up in the infirmary.
Due to the wild effect of ‘Moonlight Madness’ no one had noticed that the suits of armour between 
the front doors of the castle and the Great Hall had been turned into statues. If there weren’t with the 
slight impression of a gauzy shawl..

The ones with real issues were the ones who had been switched: Ravenclaw’s prefect/Quidditch 
captain Rodger Davies and Cho Chang as well as Hufflepuff’s descendants Deborah and Zacharias 
Smith.

Rodger caught Cho’s eyes in the hallways and made movements like he was in her body and 
fondling it again.

Cho’s eyes narrowed, “That isn’t funny Davies.”

Rodger smirked, “Really? I thought it was. For a few minutes there, I was one of the sexiest girls in 
Hogwarts. Thought I might as well enjoy it.”

“Hufflepuff or not, at least Cedric has manners.”

Rodger snorted, “Didn’t keep him from being sexually involved with a dozen girls in the Great 
Hall.”

Cho snapped, “That wasn’t his fault. They were going to force him.”

Rodger crowed, “No guy unless they’re bent wouldn’t be pleased at the idea. So either he lied about 
being upset by the attention or he’s bent and is attracted to some guy.”

Cho pulled out her wand and muttered a spell.

Rodger glared at her, “What did you do?”
Cho smirked setting off for class again, “Cold water and impotency spell.”

“You wench!” Rodger growled, spinning his wand in his fingers before casting a curse.

“Davies! Chang!”

Professor Lupin wasn’t looking pleased.

XooooooX

Remus had to levitate himself over a swamp that ‘randomly’ appeared between Filius’ classroom and his own. Blasted Weasley-Prewett twins! It had to be those two; they were the only ones clever enough to create something like that.

“Fifty points from Ravenclaw for using magic in the corridors. Davies you’re a prefect! This behaviour should be below a Fifth and Sixth Year. I will be discussing this with Professor Flitwick.” He spotted Eastchurch. “Miss Eastchurch. You will escort these two to the infirmary. I want to know what they cast at each other.”

Cho and Rodger glared at each other.

But Felicity Eastchurch pushed them along towards the nearest stairs that led to the infirmary.

Remus sighed; he’d hoped that the Prank War would be more fun as opposed to the altercation between Chang and Davies.

Chapter End Notes
A/N: Sorry for the inconvenience- I decided it needed to be edited but here it is.

Okay so I left it at a clifty sorry. It's just too large for one post. I hope you all enjoy it though.

Chapter 43- the Demon box and Myrtle’s Prank

It was nearly ten o’clock at night when the blasted nosebleed stopped. His ears had returned three hours prior.

His wandless magic had attempted to destroy the teacups that bit his nose and disgusting lemon drops but that failed. He’d tried a few more ‘lemon drops’ only to get a blood flavoured one.

He’d gone to bed after chugging two more blood replenishers.

A large clasp of thunder awoke him.

He opened his eyes to find himself in darkness, his eyes were open but he could see nothing, not even shadows.

His breath froze in his chest.

His greatest fears? What was this?

He hated thunder but didn’t fear it. As an avid reader he feared blindness. He tried to move his hand to wave in front of his face and felt separate from his body enough that he had no control over it.

No! Albus Dumbledore was a control-obsessed wizard. He was both obsessive and compulsive about it.

He felt the burning begin; it felt like his skin was curling into crisp ashes that would soon crumble. His bones felt hot like a potion stirring rod that had been left in a boiling potion too long. The pain!
Dragon pox…

It couldn’t be. He’d been properly vaccinated…unlike Elphias who’d caught it before he’d received the full course of the vaccination. Had he caught a resistant strain?

He couldn’t breathe; he felt the weight of a hippogriff on his chest. He did not have heart problems he was healthy for a wizard his age; with the exception of his deformities but those came before he was born...

Then came a taunting voice…

“Albus, still arrogant as ever. Still fooling the masses? If you hadn’t lied to me we might have still be partners. I wouldn’t have let you in my bed though. A pity you were so physically imperfect given how brilliant you were. It seems once more your arrogance is getting the better of you. You encouraged me in my wild notions. You gave me plans. You planned for everything. It was your idea to track down the Deathly Hallows. You could see where in history the Elder Wand reared it’s head. If you hadn’t lied to me, hadn’t pretended to have my child or perhaps your brother was right and you were crazy- I would have taken you with me, with the right spells we could have drained your sister of her uncontrollable magic.”

Albus whimpered, Gellert? He was here taunting him? Gellert was supposed to be in Nurmengard, Gellert went there after he defeated him and won the allegiance of the Elder wand. Gellert was clearer the weaker one, proving that Albus himself could have become an infamous Dark Lord. He had more power and authority playing the Lord of Light. He was respected, his word trusted and no one would have suspected his manipulations other than useless persons like Lucius and Severus. He almost wished that Remus had killed Severus that night in the Shrieking Shack.

Although Voldemort wouldn’t have discovered even a part of the prophecy regarding young Potter. He had told warned Frank about going into hiding, the arrogant bastard dared to laugh at the possibility that his son who had been properly blessed would be in danger. How was he to know that Neville’s godfather was Scrimgour? That man wore power like a cloak; the current Head Auror was the most powerful and hard-working Auror in the department. He didn’t stay at his desk he still went into the field especially when there was a full deployment.

Only James took his warning seriously, taking his advice to heart, even letting him chose the residence. Lucky for him both James’ parents died before James’ seventeenth birthday. Leaving him as the wizard to explain about his inheritance. Knowing Lily was a bit uneasy about moving into the Abbey he convinced James that his own cottage would be safer. He’d created a wizard space hidden room to hide Gideon in. How Fabian discovered his brother was there was still odd. It had happened
before the Fidelius charm was placed on the cottage because the Potters hadn’t moved in yet. The day Gideon was rescued James was still at the Auror Department and Lily had taken Harry to St. Mungos for his check up. They never knew Fabian had been there.

“You killed us…”

“Murderer!”

“My baby! You let us be killed because of you!”

“You wanted my brother dead! I’ll never forgive you!”

“You were my teacher! How could you hurt me like that? I trusted you. You were the first person from the Wizarding World I met and you betrayed me!”

“You put us in danger. Your lies got us tortured.”

“I want my baby…”

What was this? How were his personal demons haunting him?

Then came the explosions…

They sounded liked bombs, thunderclaps and Muggle firecrackers yet he couldn’t see the flashes of the explosions.

It took three hours for the explosions and the burning sensations to go away.

He lay there gasping for breath, finally able to move.

Served him right for taking all those blood replenishers so close together. He must have overdosed as
well as been suffering from blood loss due to the constant nosebleed from eating the fake lemon drop.

XooooooX

Everyone had gone to bed; Ravenclaw Muggleborns had set the Muggle Alarm clocks to go off at half past three in the morning. They were charmed invisible and one was hid in every other dormitory. They also had Sonorus charms. They had even hid in some of the professor’s apartments. Well the Ravenclaws with house elves had ordered them to hide them.

So everyone was sleeping peacefully until half past three when the loud incessant ringing began.

XooooooX

Because Ronald ‘Dumbledore’ wasn’t well liked a Muggle alarm woke him practically screaming in the dormitory he now lived in alone.

Neville was down in the Slytherin dungeon with Harry slumming with the snakes while Seamus kipped in Colin’s bed and Dean was at present sleeping with the Sixth Years in George’s bed since George practically lived on the Durmstrang ship. Useless poufs the lot of them…

Ron felt out of the bed in shock, sleepily rubbing his eyes and wincing at the loud sound.

Hands over his ears he tried searching for the source of the annoying sound.

It was louder but very similar to the Muggle possession owned by Dean and Hermione.

Slapping her had been an accident but she wouldn’t speak to him. However she had left the Daily Prophet out so he could read Skeeter’s lies about his mother.

Merlin’s bollocks where was that thrice damned clock! He’d destroy it! It was probably Dean’s. That
Potter lover was probably toying with him!

He’d show them! He attempted and failed to summon the disgusting thing. He’d find and destroy it then send it to Arthur Weasley as a gift. How dare the man claim to be his father for most of his life and then abandon him!

Ron grabbed his wand and started casting the Blasting curse to find that nasty Muggle Alarm clock.

XooooooX

When three o’clock struck Harry, Draco, Blaise and Neville fell out of bed holding their ears. Even Vince was wincing, that fool Greg was snoring like the Hogwarts Express.

Draco temporarily hexed away his and Harry’s hearing.

The other Slytherin boys did the same.

Blaise took pity on the shaking ball of a Gryffindor and temporarily cast the hex on Neville because he was closer.

Draco got up and helped a deaf Harry to his feet and placed him back on the bed. He gestured for Blaise; then he cast Legilimency on his friend.

‘I’m going to levitate the bed. I suspect that the noisemaker is invisible. It’s probably under a bed.’

Harry reached over to tug on Draco’s sleeve.

Draco broke the connection with Blaise and cast the same spell on Harry.

Harry winced but couldn’t fight the spell.
’What Harry?’

’It’s an alarm clock. It’s a Muggle alarm clock. Someone cast a Sonorus charm on it.’

Harry thought about what a Muggle alarm clock looked like hoping that Draco could see the image as well as understand his thoughts.

Draco nodded before passing the information along to Blaise.

Draco proceeded to levitate the bed while Blaise cast finite incantatem everywhere under the bed.

They started by levitating Blaise’s bed, which was nearest the door.

Then Vince’s and Theo’s, finally the reached Draco’s bed which he shared with Harry.

After maddening moments of deafness and methodical casting by Blaise the Muggle alarm clock appeared. A second finite seemed end the endless vibrating seeing how they were deaf.

Draco cast finite on himself and Harry ending the hex that made them deaf.

Harry hugged him, “You’re brilliant!”

Draco blushed slightly, “It wasn’t much.”

Blaise sneered, “Like I didn’t do anything.”

Harry playfully blew him a kiss, “Good job Blaise.”

Before Draco had a chance to pout or reprimand Harry, the younger wizard kissed him.
Vince groaned, “Get a room…or at least close the bed curtains.”

Draco glared at his guard before pulling Harry back into bed. “That was interesting! Wonder whose idea that was?”

The fourth year Slytherins boys with the exception of Greg who had slept through the prank retired to bed once more.

XoooooX

Explosions waked Seamus up and he realized Colin was sobbing in his arms. He kissed his hair and shook him gently; “Wake up. It’s alright.”

The shy boy with beautiful blonde curls opened his eyes, which sparkled with tears, “Shay?”

Seamus hugged him, “There are explosions coming from my old room. I think Ron’s gone off the deep end. I’m going to get Fred.” He kissed the top of the boy’s head before snapping his fingers to summon his elf Liam. In clipped Irish Gaelic he ordered the elf to wake Professor Remus.

Then he left the Third Year Boys dormitory and ran up the steps passing his old dorm. He threw open the door only to be deafened.

XoooooX

Fred was blasted awake by loud ringing. His ears ached. Fred felt his glamour waver, he temporarily cast a spell that removed his hearing and tightened his glamour before exiting his bed.

He checked his watch, it was just gone three. Where the hell was it?
The rest of the dorm minus George who was still sleeping onboard Thor’s Hammer was awake and holding their ears.

Dean Thomas, two years their junior was crashing in George’s bed for a while.

Who could blame him? Ron was a traitor and a fool. No one sane would want to share a room with him.

However it was the curse on Harry’s bed that sent Fourth Year Lions fleeing the dormitory.

Neville and Harry were still in the Slytherin Dungeons, Dean was here and Seamus was with the Third Years.

Fred still hadn’t forgiven him for the points Dumbledore took from Gryffindor because Ron was insulting his two nearest brothers George and Percy.

No one but George knew the spell so Fred cast it on the others and used his wand to write in the air.

“What is that noise?’

Dean waved his hand pulling out a crumpled piece of parchment and a quill, scribbling, “It’s a Muggle Alarm clock.” He drew a sketch of one.

The boy really was a talented artist as if those Quidditch banners he’d painted weren’t proof enough.

Fred nodded, air writing again, ‘probably invisible, with a Sonorus charm.” He closed his eyes, using his connection with the wind to track the vibrations to their source.

Before he could the dormitory door was thrown open.

Standing there looking a bit wild was Seamus Finnigan.
Seamus covered his ears at the sound, shouting.

Fred having cursed himself deaf couldn’t understand him. He held up his hand to tell the boy in gesture to wait and turned his attention to locating the alarm clock by the feel of the vibration of its ringing on the air. Forgetting others—possible enemies, surrounded him Fred used his wind to lift Lee’s bed. His wind brought the invisible and Sonorus charmed clock to him. Tapping it with his want, he whispered a very powerful finite incantatem.

The vibrations finally stopped.

Fred took a huge breath and let out a sigh of relief before ending the hex that made them all deaf.

Seamus stared at him, “What the hell was that Merlin awful noise?”

Dean wiggled a finger in his ear, “Muggle Alarm clock.”

“Sonorus charmed of course.”

Seamus’ eyes narrowed, “Just how did you find that thing? Did that thing make you deaf?”

“Nah,” Fred smirked, ignoring the question regarding how he found it. “I just used a hex that makes one temporarily deaf. It’s great in a duel, just think about, how disorienting it would be to be suddenly deaf? What did you need?”

“We didn’t have an alarm clock in Colin’s Dormitory. Explosions waked us up. They were coming from my old dorm. You want to deal with him? Disowned or not isn’t he still partially related? I’ve got no good relations myself. You remember Fergus; he’s a bully, a cheat and a no-good all-around scoundrel but Aintín Áine loves him. More’s the pity.” Seamus finished muttering under his breath.

“Explosions? I don’t think we sent any fire crackers in his room.”

“Not fire crackers Fred! It sounds like the Blasting curse.”
Fred snarled, “And Harry was accused of destroying Hogwarts property.” He turned to Seamus, “You got a personal house elf?”

Seamus nodded, “At my seanmhuintir. What do you want him for?”

“To tell Professor Prince-Malfoy and Lupin about Ron.”

Seamus chuckled, “Oh well I already sent Liam after Professor Lupin.”

Fred stalked off himself, muttering, “Why me?” he wasn’t a prefect, granted the sixth years boys prefect should have come with him. Apparently, he hadn’t seen fit to. Which annoyed him. Oh so he was deal with his troublesome, embarrassing cousin! He sent a Patronus-like wind creature to go wake up his girl. He threw open Ron’s dormitory which he now shared with no one. “What in Merlin’s name,” he got no farther because of the loud ringing.

Not this again!

Beds had been exploded into splinters, Ron’s trunk had been blasted to bits, and the nightstands were in pieces.

That idiot was still blasting things.

Hexing his hearing away again, Fred cast the Incarcerous on Ron before silencing the Sonorous charm and sat down on the stairs to wait.

XoooooX

Remus and Lucius were woken by the sound of a scuffle on the landing of the stairs about the middle of the ‘bedroom they shared in Severus’ Hogwarts apartment.

“Lord Malfoy be sleeping! Stria not going to let strange house elf wake him!”
“Liam not strange! Liam work for Lord O’Shanesey! Master Seamus send me. Liam don’t want your master. Liam want Professor Lupin.”

Lucius sighed, he knew Irish Gaelic but he didn’t speak it as much as the local version. “We’re already awake Stria.”

The house elf padded toward the large four-poster bed with emerald velvet curtains and duvet. Stria was wringing his hands, “Stria sorry master.”

Remus touched his shoulder, “What do they want Lucius?” he didn’t understand what the house elves had been saying.

Lucius pointed to the unfamiliar one, “That one, Liam was sent by a Seamus.”

“Seamus Finnigan?”

The little house elf nodded, replying in stilted English, “Master Seamus want you especially.” He tilted his head, “Someone told master Seamus that they wanted Professor Prince-Malfoy too but I’d already been sent.”

“Why were you sent?”

“Explosions coming from Master Seamus’ old dorms. Master Seamus tell Liam get Professor Lupin. Master Seamus go to get Young Master Weasley-Prewett.”

Remus left the bed; he was Head of Gryffindor because Minerva resigned. That left him reluctantly in charge of Gryffindor, only reluctantly because he had to deal with Ronald Dumbledore. He was a bit sore from all the vigorous sex they had earlier in the evening and he had been looking forward to a night spend in its entirety in these rooms. “I’ll be there in a few.”

Lucius leaned over to kiss Severus’ neck, speaking softly in French, “Severe, there is a disturbance in the dorms. In Gryffindor. The Deputy Headmaster is needed…”

Severus seemed to wake slowly, “What? Salazar’s Wand! Never mind. I’m getting up.” He tried to
sit and winced, “Merlin that hurts. Trust that dunderhead to need discipline hours after I let you two plough my arse.” He summoned an painkilling draught that he’d brewed especially for morning after vigorous sex with Lucius. Not he needed it more since he had not one but two lovers. Damn them both for being such sexual creatures and thinking his true form as Sidhe was that sexy. He waited until he could move without being overwhelmed with pain. “I’m going to strangle that dunderhead!” he muttered as he dressed.

XoooooX

Fred was quite tired especially after being woken at Three in the bloody morning with a Muggle alarm clock that had a Sonorus charm on it. Merlin’s holey underpants this was ridiculous! He’d get them back! At two am the other House were going to be woken against their wills. He’d see how they liked it!

He finally heard the sound of the portrait door opening and footsteps on the staircase to the boys ‘dorms.

It didn’t take long after that to see a yawning and very displeased Head of Slytherin and Professor Remus.

XoooooX

“What in Merlin’s name is going on Weasley?” Remus yawned.

“I was woke most unkindly by a Muggle alarm clock prank. Some brilliant person had them set to go off at three am of all the unholy hours. I dealt with ours only to have Seamus show up to tell me that explosions were disturbing the Third Years’ sleep. I found Ronald using the blasting curse to find the alarm clock. It wasn’t that hard, even if it did have the disillusionment and Sonorus charms cast on it. I found it but he destroyed a lot of Hogwarts property.” Fred said stretching.

Remus checked Ronald’s wand, “He definitely cast the blasting curse and the only sign of another’s magic is the echo of a disarming charm. Dumbledore you will,”

Seamus summoned Colin’s camera, “Would you like evidence first sir?”
Remus nodded, “Twenty points to Gryffindor.”

Seamus took copious pictures of the damage Ron had wrought, “I'll have Colin develop them in the morning.”

“Thank you Mr. Finnigan. You did the right and proper thing. Fifteen points to Gryffindor.” Severus added.

Remus then cast a spell that restored order to the dorm room but had the other four beds removed. “Now Mr. Dumbledore, you are in very big trouble. You are assigned one month of cleaning up after Thestrals. One month of scrubbing cauldrons and two months with Filch as his boy of all work. Now I suggest that you get some sleep.” He levitated Ronald to his bed, turned down the bedding, placed him in it, cast a sleep spell and removed the Incarcerous.

Severus grabbed his arm, “Let's go back to bed.”

“Thirty points to Gryffindor Fred for keeping a clear head.” Was Remus’ parting remark.

If they were more awake they would have thought to grant points to the House who came up with the alarm clock prank.

Chapter End Notes

December 3, 1994

Lucius had offered Malfoy Manor as the location for the Meeting.

He had arranged for certain persons to arrive early.

There were holes on the Board.

The Slytherin Seat was by right Adrian's due to his obvious inheritance from Salazar himself so the seat could be held by his father as Regent.

Crouch's seat was awarded to Auror Black but it had to be a vote upheld by a 3/4 vote in the Founder's Council.

There were twelve seats besides the Founders' Council on the Board; three had been allotted to acquaintances of each founder. At present the Crouch, Peverell and Slytherin seats were vacant.

Sirius III didn't arrive however Sirius I did in place of Andromeda.

Lucius bowed, "My Lord, it's an honour to welcome you to the Manor. I take it you are here in Auror Black's and Madam Black-Tonks' stead?"

Sirius I nodded, "Indeed."

The other guests/members arrived. Lucius took his customary seat at the head of his table, the one bearing the crest of his House. "I ask permission to speak."

Lady Augusta Longbottom, the Head of the Board nodded, "The President of the Board acknowledges Governor Malfoy."

"It is to my knowledge that three seats are still at present empty."

The others nodded.

"I propose that seat belonging to a descendant of Salazar Slytherin be granted to granted to one Tiberius Pucey. It is his by right of descent through his great-great grandfather Cadmus Gaunt who was the last person to hold that seat."

"Lord Pucey is it true that Cadmus Gaunt is your ancestor?"

Tiberius Pucey blinked and then nodded, "I am the descendant of his daughter Elektra."

Augusta turned to conference with Xeno Lovegood who held the seat as regent for Luna and Naomi Smith who was Prefect Deborah Smith's mother.
When they finished Augusta nodded, "It is so determined that the Salazar seat pass to Tiberius Pucey by right"

"As you know Lady Longbottom the Ministry declared all of Crouch's possessions to revert to Auror Black. Due to an attack on his family he is not here but his representative is. I would like to move that Sirius Orion Black be granted the Crouch Governorship due to the Crouch family being ineligible to hold the seat due to their life sentences in Azkaban."

The now four member Founders Council conferred.

Augusta announced,"One Sirius Orion Black is now holding the Crouch seat on the Board of Governors."

"The two elder Peverell lines are now considered extinct. I move that the Peverell vote be granted to Madam Black Tonks who is the Regent of the Houses of Black and Potter. "

Amelia Bones blinked, "Lord Malfoy with Andromeda absent that means King Sirius controls two Black votes, the Peverell vote and the Potter vote! That's four!"

Lucius shrugged, "I control the Prince and Malfoy votes and since Gideon isn't present I believe that Septimus controls the Weasley and Prewett votes."

"Actually, I am here."

Those present heads turned.

Sitting in Septimus Weasley's place was one Gideon Prewett.

"Pardon the glamour. I am filling in for my father in-law. He had business in Hogsmeade that must have run over. We were to attend together."

"Either way the Weasley and Prewett votes are being held by the same person at present. When Andromeda returns she'll only have three." Lucius hoped Harry was extremely fertile: with at least four titles: Malfoy, Potter, Black and now Peverell to provide heirs too all of which were entitled upon the male line they were need four sons. Five if the Infertility curse wasn't broke on Severus.

"If all the seats have been allotted then I bring the December meeting of the Hogwarts Board of Governors to order." Augusta announced. "Do we have any new business?"

Lucius raised his hand, "I have business."

"The Board recognizes Governor Malfoy."

"I Lucius Malfoy move that Headmaster Dumbledore be fired and replaced by one Professor Filius Flitwick."

Sirius I and Gideon's voices chorused in a desire to second.

"Which title do you want acknowledged as second my lord?" Augusta asked the Chuvash King.

Sirius I smirked "Lets keep him guessing. Governor of the House of Peverell seconds Governor Malfoy's call for the release of Albus Dumbledore from the position of Headmaster.

"All those in favour?"

Governors Pucey, Longbottom, Lovegood, Bones, Black, Black [Crouch], Potter, Peverell, Malfoy,
Prince, Weasley and Prewett were for the dismissal-, which counted to twelve persons. Which counted up to fifteen considering the members of the Founders' Council held the weight of two votes compared to the regular Governor's vote.

"Those against?"

Diggory, Clearwater, Burbage and Smith were the only votes against which meant they had five votes.

"In a vote of fifteen to five, Dumbledore is deposed. It is the ruling of the Board of Governors that one Filius Flitwick is Headmaster of Hogwarts."

Sirius I raised his hand, "I Sirius voting on behalf of House Potter move that Governor Prince be named Deputy Headmaster by this Body."

Amelia Bones seconded, "I, Governor Bones second the motion."

"It has been moved and seconded that Governor Severus Prince-Malfoy be named Deputy Headmaster. All those in favour?"

The vote was the same as the one for the dismissal of Dumbledore.

"By a vote of fifteen to five it is the determination of this Board that Governor Severus Prince-Malfoy, Head of Slytherin and Potions Master of Hogwarts be named Deputy Headmaster of Hogwarts. Is there any further business to come before this Board?" Augusts asked.

There were shaking heads all around.

"Then I President of the Hogwarts Board of Governors declare this the December meeting of year 1994 closed."

Diggory was finishing his notes as secretary of the Board.

Lucius bowed, "As thanks for your attendance I offer you the opportunity to stay for lunch."

There were murmurs of thanks and polite refusal from the other Governors.

Lucius was more then pleased with himself for his political manoeuvring. Severus was Deputy Headmaster and Filius was Headmaster. It wouldn't be long before Severus was Headmaster. Filius was getting on in years and would surely be retiring sooner due to his recent ascension to the Headmaster office.

"Since Diggory, Clearwater and Burbage left with Governor Bones perhaps I could request that some of you attend with me to turn out Dumbledore? It will take at least three members of the Founders' Council to turn the wards against him."

"It would be an honour." Lucius smirked

XoooooX

It was a large party that made its way to the Headmaster's Tower.

Dumbledore looked up as they entered and giving them a frazzled smile, "How might I help the Board of Governors?"

Augusta spoke, "As Head of the both the Board proper and the Founders' Council it is my duty to
inform you that in a three-quarter vote the Hogwarts Board of Governors has voted for you to be disposed. You are to be turned out bag and baggage."

"Now Augusta, is this posturing really necessary? What could I possibly have done that would require me to be removed?"

"Don't bother playing innocent. I'm sickened at the sight of you."

Augusta, Xeno and Pucey joined hands and began chanting.

Dumbledore attempted to protest.

There was a loud snap and Dumbledore was gone.

"There. The old man has been turned out."

Lucius bowed, "I will have Filius, Severus and Madam Pince go through his possessions and remove what belongs to Hogwarts. Then the House elves will be told to pack up what is his and have it delivered to wherever it is he supposedly lives during the summers."

The other governors bowed and left.

Augusta paused, "Lucius, I recommend not attending the Wizengamot session on Monday."

Lucius raised an eyebrow, "For what reason?"

"Nothing bad. However I'm sure that it would be preferable if you skipped. I plan on creating a situation that will facilitate the deposing of Fudge. It would be simpler if you weren't present. We'll say you are busy on Governor's business. Overseeing the changing of the Leadership would be the best focusing of your time."

Lucius bowed, "I shall do as you request Lady. I would like to be informed of the substance of the Session as soon as it is permissible."

Chapter End Notes


Yes I suppose that Seamus and Fred's points made up for points Ron lost due to his destruction of the Fourth Years Boys Dormitory. Peeves' claim that Dumbles is not quite a man is discussed in Chapter 19 and 21 of Falling Feather.

BTW everyone doesn't speak Parseltonque. It's so difficult to learn that most can't. Reading phonetic Parseltongue is a lot easier then speaking it. Severus can only 'baby talk' in Parseltongue compared to a Chuvash. The fact that Severus can speak it at all is due to his magic I'm sure. Ron who is a pathetic excuse of a wizard was capable of peaking the word 'open' so that sort of disproves that it can't be taught or learned. For example if it is only a blood trait like say the Uchiha Sharingan then of course it can stil be used to a point by a non-Uchiha Kakashi has one. He can't control it as well as an Uchiha but he can use it. The reason that the chamber wasn't opened before was that it wasn't found. Had a Chuvash found it they would have been able to open it but the
Basilisk was tied to the bloodline of Slytherin so only a descendant could control the Basilisk. If you read farther in story you would see that only the Chuvash use it amongst themselves. It's a language and it can and should be spoken and treated as such.
Chapter 45- Fred's 'revenge prank'

December 4, 1994

Fred snuck out of Gryffindor Tower and met up with Peeves two hours after curfew.

"A Sixthie's out of bed!" Peeves announced loudly by way of greeting.

Fred snorted, "You knew I would be. Now are you ready Peeves?"

"Peevesie is always ready to cause havoc and mayhem!"

"Take these to the other Houses. Light them and leave them in the main corridors of both sets of Dorms."

"Yes Master Freddie!" Peeves said giving him a mocking salute and disappearing with the bag.

Fred was going for maximum noise, these fireworks were specifically created for indoor use. They were noisy and bright. Although they were capable of shattering glass when exploding they were despite all the fire and sparks unable to set thing on fire. Pranks were only funny if they were shocking and comical. Once they tipped over into dangerous, it wasn't a prank anymore; it was merely a vindictive act.

Not that Frederick Maris Weasley-Prewett wasn't above such actions. However, you had to earn his enmity. As of late only Dumbledore, Molly and Ron had at present. He was quick to anger and extract retribution. With the exception of family he was slow to forgive. He'd cause Percy more headaches when he'd thought his closest older brother had treated Oliver badly yet when he'd learned why Percy had been boarding on cruel, he'd been among the first to be angered. Prior to the apparent breakup between Percy and Oliver, Percy had been highly supportive of their House team. Angelina had told himself and George how upset Percy had been when she, Adrian Pucey, Rodger Davies and Cedric Diggory all asked for Prefect duties that wouldn't conflict with their House's Quidditch Practices.

Now Percy and Oliver were inseparable again. Which pleased him to no end, Oliver had always been like a big brother and being engaged to Percy merely legalized something that Fred had always felt. He almost wished that he had a brother for Harry but he had to admit that Draco was good for him.

Smirking, Fred made his way back to the common room in Gryffindor Tower. He used his wind to send a few of his fireworks to torment Granger and to annoy Angelina, Katie and Alicia. His teammates would no doubt grumble at him but it would be enjoyable.

XooooooX
Blaise, Neville, Vince, Theo, Draco and Harry woke at the first explosion.

Harry whimpered, burying his face in Draco's silk pyjama top.

Blaise stumbled sleepily to the dormitory door.

Only to be greeted with louder explosions and colourful flashes. Out of the coloured smoke came a smallish dragon that appeared he made from of green and silver flames.

The dragon entered the open door flying over Blaise's head to zooming around closer to the ceiling. It flickered like the green flames of a floo.

It was beautiful to behold and roared in great imitation of the dragons from the first task it sounded most like the roar of a Hungarian Horntail despite the similarity in colouring to a Welsh Green.

As the roar of the dragon increased it even woke Greg whom they teased as being able sleep through the castle collapsing around his ears.

The five Slytherins and two Gryffindors watched the dragon soar and scream until it exploded into coloured sparks that rained down but didn't set anything aflame.

Harry rubbed his eyes, yawning, "Why? Two nights woken up at ungodly hours by loud noises?"

Draco lifted his chin smirking, "You can be quite adorable when you are like that." Teasing his boyfriend, his future mate about how he'd clung to him and a little about how cute he was when he yawned.

Harry flushed, "I don't like loud noises. I've learned that loud noises usually mean bad things happen."

Draco silently cursed Dumbledore and Harry's Muggle relations. His mostly unawakened Veela nudes his senses, demanding he take retribution for Harry's injuries both physical and mental. Draco decided that they would do something special later that morning. He pressed his lips to Harry's, "I shall do my utmost to protect you."

Harry's eyes widened as his future mate kissed him. Draco would protect him? Then he remembered how Draco had taken the Crucius for him. Closing his eyes, he remembered his fear and the anger radiating off of Pansy and Draco's ex-mother. Harry felt the warmth and comfort of Draco's arms around him and the sound of the Slytherin's heartbeat lulled him to sleep.

XoooooX

Sophronia woke at the sounds of explosions outside the door to their dormitory in the corridor. She knelt and threw open the curtains, what greeted her were the pale faces of her roommates.

Seriously? Last night was another such disturbed rest!

Sophronia wished she slept with the Fourth year girls at this moment. So that she might send Millicent to investigate. Unlike most girls, the Bulstrode heiress did not shirk and screech, rather she was brave and stubborn.

Sophronia was suspicious that Millicent would make an excellent beater; perhaps, even better then
Derrick and Bole. Why? Although Millicent lack the beauty of Daphne Greengrass or the prettiness of Tracey Davis, she had a self-confidence and possession that they lacked. While Pansy might have been considered as good looking as she had believed herself to be, had she possessed a more pleasing temperament and had not had the misfortune of that pug-like nose.

The girls in her dormitory began to sob softly.

Children!

Most likely mourning the loss of their beauty sleep.

Grumbling, Sophronia stole from her bed, glaring at her dormmates. She noticed as she approached the dormitory's door that the sound of explosions grew louder.

They sounded like the fireworks that she'd once heard at the Queen's birthday celebration or the Muggle New Year's celebration on the telly.

Sophronia cracked the door open.

There came a loud roar and a dragon made of green flame flew towards her.

Sophronia stumbled backwards, tripping over the edge of her nightgown and sprawled back on her arse.

The girls in her dormitory shrieked.

Sophronia rubbed her hip where it struck the floor, the hard stone floor which was covered with a light carpet that bore the Slytherin green colour and some warming charms and perhaps a few cushioning ones.

Above her head, or rather their heads, soared a majestic dragon as green as the Welsh Green Dragon that she'd seen in the first task. However it's roar was that of a Ukrainian Ironbelly...

The dragon made of green flame soared its wings flapping and sometimes it actually seemed to glide.

The girls screamed when it darted towards their green velvet curtained silver limewood bedsteads.

Sophronia lay back and admired the dragon as it soared and roared.

Finally, it exploded in a flash of green and then rained down green sparks.

Another girl shrieked.

Sophronia rolled her eyes at them, they were just fireworks. Magical ones, obviously but the concept was the same.

Mere moments later from her thoughts to Merlin's ears, framed in the doorway was the familiar form of Milicent Bulstrode.

Her short hair was somewhat mussed, a loose robe hung on Millicent's broad shoulders. Instead of a nightgown and peignoir, she ware silk trousers and a matching shirt in a more masculine style.

Millicent strode over, glaring at the still stricken, whimpering girls in their beds and leaned over holding out her hand, "Assistance, my Queen?"

Sophronia grinned, "Thank you, Millicent. Consider yourself promoted. I have need of a guardian."
She said as the older girl pulled her up.

The girl who had the build of a Beater blinked at her, "Are you serious?"

Sophronia grinned, "I would prefer to have a female guardian. As you can see, none of my year have your courage or ability to seem unruffled.

"She's not female really." One of the formerly whimpering girls grumbled.

"Pansy was prettier then her."

Millicent's eyes flashed but she kept silent.

Sophronia's voice sliced through the air like a knife. "I forbid the mention of that individual. She is cut off. It is not for those outside the House Council to publicly disagree. There is protecting your own skin and cowardice. Millicent is clearly more honourable then the lot of you. I would rather have her beside me. then any of you preening want-to-be Princesses. The honourable Princess is more worthy of my time then you lot."

Millicent's expression changed from one of annoyance to shock.

"I care more about trusting the persons as my side. I, Queen of Slytherin declare Giselle Goyle as my advisor, Luna Lovegood, my second, Millicent Bulstrode and Theodore Nott as my guardians." Her voice was magnified by her desire to put those pathetic wenches in their place.

XoooooX

Giselle? Her Giselle advisor to the Queen? Herself, the guardian of the Queen? As an advisor, Giselle now outranked her brother Greg…

Millicent bowed slightly, "Why my lady?"

The young Queen leaned over blushing, "I think her brother is cute and I want her to like me. Besides, as a prefect she knows more about House Politics then I know. I began as the lowest of the low and rose to the second highest rank. I shall make mistakes, however I would prefer to have advisers to lessen their number and severity."

Millicent smirked at her, "I'm certain Giselle will approve of you. I shall be returning to her presently. It was at her recommendation that I came. She wanted my reassurance that you were well."

Millicent was pleased that their Queen wasn't a snivelling coward but an unruffled, rather mature young woman. Sophronia Prewett was someone she would be proud to call sister one day.

Millicent bowed over the young Queen's hand, "It will be an honour to accompany you to breakfast my lady. We shall attend you and take our places for the March."

Millicent waited until her Queen had retired to her bed before taking her leave. Thanking Salazar that Sophronia was a far better person than the self-proclaimed Consort of the Prince, Pansy Parkinson.

Life was more pleasant without Pansy around…

XooooooX
The Ravenclaw Third Year Girl's Dormitory's snore-filled but peaceful slumbers were abruptly interrupted by bangs, booms and cracks.

It startled Luna awake.

She groaned. Payback from Gryffindor for the Muggle alarm clock prank?

It had to be Fred…

Myrtle who was a lot more tolerable since she'd been praised publicly for proposing the alarm clock prank floated into the Dormitory with the Grey Lady.

They were clearly chatting amiably, the Grey Lady wasn't much older in life years but clearly outnumbered the formerly whiny, hostile and temperamental ghost of the second floor girls' bathroom in death years.

"Did you see Rodger?" I've never seen or heard a young man shriek that high!" Myrtle giggled.

Helena Ravenclaw chuckled, behind her hand, "That Eagle was impressive. It's made of blue flames and sounds just like one of those majestic birds. Rodger Davies is supreme arrogance, it took him down some."

The explosions and flashes of light continued behind the door.

Luna spoke up, "What bird? Davies shrieked like a girl?"

The two ghosts of former Ravenclaws turned to her and giggled like school girls.

Helena Ravenclaw quieted first, "Open the door and you'll see. Being my sister's descendant, you will no doubt be impressed."

Luna gave them a thoughtful look before hurrying to the door and throwing it open wide.

"Don't stand in the doorway…"

Myrtle's warning came too late.

There was an explosion, out of the flash and smoke flew an eagle composed of a contrasting set of blue colours.

Luna had to jump out of the way to the left of the door to avoid being 'run over' by the impressive eagle.

However, she didn't scream like Davies.

Luna leaned against the wall to the interior left of the dormitory's door.

She watched the large eagle made of blue flames, it was pretty…

The large flame created wings flapped at it circled, dove, screamed and flew about the Dormitory.

Helena nodded approvingly, "You do my mother justice. She was unruffled by most things. Although we as a community did not possess such things as these fireworks while she lived."
The murmuring, cries and whimpering reached a crescendo.

Luna snapped, "Oh shut up! It's only a bird, big but it won't hurt you. See? It maybe flame but nothing's catching on fire. It's merely a revenge prank for ours yesterday. Don't be children."

The other Third Year Girls huffed at her.

To punctuate her words, the eagle exploded in a flash of light.

Luna sniffed, "See? Now go back to bed."

Myrtle and Helena giggled again and curtseyed before floating through the wall once more.

Luna made her way back to bed, muttering, "Brilliant. I'll have to see that Gryffindor gets points for that one."

XooooX

Angelina was less than pleased to be woken up by the sound of fireworks.

Fred! That sneaky bastard!

No wonder he had been smirking all day…

Honestly, no doubt he pranked her on purpose. That's what you get when you're in love/dating an incorrigible prankster.

Touching her wand, Angelina charmed the door open.

A huge scarlet lion wreathed in gold flames emerged following a loud crack from a cloud of coloured smoke and bound into the room.

The Sixth Year girls were stunned silent.

The lion roared fit to rattle the windows.

Angelina was truly impressed. It was obviously a Fred creation or at least his idea. That was what she thought at least.

The lion tore around the dormitory, roaring as it leapt from bed to bed.

A shower of sparks occurred with each pounce yet the scarlet embers failed to catch the bed's velvet curtains or the coverlets on fire.

The lion came around to Angelina, landing practically on top of her just before exploding into a shower of red and gold sparks.

Rolling her eyes, Angelina flicked her wand and shut the door and the lumos lamps turned themselves out once more.

That boy! She thought hiding a smirk.
Since most didn't think much of Hufflepuff, it was no wonder that they too didn't escape the pranking.

However, Peeves disliked certain persons within said House so much that he 'disobeyed' his 'partner' Fred.

The other fireworks he'd placed outside in the corridor in front of the entrance to the selected dormitories but these he placed inside.

He snickered, hovering half in and half out of the wall so that he might bear witness.

Peeves lit a handful of fireworks and tossed them into the center of the dormitory.

At the first explosion Justin Finch-Flechley, Zacharias Smith, Ernie MacMillian and their fellow Dormmates Wayne Hopkins and Oliver Rivers were blown out of their beds.

The five luckless Hufflepuff boys were dazed at the brightness of the flashes, crackles and colourful explosions as well as the sheer noise.

Justin was awed and Ernie stunned but Zacharias was quickly getting angry.

Ernie noticed and rolled his eyes at his cousin. Often Susan and himself were embarrassed by Zacharias, Deborah despaired of him often. Both his mother and Susan's father were Zach's aunt and uncle respectively; their cousin was not a good reflection on their House. As Deborah put it, Zacharias was as opposite to Helga as one could get. Zach had an anger problem, he could be more violent than a Slytherin Beater. Sometimes one became so frustrated with him. It was no wonder that a handful of Hufflepuff guys like himself, Justin, their dormmates and older ones like Anthony would be capable of brawling with him. Anthony Rickett was normally as hard to anger as Cedric; in fact. he was extremely cool-tempered for a Beater.

Zacharias stormed to his feet and stomped towards the centre of their shared dormitory.

There was a loud explosion with more flash and noise than before, out of the smoke leapt a huge yellow and dark purple badger.

Despite his surprise and slight annoyance that the colours were off but he considered that black would be pretty hard for a firework. They were made to be shot off at night after all.

Justin and Ernie let out exclamations of surprise that were echoed by Wayne and Oliver.

The badger lunged at Zacharias growling.

A stunned Zacharias let out a high pitched shriek that was highly reminiscent of a girl's scream.

The badger was corporeal enough to land on him and knock him down, Ernie caught Justin's eye and they snickered.

The badger was cool; it seemed to be made of flames and could growl, move and knock Zacharias
on his arse.

After a few moments of growling and loping around the dormitory, it exploded into a shower of yellow, gold and dark purple sparks.

Ernie, Justin, Wayne and Oliver burst out into gales of laughter.

Zacharias stood, brushing himself off and grumbled, "It's not that funny." His face was so red, he looked like he was part of Gryffindor and in an exceeding bad humour.

Ernie snickered, "Was from where I was standing cousin."

"I'm going to bed." Zacharias growled as he stomped to his four-poster and slammed his gold curtains shut.

Ernie shook his head, Zach's behavior showed bad breeding and the Smiths were an ancient family that traced their lineage back to Helga Hufflepuff herself.

This would be an incident every boy in this dormitory would have etched in their mind probably until the day they died.

Chapter End Notes


I promise there will be more sexy moments between the three when I find the right place for it. Lucius has no choice but to accept Remus, Severus needs both of them to ground his magic and without Remus they can't reverse/remove Severus' curse. Besides, he'll do anything for Sev and if Sev wants Remus, he'll have to agree. Veela and Werewolves are both highly possessive mates and they have to learn to share. Remus will find his place in their relationship soon. At some point Lucius and Remus might have to have a dominance battle to prove who is the Head of their Family in bed. Any guess on who might win?
Chapter 46- Orders of Merlin

Chapter Notes

Takes places during Chapter 21 of Fallen Feathers recommend reading prior to this

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Chapter 46- Orders of Merlin

December 5, 1994

Lady Longbottom stood before the Wizengamot, “I wish to be heard.”

The chamber quieted.

She didn’t speak up often and when she did the other members knew well enough to pay attention.

Fudge rapped, “The Minister recognizes Lady Longbottom.”

It would be interesting for a Longbottom to request a Malfoy be presented with the Order of Merlin.

Lady Augusta Longbottom spoke, “You have all no doubt heard of Lord Malfoy and Lord Prince’s conduct? That they captured He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named, the person truly responsible for the deaths of the Potters and Lord Crouch who took his Death Eater son out of Azkaban?”

There were nods of agreement.

“I propose in light of their dangerous actions that were in defense of the Peace of both the Wizarding and Muggle Worlds that they be awarded the Order of Merlin, First Class.”
Umbridge was livid, “You’re joking. They were Death Eaters.”

Madam Amelia Bones interrupted, “It was proved that Lord Malfoy was forced. He could not and would not have joined of his own free will. As for Lord Prince, he joined to protect the man he loved. He did it out of love, knowing he’d most likely be punished for taking the Dark Mark. I am in favour of this. If we have more brave men like them we’d have a perfectly run department. Perhaps, young Master Malfoy will choose to join the Auror Ranks.”

Doge coughed, “Probably used Dark Arts…”

Amelia scoffed, “The Prisoners were examined. The only Dark Arts were the Unforgivables such as the Cruciatus and the Imperious, those of which appear to have been cast by He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named. Their wands were clear. How Lord Prince could be in the same room as the persons responsible for the murder of his childhood friend and not even lay a physical hand on them much less a magical one to make sure they suffered I’ll never knew. Lord Malfoy said that it was clear that his Bondmate was tempted so he captured them himself. They even went so far as to make sure to turn them over to the proper authorities.”

Doge looked very uncomfortable.

“Other than baseless assertions that they used the Dark Arts or that they took the Mark willing and were active parts of the Death Eaters’ terror attacks does anyone else have objections?” Lady Longbottom asked.

“If it had been Madam Bones or Senior Auror Shacklebolt we would award them Orders of Merlin without much fuss. We barely discussed the matter when we granted it to the traitor Pettigrew.” Lord Weasley said grimly.

“The former Lord Crouch believed he deserved one for his part in the Death Eater trials however his treatment of his own son made his so-called justice ineligible.” Lord Wood added.

“Other then baseless and frankly slanderous accusations are there any real reasons to not grant them the Order of Merlin?” Madam Bones asked.

“Where are Lord Malfoy and Madam Tonks?” Madam Umbridge said in that sickly sweet voice of hers.
“I’m here for the House of Black.” Came an authoritative voice. “My apologies Lord and Ladies.”

The chamber was surprised.

“Sir?” Madam Bones said bowing.

“I hold the principal seat of the Black family, Grimpound Manor and I hold the Black family wand. That alone should grant me voice. Although I am here in Andromeda’s stead, I am her proxy. Mostly because as the Leader of a magical people it is slightly unfair of me to have much say in another’s affairs.”

“How are the Tonks? Any change?” Madam Bones asked quickly.

“Eli said she should continue to remain in a healing trance or coma, whatever it’s called. I trust him.”

“Eli?”

“My eldest son. He trained in Paris. Now what is the issue before the Wizengamot?”

“Whether or not to award Lords Prince and Lord Malfoy the Order of Merlin.”

Sirius I laughed good-naturedly and it rang out through the chamber, “A brilliant notion. Whose idea was it? Madam Bones? Lord Weasley’s?”

Septimus bowed, “It was Augusta’s.”

Sirius I raised an eyebrow. “Indeed? I think that awarding them the Order of Merlin is a small thing in light of their Herculean efforts in the past month on behalf of the Wizarding World. I know that it only allowed for one to hold two votes I have at present standing in for four families, which equals five votes. Lady Longbottom, may I ask you to speak for the Potters? Your families have always been close. I would ask Lord Weasley to speak for the two Blacks seats but you…”

Septimus smirked, “I hold only the Weasley Seat to today. My Grandson is standing for his bearer
“Very well Then I grant the right to speak for the Orion Black seat to Lord Weasley and for the Charis Black seat to young William. I shall speak for the Princes and the Malfoys.”

“This is highly irregular…how do you claim the right for this?”

“I am a Black, the Black, the holder of the family wand. Lord Prince and Lord Malfoy are busy with school matters and cannot vote for themselves to receive the Order of Merlin. Madam Black-Tonks who the regent for young Harry’s two seats and Auror Sirius who holds the former Crouch seat cannot attend. Due to circumstances that cannot be revealed at this time they are currently in hiding. Through marriage ties one can hold a vote, just as Lady Longbottom does. Lord Weasley can speak for the Blacks due to his Bondmate having been born a Black. Now I believe Lady Longbottom was about to make a motion.”

Augusta coughed nervously, “I move that for valour hereto unseen prior that Lord Malfoy and Lord Prince be awarded the Order of Merlin, First Class for their capture of the Dark Lord and the betrayer of the Potters, one Peter Pettigrew.”

Septimus pounded his desk, “I second that.”

Cornelius Fudge stammered, “It has been moved and seconded that Lords Malfoy and Prince be awarded the Order of Merlin, First Class.”

“Wood votes yea.”

“Weasley votes yea.”

“Black votes yea.”

“Potter votes yea.”

“Bones votes yea.”
“Crouch votes yea.”

“Umbridge votes nay.”

“Doge…abstains…courteously.”

“Longbottom votes yea.”

“Marchbanks votes yea.”

“Prince votes yea.”

“Malfoy votes yea.”

“Fudge votes…yea.”

“Prewett votes yea.”

“Dumbledore is absent. Vote will be recorded as an abstention.”

There were few nay votes in total, maybe five.

“With twenty-five the yeas have it. It is the decision of the Wizengamot that Lords Malfoy and Prince be awarded the Order of Merlin.” Madam Bones announced with a smirk.

“I believe that it would only be appropriate to grant them their titles during the opening of the Yule Ball.”

Sirius I stood, “May I speak?”
The Lords and ladies of the Wizengamot nodded.

“I believe there was a reward for someone who facilitated the capture of escaped prisoner and now cleared Auror Black?”

There were nods.

“Then I humbly request that the person who restrained Auror Black and turned over Narcissa Black and Pansy Parkinson for violating the Wizengamot’s decree against the use of Unforgivables to Auror Tonks be granted the reward.”

“Who turned him over?” Septimus asked.

“Professor Remus Lupin.” Kingsley answered.

Augusta blinked, “Wasn’t that a friend of his?”

“I believe that the Professor wanted him to stand trial and prove his innocence so he wouldn’t have to remain on the run forever. As an intimate of Lord Prince and Lord Malfoy he knew that Auror Black’s case was being reinvestigated. He was defending Harry Potter from Narcissa Black and Pansy Parkinson. In fact young Master Malfoy took the Cruciatus twice for young Master Potter.”

The Wizengamot was filled with gasps.

“What is the point of giving us this information sir?” Umbridge asked in her sickly sweet voice.

Sirius had to restrain himself from tearing her head from her shoulders, “I would like to propose that Remus for his gallantry be awarded the Order of Merlin, Third Class.”

Fudge swallowed, “But…”
This was perfectly choreographed.

“Lord Wood places a vote of no confidence in Minister for Magic Cornelius Fudge.”

The vote was seconded by Longbottom, Weasley, Prewett, both Black seats, Potter, Prince, Malfoy, Bones, Shacklebolt and Marchbanks.

It went to a vote.

Doge and Dumbledore were recorded as abstentions.

The ‘Slytherin contingent’ voted with Malfoy, Black and Prince.

The Hufflepuffs followed the Bones- with the exception of Fudge.

Gryffindors voted with Weasley, Prewett, Wood and Potter.

Ravenclaws- minus Umbridge of course, voted in favour.

The final tally was two abstentions and maybe three nays.

Fudge turned pale.

With the over two-thirds/over three-quarters, and nearly unanimous vote of no confidence in Minister for Magic Fudge; in a vote bordering on historic he was voted out.

Sirius I, King of the Chuvash spoke, his voice ringing with the authority of his power. “I Sirius I, King of the Chuvash, Son of the House of Black, Brother of Former Hogwarts Headmaster Phineas Black and holder of the Black family wand endorses Amelia Bones for Minister for Magic pro-tem.”

Augusta spoke up, “I second the nomination.”
Fudge fled the Wizengamot chamber, and Umbridge followed but not before glaring at them all.

With Madam Bones’ record, with the exception of four abstentions her appointment of Minister for Magic Pro-tem was declared unanimous.

There were congratulations all around for her.

Bones was known to be fair, her Hufflepuff nature suited her well. She was hard working, and though her loyalty was unbuyable she was the type to weigh the evidence and possible outcomes before making a decision. With her record in the Department of Magical Law and before that with the Hit Wizards, even Former Death Eaters and neutral Slytherins respected her.

Chapter End Notes


A/N:

Re: Ch. Peace Shattering Argument in the the Great Hall

I wrote that chapter the way I wanted it to go. I was sure that I had translations for everything. My apologies if I missed one. I thought it best to have Draco translating since he was a more familiar character. I understand the plausible reasoning of how I could have translated the 'Russian cussing match'. I did consider that- This chapter has gotten a lot of heat for a variety of reasons. Including my apparent showing off of my Russian.

The phase Tebya ne ebut, ti ne podmahivai! means 'Mind your own God damn business' although it literally means, 'you're not getting fucked, so don't get up and squirm on my cock'.

I'm sure anyone being told that would end up livid especially since it came from the Headmaster of Hogwarts.

BTW I chose the name Alvin because it's an elf related name and the Woods have elf in their ancestry. Its a nice name that means 'Friend of elves'. If my readers find a nice elf related name that sounds good with an Arthurian name I'll use that for their next child
instead of the name I've already picked.

As for the cupboard issue- there were two cupboards. One under the kitchen sink and the other beneath the stairs. I'm sorry if I didn't make that clear.
They’d picked up the nogtails from Seamus’ grandfather yesterday, who promised to stay nearby to be called upon to catch the swine demons.

Angelina snuck out of the tower early with Fred and Seamus, they’d hid the nogtails in the Room of Requirement.

Angelina had found a spell that would let her mark the Nogtails, it was a spell that was used to brand magical creatures. She marked them one, two and four in Runes.

Seamus snickered, “When do we release them?”

Fred smirked, “Why not just before breakfast? It would cause the most panic.” He tossed a jar of a potion that George created that made everything slippery on the nogtails. He’d already spoken to Peeves about waxing the floors.

The castle staircases were slides and trick steps showed up at unexpected places. Walls were doors, doors were walls and all his known secret passages had moved. Either it was the entrances or exits that moved; otherwise, the whole passage was somewhere else. It was so confusing.

Luckily, places like the kitchens were unaffected by the castle’s changes…

Whoever had gotten the castle involved in the Prank War was genius…
Draco had to levitate himself and Harry up from the dungeons because the stairs were going crazy.

Harry liked being close to Draco; it was calming...

With all the pranks going around, it was fun…

Draco was nearly run down by a white pig thing.

Greg shouted, “NOGTAIL!”

Draco flinched. What was a swine demon doing here?

Slytherin parted, letting the pig-like creature through.

Behind them, came screams.

Draco snorted, Hufflepuff.

There were shouts up ahead…

Girls in red and blue uniforms were also running from a nogtail.

They and the nogtail slid down the stairs when they turned into a slide.

A group of Gryffindor wizards were trying to catch it, but it was slippery on the floors above.
Granger screamed when the nogtail fell in her lap.

Its response was to bite her and growl.

Draco’s eyes narrowed, why did the Nogtail have the rune for four on it?

The nogtail that had passed them already had come up another pair of stairs. It ran towards the Great Hall but hit a barrier.

Draco let out a sigh of relief; at least it wouldn’t be getting in there.

The nogtails growled and then herded the students into the Great Hall.

Slytherin went in disgusted, but the females from the other Houses were screaming and the males were covered in grease.

Severus rose and hissed for silence.

The Ravenclaw, Hufflepuff and Gryffindor girls quieted to a whimper.

“What is going on here?”

Seamus spoke up, “Professor, the girls be upset because a nogtail is loose in Hogwarts. Granger is upset because it ended up in her lap.”

“Must of thought it was Ron.” Fred chortled.

Hermione burst into tears.
“Nogtails?” Severus tried very hard not to laugh, “How in Salazar’s name did Nogtails get into Hogwarts? How many are there?”

Draco called out, “They are labelled with Runes. I saw one that said four.”

“The one that ran past us looked like it bore a backwards two.” Greg offered.

Draco was surprised that Greg was admitting to being dyslexic.

“So, we have one labelled four and one labelled two in runes?”

Headmistress Maxine frowned, “We saw no nogtails this morning.”

George entered with Durmstrang at his back.

A nogtail floated in a bubble in front of Viktor and he looked annoyed.

Seamus, Dean and Fred looked at one another and swallowed nervously.

“Would someone like to explain how a demon ended up in my apartments?” Viktor asked.

The nogtail, even enclosed in a bubble was kept outside the Great Hall by some ward.

Severus sighed, “Apparently, at least three nogtails are in the castle. What number does yours bear?”

“It bears the rune for one.” Viktor added.

“I thought that nogtails could only be captured by albino bloodhounds…” Remus said surprised.
“It’s a temporary bubble charm.” Vanya replied. “We learned in Care of Magical Creatures and a lecture on Dark Creatures in our class on Dark Arts and Protection.”

“Nogtails ain’t dark.” Seamus protested, “They’re just tricksy. They can bring bad luck on a farm but that’s just cause they suckle pregnant sows or impregnate the ones on heat. So they only starve piglets and spawn half-nogs.”

Vanya chuckled, “Pretty informed fer a Brit.”

Seamus scowled.

Fred kicked him.

The bubble broke and the nogtail dropped to the ground with a shrieking squeal.

Glamour spells shattered all over the Great Hall.

The witches cowered covering their heads and started to sob.

The wizards roared with laughter.

It seemed to Draco that Queen Sophronia had struck.

All the non-Slytherin witches had obnoxiously coloured hair.

Even Luna was sporting Peacock blue, but she’d entered with it visible, while wearing a slight smirk.

Cho Chang had bright bubblegum pink hair.

Hermione Granger’s was neon green.
Angelina’s was peacock blue as well and it was flattering due to her complexion.

Deborah Smith’s was pink.

Ginevra Weasley’s was green, which looked horrid with her colouring, and she was sobbing.

Lavender’s was pink and Pavarti’s was green.

The witches were trapped by nogtails and forced to stay in the Great Hall where they were snickered at.

The Ravenclaws were also covered in bruises.

Vanya snickered; his somnambulist curse was working.

A few of the Beauxbatons girls were sporting bruises but they had been exempted from the hair colour prank.

“Anyone know where to get albino bloodhounds?” Filius asked, this morning was quickly dissolving into chaos.

“The Ministry has some in the Department of the Regulation of Magical Creatures.” Hagrid offered in his brogue.

The nogtails screamed and ran.

A taller, older version of Seamus strode in. He bowed, “Lord Killian O’Shanesey at your service. My hounds are bred to track nogtails. I was in Hogsmeade on business when he scented Nogtails and because eager for a chase.”

Filius rose and bowed, “We would be forever in your debt, sir.”
“Righto. Conan seek and herd.”

The albino wolfhound leapt into the air doing a flip before charging off.

“It won’t take him long. He’s got practice.” Killian chuckled.

“Fifty points to Slytherin for the hair prank and one hundred points to Gryffindor for the Nogtails.” Severus said chuckling.

“What about Durmstrang?” George called out. “I think theirs was pretty ingenious.” He waved his hand at the Ravenclaw table. “Vanya’s handy work.”

“The bruises?”

“Somnambulist spell.” George shrugged.

Vanya smirked.

Severus chuckled, “A difficult spell to cast and on the entire tower no less. Seventy five points.”

It seemed that Gryffindor and Durmstrang were about tied with Ravenclaw and Slytherin close behind. Hufflepuff was behind Beauxbatons in points.

“I suggest we eat while we wait for the nogtails to be rounded up and properly dealt with.” Filius suggested. “Killian, why don’t you have a seat and join us.”

“A second breakfast? How kind. I forgot how delicious Hogwarts food is.” Seamus’ grandfather joined them at the Head table, which lengthened to accommodate him and a house elf appeared with a chair. Another arrived with dishes and silver.
There was a loud sound like a raspberry being blown.

Peeves was circling and singing.

“Dumpy thinks he’s tricksy
Peevesie is tricksier”

He slammed a Portrait into the wall behind each House Table where the walls accepted them.

He flew around, laughing like a mad man. “Oh speak Great Ones! Please pontificate for the wee ones and the eggheads. Let them shake and quiver. Speak to us, Queenie. Wave your sword and lecture, Dragon. Hiss at us Cauldron Worshiper. Teach us how to cook Elf Lover! Peevies thinks he’s missing one. Queenie ought Peevesie find Lady Aurelia? Should Peevsie Weevseie put her at your feet?”

“Oh do be quiet, you idiotic Poltergiest! Take your jibs and jabs and go torment Sir Caradoc or Sir Nicolas.” Rowena snapped. “Your insolence is revolting.”

“Revolting? Peeves is a revolutionary! Not revolting! Get words right, Queenie!” Peeves cackled.

“Ignore him, Rowena dear. He’ll get bored soon.” Helga advised.

The four Houses were stunned. They had never seen portraits of the Founders before.

Severus chuckled, “At least, he did something right. Those Portaits belong there. Hey Peeves? I’ll lock up Filch if you bring me the others.”

Peeve zoomed towards him, “Snapey Wapey mean it? A whole day with no nasty Filchie? That include Nosy Norris?”
Severus nodded.

“Hip hip Kogar! Peeves deliver them straight away! A day to play! No waste baskets, chalk, chandelier, doors, students or walking stick shall be safe!” he flew at Ronald tossing him high in the air and sending his wand flying. “Ta ta! Dumbly bumbly two!”

Filius groaned, “Severus, I hope you know what you’re doing.”

“I want those portraits. I’d sacrifice Ronald Dumbledore’s physical safety temporarily to ensure we have them back.” Severus grumbled.

There came a whine from the entrance to the Great Hall.

Conan had returned with one Nogtail, which he had by the tail.

“Coming, Conan.” Killian said rising and wiping his mouth with a napkin.

He crossed the Great Hall in long strides; he pulled out his wand and conjured a cage.

Conan dropped the nogtail in the cage.

With a flick of his wand, the demon swine was locked up.

Yipping Conan set off again.

“One down, th… four to go.” Killian grinned.

“How many of them did you give Seamus, Killian?” Filius asked failing to restrain a chuckle.

Killian protested, “Gave? What makes you think I had anything to do with this, Filius?”
“The fact that you just happened to be present when nogtails invade the castle? Your grandson was just brimming with information about nogtails. You had an albino wolfhound with you…” Filius chuckled.

“Conan is my constant companion. He even comes to Wizengamot proceedings with me. Conan is my familiar…” Killian protested.

“Yer the O’Shanesey that raises nogtails!” Hagrid burst out.

“Of course, they are yours. I suppose the nogtail idea was Seamus. Angelina inked the runes. So whose idea was it to grease them?” Severus asked.

Dean and Fred promptly looked guilty.

“So, this really was a team effort…”

“House.” Fred smirked.

“Gryffindors really shouldn’t be so transparent, I might have guessed that the hair colour prank was Slytherins’ due to their lack of coloured hair. Yet I can’t tell who did it.” Severus chided.

“It was Sophronia.” Luna smirked, toying with her peacock blue hair, “Thanks for choosing a flattering colour.” She blew her best friend a kiss. “Pink is so not my colour.”

Harry and Neville burst out giggling.

“Is there something you would like to share, Potter? Longbottom?”

They shook their heads and continued giggling.

Adrian, Draco and Sophronia shook their head at their antics but Greg joined in.
“Are you going to take responsibility and claim this prank, Miss Prewett?” Severus asked.

Sophronia shook her hair, “No, professor. I think the prank speaks for itself.”

Conan announced himself with a whine.

Killian caged that nogtail and sent his familiar on its way for the next.

Within ten minutes, Conan was back with another nogtail and looked pleased with himself.

Filius chuckled, “I shall take that as a sign that he got them all. Thank you for an interesting morning. Next time be little sneakier, Gryffindor. Classes students and no, bad hair is not a valid excuse for skipping.”

The girls moaned, groaned and sniffed trying to look pathetic.

“I’ve been a professor too long for that to work!” he chided, “Now get!”

XoooooX

Augusta was smirking when she flooed into Severus Prince-Malfoy’s apartment that he shared with Lucius and Remus Lupin.

Lucius was alone surrounded by paperwork, barely looking up at the crackle of floo flame and then the steps out of the hearth.

Augusta smirked, waving a set of folded sealed parchments, “I’m ecstatic. Fudge has been removed from office and Amelia is now Minister of Magic. It was a majority of the other present members of the Wizengamot’s ruling.”
Lucius rose and gestured for her to follow him into the sitting area, offering his arm like the gentleman he was.

Augusta took his arm, “I am quite pleased with myself. “

After she was comfortably seated on a settee, Lucius asked, “Would this have something to do with why you requested that I stay away from the Ministry today?”

Augusta smirked, “Wouldn’t you like to know?”

Lucius raised an eyebrow at her smugness, “If you weren’t willing to indulge my childish curiosity, you wouldn’t have come unannounced with official documents.”

Augusta attempted to give off an innocent air.

“By Salazar Lady, you ought to have been a Slytherin, rather than a Gryffindor.” Lucius said shaking his head.

“Actually, I was a Ravenclaw. It matters not though. It seems that the Wizengamot is quite grateful to yourself and Lord Prince for your little attempt at playing Auror. They should with what fools we have in those ranks theses days, with the exception of Rufus and Kingsley of course. It seems I managed to persuade them to honour you properly. What do you think of Lord Lucius of the House of Malfoy, recipient of the Order of Merlin, First Class?”

Lucius was speechless, “You’ve got to be joking. Why would they grant that to a Death Eater?”

“You were reluctant, remember? I hold here Orders of Merlin for yourself and your mates. Remus has been granted the Order of Merlin, Third Class for his arrest of Sirius Black and turning him over to the authorities for a trial.”

Lucius blinked, “We’ve all been granted Orders of Merlin?”

Augusta bowed, “It was quite a fight. Lady Umbridge was most displeased. Especially when we ousted her beloved Cornelius.”
Lucius chuckled, “She dotes on him overly much, she’s like a third year Hufflepuff with her first crush.”

Augusta winced, “She was a Ravenclaw, Lucius.”

Lucius sighed, “For that, I am truly sorry. I pity you for I know that the traitor was your nephew.”

“His estate passed to me when he was declared dead. I will be granting it Neville when he comes of age. I would prefer that the name of the title be legally changed.”

“I suppose that Pucey-Longbottom or Longbottom-Pucey would suffice?” Lucius teased.

“Neville is being pursued by the Pucey heir? There are at least two or three years between them. How would they have met?” Augusta asked incredulously.

“I think that it is more that Neville is interested in the King of Slytherin. When Harry’s bed was found to be cursed, all but Ronald Dumbledore, moved out of the Fourth Year Gryffindor Boys Dormitory. Neville is staying in the Dungeons with Harry. I’ve observed him at the Slytherin Table and he seems quite attached to young Adrian. Perhaps, you could discuss a possible betrothal between your grandson and the Pucey heir. The Puceys, like the Greengrasses, were neutral.”

“I will discuss it with Neville later. So will you accept the Orders of Merlin?”

Lucius smirked, “How could I refuse them? I am sure that Remus and Severus will be flattered.”

“They ought to be.” Augusta said pompously. “Considering the trouble some of us went to.”

“This was the reason you asked me not to attend the Meeting of the Wizengamot, was it not?” Lucius asked arching an eyebrow.

Augusta smirked, “Of course. You couldn’t vote on receiving the Order of Merlin yourself. Besides, tending to Hogwarts business at my request was a plausible reason to be absent. You’ve also
appeared in recent years as quite the Fudge supporter. To remove that support so suddenly, would have done you more harm then good. Others; Wood, Weasley and my gracious self were the force behind the ousting of Fudge. When they discuss your giving support to the Bones Government, they will see you being a constant supporter of the power that be. You work within the system to change it. When it cannot be changed you put the word in the right ears and they make the changes in who holds the reins of power. It is a smart political move. After all, the Malfoy family is always the power behind the throne. Anyone who hopes to be big in the ministry, knows they ought to court your approval.”

Lucius chuckled, “You are a very perceptive woman.”

Augusta smirked, “I raised an Auror, we have to be.”

“What can I ever do,” Lucius started.

“Oh, be quiet and don’t be a fool. An Order of Merlin is a small thing in exchange for what you have done for the Wizarding World. Arresting He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named and the betrayer of the Potters? There should be songs in your praise, Lucius.”

Lucius shook his head, “All I want is a pleasant life with my mates and for Harry to recover from his traumatic life. We felt that the Dark Lord was weak enough and unexpecting, so we could sweep in where Aurors had failed.”

“But the support from you and Ted’s services, I don’t see how he could not recover.” Augusta rose, “Now if you will excuse me, I will see if I can find my grandson. Where is he likely to be at this hour?”

“I believe he is at Lunch in the Great Hall most likely with Harry Potter at the Slytherin Table. If you would like my lady, I could escort you.” Lucius rose and bowed.

Augusta turned pink, “If it would not be an inconvenience…”

“For the woman who saw to it that my play acting as an Auror resulted in unsought rewards? There is no inconvenience.”

Augusta took his arm, “Then lead on, good sir.”
“With pleasure, Ma'am.” Lucius said courteously.

He led her out of Severus’ dungeon apartments and towards the Great Hall.

XoooooX

Neville was eating but his eyes were drawn to Adrian…

“Well, it seems that Lucius was not mistaken.”

Neville fell off the Slytherin bench in shock, “Gran! You’ve given me a fright!”

“I told you, Augusta.” Lucius chuckled.

“Good afternoon, father.” Draco inclined his head in greeting, “Would you like to join us?”

“It would a pleasure, my son. Is there room for Lady Longbottom?”

“Of course.” Adrian said.

Slytherins silently moved over, giving the formidable woman a place

“Well would have thought Slytherins, Gryffindors and a Ravenclaw could sit and eat at a Hogwarts table together?” Augusta chuckled.

“Luna sits with us sometimes.” Sophronia smirked.
Theo blushed.

Sophronia poked him, “Behave Theo!”

“Easy for you to say, you’re always staring at Greg.” Harry smirked.

“Like you aren’t undressing Draco with your eyes. Blaise is always mooning over Charlie and Neville worships Adrian.”

“Sophronia!” Neville pouted, turning red.

Adrian frowned, giving the shy Gryffindor an appraising look.

Neville stared studiously at his plate but his eyes kept being drawn back to Adrian like a magnet.

“Besotted. Totally besotted.” Augusta said shaking her head, reaching to ruffle his hair, “Neville, what am I to do with you?”

Neville turned to her in shock. “Gran, are you alright?”

Augusta smirked, “I suppose I ought to consider a betrothal for you.”

“What?” Neville yelped.

“Perhaps, with that lovely Patil girl, the Gryffindor.” Augusta smirked.

Neville’s eyes filled with tears and his face paled in horror, “Gran! Please no, Pavarti is nice and all, but I would be miserable. Please…”

Augusta laughed at him, “Are you that enthralled with the Honourable Hadrian Pucey?” her eyes narrowed and she turned her attended to the older Slytherin, “What are your intentions towards my
“None at present. He is cute and eager to please like a puppy. Its adorable, but I’m not interested in pursuing a relationship.”

Draco smirked, “If Lord Black is right, you better snap him up before someone less deserving makes a play for him. Viktor has George, I’ve got Harry, Blaise wants Charlie and that leaves him. Neville, I mean. If you are at all interested in Wizards, I would court Neville. That way when he turns sixteen, he’s all yours for the taking.”

Adrian frowned, his eyes thoughtful. “You make an interesting point, Draco.”

Harry was painfully aware that Draco had named all the persons paired with Submissive Chuvash.

“No, it did seem fun though…”

“Anything interesting happen today?” Augusta asked.

Slytherin and Durmstrang bust into laughter along with Harry, Neville and George.

Adrian calmed himself, “Did you not notice the girls’ hair?”

Augusta shook her head and then scanned the Great Hall. Her lips twitched, “It looks like the Eagles, the Lions and Badgers lost a fight with paint.”
“Nah, its just dye in their shampoo.” Sophronia waved her hand.

“The Ravenclaws are all bruised because of a somnambulist spell.” George offered.

“Then there were the nogtails this morning.” Greg put in.

Lucius raised an eyebrow, “Nogtails? In Hogwarts? How?”

“Gryffindor prank.”

“Prank? What is going on?” Augusta frowned.

“Prank war. A bit of harmless fun.” George added. “We’re quite enjoying ourselves. It started as a way to torment Dumble Bumble, but it’s turned into a lot more fun.”

Lucius frowned, “The Mysterious Moonlight Madness wasn’t fun, George.”

George held up his hands in surrender, “A miscalculation that was swiftly dealt with by Professor Prince-Malfoy. My research said it would be harmless. Obviously, I didn’t research as much as I should have. I had no idea that it would affect certain persons the way it did. You have my sincerest apologies.”

“Since no one was hurt, I accept them.” Lucius said carefully choosing his words. “You were very lucky. Had Severus succumbed, it could have ended badly.”

Adrian chuckled, “True, but it was funny seeing Neville trying to decorate the Great Hall with plants.”

Neville groaned and hid his face in his hands.

“Draco was the one running around acting like a two-year-old.” Severus added, joining them.
“Papa!” Draco pouted.

“You think I didn’t hear you teasing your House Mates?” Severus chided.

“Merlin!” Draco groaned.

“Lord Prince.” Augusta nodded.

“Lady Longbottom. What brings you to Hogwarts?”

“Wizengamot Business.” She smirked, “Isn’t that right, Lucius.”

He chuckled, “Indeed, rather curious business. She decided to update me about the issue before it today and what passed. Fudge had been sacked and Amelia was voted in as the new Minister for Magic.”

Harry grinned, “I like her. She’s really nice. Fudge was an idiot.”

“What was it you wanted from Fudge during Draco’s Third Year?” Lucius teased.

“Order of Merlin, third class.” Severus muttered.

“Well,” Augusta smirked, “I’ve done one better. Lucius, do you think we should inform his snakes?”

Lucius nodded, “At your pleasure, my lady.”

“Attention, Slytherins.” She said imperiously, “it is my Honour to announce that Deputy Headmaster Severus Prince-Malfoy, Resident Potions Master, Head of Slytherin and Member of the Board of Governors, has been granted by majority vote by the Wizengamot; the Order of Merlin, First Class. For services to the Wizarding World.”
The table roared with approval.

Augusta cast a Sonorus charm on herself, “As has Lord Malfoy, former Head Boy, former Slytherin Prefect, member of the Wizengamot and member of the Board of Governors. Head of Gryffindor, Remus Lupin has been granted the Order of Merlin, Third Place for his defense of Harry Potter and quick work in protecting a handful of students in his care.”

Gryffindor minus Hermione, Ginny and Ron roared at that.

Luna was politely clapping.

Which resulted in Ravenclaw giving the three, a standing ovation that was joined by Gryffindor, Slytherin and the Head Table.

Once they quieted down, Severus was speechless, “Order of Merlin? For what I did? It wasn’t much…”

“He arrested the true betrayer of the Potters and handed him over the Ministry!” Lucius spoke up. “I say that that deserves an Order of Merlin. As for Remus, he protected my son, Harry and their companions. Remus even turned over Sirius Black, so that he could have a fair trial that proved him innocent of all charges. I say that he truly deserves an Order of Merlin.”

“We haven’t had two members on staff with the Order of Merlin before…” Filius gasped.

“Well, there is the first time for everything.” Augusta smirked.

Draco smirked looking at Harry who was grinning, that was an understatement…

XooooooX

Ron scowled at them.
Harry was a traitor! He was shacking up with Malfoy and no one thought that was disgusting?

He even had Neville down in the dungeons with the same boys who tormented him their first year.

Harry had turned his family against him. His brothers claimed they were merely cousins and wanted nothing to do with him. They went out of their way to make him miserable. That stuck up daughter of a Squib had pranked his baby sister!

He would make Harry Potter pay for abandoning him!

How dare he turn his back on him, Ronald Bilius Weasley who had been his first friend? To be traded for a Malfoy was beyond insulting.

Yes, Potter would pay…

XoooooX

Ginny tugged her hat to cover as much of her green hair as possible.

He laughed…

Harry, her sweet prince had laughed at her hair…

Why? Why had he turned her family against them and befriended Malfoy?

Everyone knew that Malfoys were loathsome Dark Wizards…

He’d always seemed so nice and kind…
She’d loved him since she first saw him…

She had been so sure that he’d fall in love with her and they would live happily ever after…

It should be her that he looked at with adoring eyes not Malfoy…

Her eyes filled with tears.

It hurt…

Someone hugged her and whispered in her ear, “it’s alright, Ginny…”

“It hurts, Hermione… it hurts, why can’t he want me?”

“I don’t know. I think something is wrong with him. I can’t figure it out…”

“He’s gone Dark.” Ron snarled.

“Harry hasn’t! He hasn’t!” Ginny shrieked.

“Shut up, you big baby.”

“Ron!” Hermione hissed, “Can’t you try to be nice to her? She’s hurting…”

“Yeah. I’ll fix him. I’ll make him pay…” Ron muttered.

XooooooX
Hermione shivered.

She had a terrible feeling…

Chapter End Notes


A/N: Augusta went a bit OC. Sorry it just happened...
Blaise was the first to notice something was different today.

It was halfway through Breakfast when he realized that George and Viktor hadn’t shown up at all.

George had been showing the signs of a beginning of a breeding cycle; it was a temperament and scent thing rather then a dietary indication.

Blaise tapped the table, casting a table-wide privacy charm. “No one must enter Viktor’s rooms for any reason. They will be locked in their rooms for a week or less. It would be kind of his schoolmates to copy his assignments. I believe that he will be excused from attendance, but not from the work expected due to Durmstrang’s rules.”

Fred frowned, “Why can’t we visit and what is wrong with Forge?”

“He’s on a breeding cycle and went into his first Heat. Had he and Adrian or even Harry been raised by our Kind, it would have been explained often. I learned from the time I was young, when my mother bothered to remember. They must be left alone. Their rooms will be heavily warded. It is highly dangerous to force your way past the wards.”

More so for the couple, then for the nosy interlopers but it was best to let them think it was for the
Fred sighed, “I would hate to be injured checking on George. If he is safe and emerges when you say, then I will give him space.” He shivered, “Besides, I have no need or desire to see George naked and having sex. Viktor might be decent looking for a wizard but I wouldn’t want to see him with my brother.”

“Space is all he needs.”

The others shrugged.

Adrian was mildly curious because someday he might be in a similar position.

Harry and Neville flushed, they weren’t really old enough to have their hormones driving them crazy. It usually became difficult to restrain one’s self when you were a year from your inheritance.

XoooooX

December 11, 1994

Branko received the signal from Viktor’s wards that he was in heat. He was surprised and proud that Viktor’s mate was Chuvash enough to bring the thrall.

He had the exact details of his son’s future inheritance at this point, when he flooed to Wellsley Hall. He’d sent notice of his arrival prior.

When he emerged from the floo he was met by a lovely woman, her silver hair coiled back in a tight bun, with grey-blue eyes and an imposing aura.

Branko bowed, “Lady Weasley?”
“Mr. Krum. My husband asked me to escort you to his study. While he is the head of George’s sire’s House, he also belongs to the House of Prewett and if you have no objection he would like our son’s soulbonded to sit in on the discussion.”

Branko nodded, “It is acceptable and understandable. A child born to two titled families have interests and concerns that relate to both of them. I would prefer that this be as agreeable to both sides as to my own.”

“Very well come with me.”

Branko followed her.

He was led from the Hall’s Receiving Room to up a set of atrium dominating stairs, down a long gallery filled with magical portraits.

George’s grandmother knocked on a sturdy oak door.

A booming voice called out, “Enter.”

Lady Weasley opened the door and gestured for him to enter.

Branko bowed to her, “Thank you.”

Branko entered the spacious room, two walls were filled with bookcases and behind a large mahogany desk was an enchanted window.

There was a peach-coloured settee opposite the desk and to it’s right was a matching armchair.

“Branislav Krum?” asked the kindly looking man behind the desk.

Branko bowed, “Call me Branko. You would be Lord Weasley?”
The man nodded, gesturing at the chair, “Call me Septimus. Those would my George’s parents; the tall one is my son Arcturus and his soulmate Gideon Prewett. It has been a rather rocky few months but we are slowly coming to terms with the need to negotiate courtships, betrothals and bonding contracts.”

Branko nodded at them, “Septimus, Arcturus and Gideon. While my son is focusing on Quidditch he is at least on paper heir to my company.”

“What is it that you do?” Gideon asked.

“I hire people to retrieve rare items for potions masters and wand makers. We have a standing contract with the Gregorovich family.”

“A good income then?” Septimus mused.

“Oh yes, it keeps my wife in a fine estate and all the luxuries she could ever want. I had set aside a large amount of galleons to be paid to my son’s mate’s family to finalize the mating. He and George are in seclusion.”

Septimus frowned, “In seclusion? Why?”

Branko sighed, “I forget that you maybe carriers of the Chuvash blood but are not one yourselves. When a Chuvash finds their mate and they chose one another; then after a few months, the submissive goes into heat and brings the thrall.”

“What is thrall?” Gideon asked looking curious.

“It is a season between five to ten days of non-stop sex. It’s part of our make up, most Chuvash only conceive on a heat. A powerful submissive will conceive their first heat if their mate is strong enough. Viktor was conceived our first thrall, yet it took a few more heats to conceive again and they were not carried to term. A single dominant will not feel a thrall without a mate for a mate brings the thrall. It is possible that George will conceive during this thrall. If not, he will most likely have two sometime next year. It would be responsible to finalize the legalities of their bonding before such news is revealed.”

“I see.” Septimus said steepling his fingers, “What was the bride pride you were willing to offer?”
“A sum of 300,000 Galleons.”

Arcturus gasped, “That much? Even for a wizard?”

Branko was smug; “A Chuvash’s mate is non-negotiable once they are claimed. I am pleased my son has such excellent taste. He is good-looking, smart and has goals. He has proven that he is worthy of my son and that is all that matters. In the announcement in the Daily Prophet you mentioned a property.”

Gideon nodded, “It is a Prewett property in Godric’s Hollow. I know that Oliver and Percy will be moving to The Rowans upon their bonding since it is Oliver’s inheritance. I thought they would like to be close. The place is called Faire Fields; it is enclosed with warded stonewalls and a set of iron gates. It has 28 acres of parkland and was once well known for its gardens. There is a set of greenhouses on the property as well as a furnished lab.”

Branko chuckled, “George mentioned his desire for a lab and to raise rare plants.”

“Then it will suit as a dowry then?” Septimus asked.

“Viktor will at least gain my company in name upon my death, what will George receive?”

“Upon his bonding, the trust vault that Gideon and I have arranged will fall to him. As for inheritances, none of us have wills that are accurate with out present desires.” Septimus offered.

“I am willing to sign papers granting my approval of this match.”

Septimus pushed a set of documents across the desk with a quill and ink.

Branko read them over and found that it bore the other wizards’ signatures as well as the Prewett and Weasley seals that were inked in blood. He signed with flourish and added his own seal as well in blood.
The contract glowed blue and then white.

“Thus they are legally betrothed. Contracts will be procured from Gringotts.”

The four wizards shook hands and shared a toast of Ogden’s Firewhiskey to celebrate.

“About the Bonding?” Branko spoke from his chair.

“Percy’s had been arranged for the twenty first of January.”

“It has long been tradition for Krums to be bonded on the fourteenth, two months following their first thrall.”

“That would be Valentine’s day.” Arcturus spoke up.

“I see no issue, it is a Muggle Holiday is it not? “ Branko shrugged. “Unfortunately, I cannot guarantee that my mate will attend or will be pleasant, no matter how much I punish her. She is a stubborn woman and has had little to do with either of us for years. She does not approve of George and might make trouble. I should punish her more but it does no good and I do not wish to be accused of ill treatment by her family. It is due to our relationship that I have such good contracts with the Dragon Preserve.”

Arcturus was interested now, “Harvey Ridgebit’s?”

“Yes, my mate’s brother Dragomir runs it.”

“Yes, we met… well, Molly and I did when we spent a winter solstice with Charlie. He was not pleased to see us as you imagine.”

Branko raised his glass, “A shame that it was not in better circumstances. A relationship between us might spell more advancement for your son. I hope that we both thrive from this union of our families.”
George and Viktor emerge from seclusion

December 14, 1994

George was sore when he woke.

Viktor licked his claiming mark, “Morning beloved.”

George flushed, “I’m too tired.”

Viktor laughed, “A few days of non-stop sex, I am sure you’ve had enough.” He gave his mate a burning look, “For now anyway, not that I could be tired of you.”

George moved away and then winced.

Viktor handed him a bit of toast.

George ate it ravenously.

Then Viktor handed him a few potions.

George frowned at him.

“An energy potion, a pain-reliever and a mind clearing one.” Viktor said reassuringly.

George nodded and drank them quickly.

Then Viktor kissed him.
George preened, letting his mate hold him.

Viktor smirked, “I must have proved my virility.”

George frowned. “What?”

Viktor laughed, “If I had failed, your Chuvash would be displeased.”

George blushed, “Oh…”

Viktor realised that George didn’t quite understand his meaning but shrugged. “We ought to dress and rise for breakfast.”

George’s eyes widened, “What? How long have we been out of it?”

“We went into thrall on the tenth. I woke up yesterday. It is now the fourteenth.”

George groaned.

Viktor frowned at him, “What is the matter?”

George gaped at him, “I had sex and missed my brother’s birthday.”

“Which brother?”

“Charlie.”

“Oh the other Dominant. He works for my uncle. He’ll forgive you. I am sure you have a gift for him and he’ll forgive us. It’s not like he’ll not have to deal with thrall himself in time.” Viktor had a
feeling that Charlie would find himself mated whether he wanted to be or not. That Zabini had his heart set on him and heaven help the dominant who thought they could resist.

They rose and dressed in their uniforms before making their way towards the Great Hall.

Blaise waved at them and then the rest of the table noticed them.

Blaise whispered in Parseltongue, “Did you enjoy yourself? What was it like? Can you remember anything?”

Viktor snarled at him, “Let him alone, he is need of food.”

Chastised, Blaise turned to his own meal.

George pinched Viktor’s arm, “He was only curious. You didn’t need to snap at him.”

“You need to eat. He can ask questions about private matters at another time.”

George pouted and began to eat, filling his plate with eggs, toast and meat.

Viktor waited until George began to eat before focusing on his own meal.

Blaise picked at his food, his appetite vanishing against his will because he had displeased a dominant. It was unfair! Viktor wasn’t even a true Chuvash. How could he cow him like this?

Adrian grabbed his ear, “Eat! I won’t have one of my snakes passing out in class due to a lack of proper nutrition.”

Blaise grumbled but ate anyway. He didn’t mind obeying one dominant (Charlie), but being ordered about by two of them who weren’t even his mate during breakfast was unfair.
The meal was quiet, it was a cold December morning and most of them were drinking steaming cups of tea, coffee and chocolate with their meals.

After breakfast, Vanya approached Viktor and held out a stack of parchment.

“Your assignments from the professors.” He said in Russian gruffly. “Would have gotten them if you’d asked. Didn’t need a Hogwarts student to remind me about it.”

Viktor clasped his wrist in thanks, “No problem. If I had thought it would happen so soon, I would have asked. I thought we were still in the settling-in period and didn’t expect it. Was it Blaise?”

The other Durmstranger nodded stiffly.

Viktor turned to the young Slytherin and hissed his thanks in Parseltongue, “Thank you. It was kind of you to mention that we might need these. If you and your fellow submissives would like to visit this evening you are welcome. Adrian may as well. We don’t remember much. Due my not being able to shed my skin, my father was unclear about the nature of thrall. He was vague because he doubted it would happen to me.”

Blaise beamed, “I wanted to be sure that you two would be safe. I told them that your wards would injure them if they attempted to enter your rooms. They agreed to stay away.”

“That was wise of you. Thank you. You will make someone a loyal mate.”

“Charlie. That’s who I want.” Blaise said softly.

George laughed, playfully slugging him in the shoulder, “That would make us brothers. I hope you convince him. He is being stubborn. I think he worries about the age difference.”

“It’s not important.” Blaise said quietly. “My father was matched my mother when she was conceived. They were sixteen years apart in age. We are only what?”

“Charlie was born on December twelfth in 1972.” George offered.
“That’s only seven years difference. I was born in December of 1979. it's not so much.”

George sighed, “I hope you convince him of that. I would like to see him happy.” He smiled at Viktor, he was a good man and he already loved him.

They all separated to retrieve their school things and head to classes.

Chapter End Notes


A/N: I always see Ginny as a fame-obsessed stalker. She does need help but unless Aberforth really steps up as a parent, nothing will be done. Harry is slowly falling for Draco so I don't see him falling for Ginny.

Severus' Creature Inheritance was revealed in a chapter of the side-fic Unlikely Heroes: Fallen Feathers, Mirrored Scales. It has scenes that weren't fitting in the main story. Something like Starlight_Massacre's Scaled Bits but not quite.
December 17, 1994

Harry was cold and tired; the Herbology lesson had sapped his strength. Even the warmth of the Greenhouse hadn't warmed him.

He quickly fell behind and was no longer at Neville's side.

The second year Ravenclaws and Slytherins had already entered the Fourth Greenhouse with Professor Sprout.

An orange spell hit him from behind and he was down.

	XoooooX

Susan Bones, the niece of the newly minted Minister for Magic felt the snap of magic in the cold December air and froze.

Something was wrong…

Her instincts screamed it at her. When she stopped so did Ernie, Justin and Hannah…

"Su what's wrong?" Ernie asked frowning.

Susan ignored him, scanning the crowd of students ahead and then glanced behind her.

Two were missing…

Harry Potter and Ronald whatever his name was now.

She cast a Sonorus on herself, "Longbottom!"

The boy turned frowning at her, "Yes?"

Susan glared at him, "Where is Harry? Aren't you supposed to watch him?"

Neville paled and scanned the snow-covered lawn, "Fuck! Draco is going to kill me."

Seamus and Dean had already hurried to his side, "What's wrong Nev?"

"Harry's missing."

Seamus' eyes narrowed, "I don't see Dumble junior either."

"Harry's probably just wandered off…" Hermione shrugged.

"We've got potions next." Neville snapped, "He wouldn't run off when we're supposed to be there.
Draco is there…"

"The relationship with him and that poncy ferret faced git is unhealthy." The girl muttered.

Seamus and Neville pulled out their wands.

Seamus snarled, "Take it back you rotten turncoat! You are nothing but a social climbing beaver!"

Hermione's eyes filled with tears, "Can't you guys see what being around Malfoy has done to you? You're turning on your own…"

"My own? Last I checked purebloods with Black blood running through their veins were my own, you narcissistic Muggleborn bint." Neville said scathingly. "Malfoy was birthed by a Black. Harry's grandmother was a Black, so was Sophronia's, the Weasleys have a Black grandmother as well. You have no right to tell the Honourable Neville Francis Longbottom what to do. Do you know who I am? I am a descendant of Godric Gryffindor, my family is charged with the protection of King Arcturus' castle, I am the heir to a Wizengamot seat, a seat on the Founder's Council, the heir to a seat on the Board of Governors and heir to possession of one quarter of that castle! How dare you, a nobody tell me what to do! Seamus tell Professor Prince-Malfoy Harry's missing. Dean go tell Professor Lupin. Granger go make yourself useful and go get Headmaster Flitwick! Dunbar you want to be a Beater and an Auror? Come help me. Susan are you and your fellow badgers willing to skive class?"

Susan nodded, "If I don't help Aunt Amelia would ground me so fast my head would spin."

"Who last saw Harry? Or Ron?" Neville snapped.

"I saw Ron…" Hannah said blushing.

"Where?" Susan asked putting a gentle hand on the girl's shoulder.

"They went that way." Pointing towards the lake…

Neville started organizing the lions and badgers. "We're going to walk in a line. Look for footprints that shouldn't be there. Drag marks. Anything unusual…"

Before Hermione could put up a shield since she didn't seem to be helping; Susan, Seamus and Neville had cast spells on her. Neville's was Petrificus Totalus, Seamus' was Incarcerous and Susan's was a warming charm.

"If you won't help us find Harry, we'll assume you're with Ron and you are only here to slow us down." Neville glared, "Smith make yourself useful go get Headmaster Flitwick. Everyone else come on."

They lined up shoulder-to-shoulder and started walking from the greenhouses in the direction that Hannah Abbot mentioned.

Neville had Dunbar was to his right, with her were Pavarti, Lavender and Alice Tolipan.

The Hufflepuff half of the line was comprised of all the Fourth year Hufflepuffs minus Zacharias Smith: which were Susan Bones, Hannah Abbot, Oliver Rivers, Justin Flinch-Fletchley, Wayne Hopkins, Leeann Runcorn, Ernie Macmillan and Megan Jones.

XooooooX
Severus had a bad feeling that filled him with dread…

What precipitated it was half the normal noise in the corridor…

Well less than half because he only heard his Fourth Year Snakes…

Then the Irish wizard who had a hand in the nogetail prank ran in gasping.

"Professor…bad news…"

Severus crossed the class room to glare at him, "What?"

"Harry…".

Draco slammed the older blonde into the wall, "What happened? Where is he?"

"I don't know…he's missing. So is Ron…” Seamus gasping wincing in pain at being shoved against a stonewall.

Draco dropped him and ran.

Severus glared, "Library! Self study!"

Blaise, Greg, Vince, Theo and Millicent ignored him taking off after Draco.

Leaving Daphne, Tracey and Sally-Ann Perkins behind.

Seamus muttered, "Episkey." Pointing his wand at himself before heading back out to join the search.

XooooooX

Dean ran all the way through the castle up to the Third Floor, dodging late charms students.

Dean heard someone behind him turn towards the Charms classroom.

He threw open the door to the Defense Classroom.

Third Year Ravenclaw and Slytherin students spun to face the door.

Remus frowned, "Yes Mr. Thomas? Can I help you?"

Dean coughed, "Harry and Ron are missing. Neville is leading a search. Seamus went to get Professor Prince…"

Sophronia rose, "Shite! That means Draco heard. Come on Luna! The guys and Millicent are already looking."

Luna conjured a thick cloak for herself and ran after her best friend.

"Library." Remus snapped, casting warming charms on himself. "Research Acromantula and their habits!"

Dean led them outside.

XooooooX
Ron was using a levitation and wind spell combo to move them along.

He already left a false trail heading towards the lake; it was easy. He just let that mouse of Hufflepuff see him heading that way. It had looking like Harry was walking along side him but that was because of the puppet hex. Harry's limbs moved on strings at his whim.

Not Harry, this was Potter the cheating, Slytherin worshiping traitor!

Ron reached a clearing he pocketed his wand leaving Potter hanging there. He circled him once before he started beating the shite out of him. His hands were shaking with cold and growing sore from both the punches and the December weather.

Ron kicked him in the sides and the back, until he heard bones break.

He flipped Potter around and kicked him in the head and the groin. Potter would never sire children, he would make sure of that!

Once the disgrace was covered in freezing blood Ron banished it from his person, then he made his way to his least favourite part of the Forbidden Forest.

XoooooX

Draco ran, he spotted Neville and ran at him.

He tackled the Gryffindor to the ground, "I trusted you! I let you into the Dungeon. I let you sleep in our dorm! I gave you privileges. All I wanted in return was for you to keep an eye on Harry in classes with Ravenclaw and Hufflepuff! How could you let this happen?"

Severus dragged him off, "Draco son, stop it. Hurting Neville won't help Harry. Let him talk!" He held out his hand to the shy Gryffindor who was radiating purpose and determination.

Neville accepted his hand and stood up brushing off the snow. "It wasn't me who noticed Harry was missing. It was Susan. I was talking and I didn't realize Harry fell behind…"

Draco ignored him, "Thank you."

Susan blushed, "I just felt an echo of magic on the air. We're not supposed to use magic outside of class during school hours. I saw Harry was missing and started to worry."

Severus noticed a line of footprints, "What are you doing Longbottom?"

Faye Dunbar answered, "Typical search pattern sir. Longbottom's idea. More assistance would be appreciated.'

Search pattern? Severus had a begrudging sense of surprise and admiration for the boy who blew up or melted at least one cauldron per week. Perhaps, the boy wasn't as much of a dunderhead at some things as he was at potions. Remus said he had natural talent at Defence and Herbology; he was also coming along nicely in Charms and Transfiguration now that he had a willing wand.

XoooooX

The first thing Luna did upon reaching the small group of searchers was to hug Draco. She whispered in his ear, "Calm down. He's your mate. Can you feel him yet? Do you feel drawn to him? Do you want to protect him? To care for him?"

Draco relaxed, his tension easing at the calm gentle tone of her croon. "Yes…"
"Where is he Draco…?" she asked softly.

XooooX

Draco closed his eyes; it took all of his concentration to push aside his anger at Neville, his fury at Wea…Dumbledore the younger, and his panic. He cleared his mind the way papa had taught him years ago. Centring himself, clearing his mind and dove straight into his own soul. He saw its bright glow…

It was clear red…which meant something that escaped him for a moment. Then the memory darted across his mind: powerful, energetic, competitive, sexual and passionate.

People like Dumbledore the younger tended to dismiss him, how could a pointy ferret be powerful? There in his soul was magic, magic that could help him find Harry. It was just waiting to be tapped; there was a weakening ward that was months from breaking.

Draco pushed back his panic, he grabbed onto his growing love for Harry Potter, his intense need to protect him, his desire to heal the wounds both mental and physical that were caused by those nasty Muggles. The scabs that have grown over the pain caused by Dumbledore’s betrayal and the abandonment of his so-called best friends. Draco imagined that ward was glass; he threw all his strength into shattering it. It was what was keeping him from find Harry.

It splintered into a million pieces, the magic flooded him and he screamed in triumph.

"HARRY! I'm coming!"

The change was instantaneous, he shot up six inches, he was now 6’, 1”, his hair now reached the centre of his back, his arms bore lithe muscles and his eyes shone like quick silver.

XoooooX

Now that wasn't what Remus expected to see…

Draco growing and changing in front of him…

The man who stood there wasn't the boy he had taught. He was very much like his father, except, his magic wasn't bound.

Remus wondered at the power radiating from the boy-man and wondered just what impact the change would have other then that physical.

XoooooX

Luna had known that this would happen, the moment she laid eyes on her cousin. A Veela seizing their inheritance themselves due to great stress was not exactly unheard or impossible but rare.

Anything Draco did to protect and rescue his mate would be permissible. Like her, he was under Veela law despite their age.

Then Draco transformed…

His panic was gone but the rage that radiated off of him didn't bode well.

Luna cursed in Runic, "That was not supposed to happen!" a full transformation was supposed to be unattainable. What had Draco done to himself?
Severus had never seen a Veela transform…

Draco was his angry, panicked boy one minute, a tall imposing man the next and now he was a Veela in truth?

He swallowed, "Draco,"

His son, the son of his heart, the son of his blood- resembled a phoenix but instead of red and gold wings; his were white, silver and gold. He was like a mixture of a swan and a phoenix.

Then Draco actually ignored him and flew away from the lake towards the forest.

Luna screamed after him, "DRACO you idiot!" then she forgot herself and transformed, leaping into the air after him. Unlike Draco she could actually control her Veela, well not the visions of course but who cared.

Remus knew that something was very, very wrong when a fourteen and a half year old boy got his inheritance early.

He kissed Severus' hand, "I'll find them." He reached into himself and pulled at his wolf, he hated relying on Moony but Moony was protective of his pack's pup. He could track Harry; he'd imprinted his scent into his mind when he first held him.

A man aging before his time one moment and a large tawny wolf the next. Running on all fours, his nose to the wind Remus charged into the Forbidden Forest after wayward and possibly vengeful students.

Harry felt nothing; he was in a sea of fire and blood. All around him was pain…he was cold, so cold. His body was leaking life as well as blood. He knew that, he could feel he was dying…all he could think about was Draco. He loved him, he had wanted to see what a life with him would be like.

His heart twisted, Ron had done this. His first ever friend had magically assaulted him, he had dragged him through the Forbidden Forest and beat him so he would die.

He thought of his friends: Neville, Seamus, Dean, Fred, George, Blaise, even Theo and Greg. Vince was weird, he wasn't sure he liked him but Greg was a nicer bloke then he'd thought until he met him. Then there was Luna and Sophronia, they were alright for girls. They were unwanted strangers in their own House, born to lead and yet tormented.

He would miss them…

He remembered Remus and how gentle and protective he had been. How supportive…

Then there was Snape…Severus had been kind to him. He had told him about his mother and apologized. That was something an adult had never really done before and it was genuine.

Draco's father wasn't bad either, very different from the imposing harsh man he remembered from Second Year when he had Hagrid taken to Azkaban, or when he had Dumbledore suspended. His
vindictive way he went after Hagrid and Buckbeak made sense now, he was trying to protect Draco. Even if Buckbeak had been insulted and Draco had been partially responsible, Hagrid just didn't understand that they were too young and immature for Hippogriffs.

He didn't think he'd miss Hagrid, the man worshipped Dumbledore. He wasn't trustworthy and put him in danger.

It was getting colder and darker…

He was sure this time he would die…

Who and how could anyone find him?

He drifted farther into unconsciousness…

The sound of two birds and wolf howl didn't register…

XoooooX

Ron was smug; he'd taken Harry to the edge of Acromantula territory and then flung him inside…

He hated spiders and giant man-eating spiders were unsettling but they would destroy the evidence. The blood would summon them…

Then something dropped out of the sky and slammed him into the snow, moss and root-covered ground.

"You despicable nasty Weasel!" a voice hissed at him. "Where is Harry?"

"What do you care ferret? He's gone." Ron laughed maniacally.

"Gone? If you killed him…"

"What and dirty my own hands? No. Why do that when I can leave it to the creatures of the Forbidden Forest?"

"Draco! Don't hurt him. Harry's in danger!"

"I know that!" the poncy git snapped.

"Vengeance can wait! If you punish him now Harry will die! You hear me? He'll die!"

"Yeah ferret, your precious little peewee Potter will die. He probably already is."

"If you harmed one hair on his head, I will kill you." A wand pressed to the back of his neck and a string of Latin was issued from their prissy lips.

Then he felt the ground between him swirl and weave. Then he was in a net…no not a net…he was encased in a spider's web that entombed him like a cocoon.

Ron screamed…

"Go Draco! Hurry! I'll watch him."

Then there was a flash of magic and the flap of wings.

"You are very lucky I stopped him Dumbledore. He could have and would have full right to kill you.
I may still let him. Right now, the safety of his mate is more important then your punishment for touching what is his."

"That disgusting little ferret is befouling Gryffindors. I heard he sleeps in the slimy git's bed. The Boy-Who-Lived whoring himself out to a Death Eater wanna-be? I dunno what game Malfoy's playing but it ends now. His precious little plaything is dead." Ron gasped trying to wiggle free only to have the silk wrap tighter around him and threaten to crush him.

"Silencio!" The voice snapped. "You are nothing but a jealous little boy. Harry didn't enter that tournament! He was nearly forced into it by a plot of He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named and his little minions. A plot foiled by Professor Prince-Malfoy and Lord Malfoy. If Harry were mine, I would have killed you with wandless magic instead of using the Vicina spider's hex. I wouldn't move if I were you, the silk will crush you. I studied that spell after I watched one of the Philoponella vicina kill its prey. I found out there was a spell that replicated its method."

"Dark Arts?" Ron gasped.

"No unfortunately. It was created to subdue dangerous creatures. Rampaging and murderous Dragons or Hippogriffs when conventional methods fail. It will smash all of your bones and possibly stop a heart or worse. I've never heard of it used on a human. It is a very regulated spell. I had no idea Draco knew it…"

"Who are you?"

"You attacked my cousin's mate. Don't think I will give you one iota of sympathy. Had I a mate and you did such a monstrous thing I would have used a spell that would transform your heart into something that would slowly kill you. Perhaps, an orange. That would prevent your blood from flowing. I have never used such a spell, nor would I truly wish to. You are a great fool Ronald Dumbledore. If Draco doesn't kill you, you will suffer either at his hands or in Azkaban."

"Monsters…"

Then he promptly fainted.

XoooooX

Draco flew, searching with his heart for one spark of Harry's magic, his soul, anything…

He had no guilt about casting the Vacina spider's hex.

It felt right when the words, 'vicina serico contundito' passed his lips.

He caught a faint glimmer of Harry's soul, in the darkness.

Dark Magic was crawling, no speeding closer to him.

Draco snapped his wings and then glided through the trees; he would not lose Harry! He'd spent years wanting him, begging for scraps of his attention. Pushing himself farther in the air, desperate to prove himself worthy.

Draco's Veela vision spotting three large spiders scurrying fast towards Harry's bruised and chilled body. The blood had frozen but the scent of it was heavy on the wind. It terrified him but he put it aside and pulled on his rage, he screamed reaching out with his magic, "Araneamors!" Red light burst from him and smashed into the Acromantula.
There were screams of rage from deep in the forest.

Draco dove, a conjured stretcher appeared beneath Harry, and Draco gently picked it up in his talons. He rose up above the forest, it was cold here and he felt ice wanting to grow on his wings. He reached into himself and pulled on his magic again.

Sunlight seemed to glow around him; it dispelled the chill, warming them both. Draco spotted the speck he knew was his papa and flew towards it.

He landed a bit ungracefully, the stretcher bouncing on the ground.

No sound came from Harry, Draco screamed in rage and torment. Then, he fainted.

XooooooX

Remus found Luna glaring, her Veela Court robes glowing with a brilliance that belonged elsewhere than a dark forbidding forest filled who knew what exactly.

Before her was a large lump of what looked like spider silk.

"What is that?"

"Ronald Dumbledore. Draco was going to kill him. I talked him out of it. At least for the moment. He went to find Harry."

A magical explosion came from deeper in the forest.

Luna paled turning from Ron to the direction Draco had flown, "Merlin! Draco what are you doing? You can't wield magic like that so soon! The idiot! He could kill himself! The magic to transform takes time to adjust to. He transformed too fast too soon. The Spider killing curse and the Vicina spider hex? Is he suicidal?" she grabbed Ron in her talons, "We have to go now! If he isn't dead he'll be in a magical coma! Why did I do it?"

Remus saw her shaky flight and wondered what intricacies of Veelas he didn't know.

Then he saw Draco, or what looked like Draco blaze like sunlight.

Merlin, Luna was right. Too much powerful magic at once was detrimental. The reason you weren't an adult at sixteen was because it took on average a year for your magic to settle whether you had a magic or creature inheritance.

Draco forced his inheritance early…

Too early…

His heart clenched, Harry looked so still and Remus could smell the blood from here.

Perhaps, it didn't matter if Draco had been too late.

While Draco wasn't his son like he was Severus and Lucius', the thought of his loss or the loss of Harry filled Remus with bile and loathing.

This could not be happening…

XooooooX
Luna landed to find Professor Prince-Malfoy raising his wand, "Expelliarmus! You can't touch him! Don't do anything!" she turned to Blaise, "Call him! Call him now! We have precious time to save them!" she danced her wand in a calling spell chanting in Runic, "My queen I call you! Death is near and help is dire. A child suffers at brink of death. Come to me!"

Beside her Blaise chanted for his King…

Then the world exploded around them…

Facing Luna was her queen and the royal guard along with her personal healer.

Luna fell to her knees, sobbing in Runic, "I have failed. He did what I thought he could not! He forced his inheritance. He transformed. He used too much magic. Help him! I beg you…"

"For the sake of the one who is to come, I shall. Anastasia dear, if you would."

Luna was surprised to see her. Apollo Grannis had come the previous time over the 'Moonlight Madness' incident during the first round of the Prank War.

There was a rumour that their queen was in love with Anastasia Morino, her personal healer. No one dared verify it; it was the queen's choice whom she took to bed. She was both an object of reverence and a symbol of power.

The tall woman knelt beside Draco, her face grim but determined.

Luna's heart stopped for five full beats before it beat again.

What had she done?

XoooooX

Blaise was about to summon his King when he saw Harry.

It only took Luna's order to begin the summons.

Like the Veela Queen, this time Sirius I wasn't alone; a personal guard of seven Chuvash surrounded him.

Who wore armour fashioned out of Dragon hide and wearing knives of dragon bone, sinew and spikes. The handles were bone, the blade a spike from a tail, the blade was attached with boiled sinew and fat, while more sinew was used to bind some hide to the handle to give it a grip. Since every part of a dragon was magical, the knives were pure conduits of magic, they could channel more than an ordinary wand…

At his side was his son, the healer.

"For what have I been called for this time?" the King of the Chuvash roared.

Neville fell, "It is my fault. I was to be protecting Harry and I failed. Ron snatched him. He's injured. He looks dead…" his bravado had melted away…as if it had merely been a glamour that shivered and cracked.

Blaise squeezed his shoulder, "His mate rescued him but used too much magic...he is over there…"

"Where is this Ron? And who is he?" Sirius I snarled.
Luna kicked a bundle at her feet, "Here. Under the Vicina spider hex. Unconscious but not dead. More the pity. He's Dumbledore's nephew."

"Did that cretin put him up to this?" the leader of the Chuvash hissed.

Luna shrugged. "I don't know. Perhaps, perhaps he did it of his own choosing. Draco would have and had the right to kill him but he had to try to save Harry."

The Chuvash healer ran forward, kneeling beside Harry.

The conjured stretcher snapped out of existence with a crack and the warm glow that had surrounded Harry disappeared as well.

The Veela healer cursed.

A very similar curse sounded out of Eli.

A stretcher appeared beneath Harry again; a hiss and a flick of a wand, then the healer and Harry were gone.

XoooooX

Remus arrived running out of the forest, gasping in time to see Harry vanish. He howled, "No!"

One of the guards snapped to attention and held up his knife in a defensive posture ready to hurl a curse.

Sirius I stepped in front of them and held up a hand, "He took Harry to Chateau Grimaldi. I believe he hopes the warmth there will help. He will be summoning his mate Merope. They will both do all in their power to save him."

"You can't separate them!" Luna gasped.

"Dear one, we don't wish to. If Eli took him home then he is in grave danger, the magic that held him in stasis snapped."

"Because the Veela child slipped into a deeper coma. I know not if he will wake but I agree that the separation might be extremely detrimental."

"I will have to escort you myself." Sirius I sighed.

"Send Healer Grannis Ruxandra. I may need his assistance. We must hurry."

Sirius turned to one of his guards, hissing at them in Parseltongue, to floo from Grimslown to Chateau Grimaldi with the Healer. Before portkeying with the Veela healer and young Draco…

If either of them perished, he would take vengeance into his own hands and Morganna take the consequences. He would slaughter every Dumbledore he could find!

XoooooX

Severus broke down, forgetting his students were present. He screamed…

His magic burst out and stunned those nearest him.

Only the Veela, werewolf and Chuvash present managed to get a shield up in time.
Blaise cast one to protect him and Neville.

Luna protected herself with a rune spell by drawing the symbol for protection with her wand.

"Not Draco…please…not Draco…I can't loose another child. Merlin Harry! Lily you have to save Harry. Don't let him die…" Severus shook, holding himself and rocked keening.

Remus realized quickly that what stunned the students was the snapping of Severus' glamour. He stood as he had seen him since the night Severus dropped his skin-anchored glamour.

Tall, glowing and beautiful…

His magic was out of control…

Remus walked through the magical storm that surrounded his mate like it wasn't there. He pulled Severus into his arms, murmuring soothing sounds.

Then he felt Lucius, approaching at a dead run.

He joined him and held Severus, "What happened? Where is Draco? Why are they here?"

"Uncle Lucius…Ron hurt Harry bad…he might not make it." Luna called out from behind her shield. "Draco tried to save him…he forced his Veela out. He used too much magic. I don't know if he'll come back either…Merlin…it's all my fault!" her voice shattered and broke into sobs. "I'm sorry…"

Sophronia pulled Luna into her arms, "It isn't your fault. Draco did this. He did the only thing he could to save Harry. He may have gone too far, tried too hard but he had to. Harry would be dead if he hadn't."

"He could still die!" Luna sobbed.

"Draco won't die. He's just tired." Sophronia snapped. "He used magic that kept Harry alive until healers came. Even unconscious he was fighting for Harry. You have to believe in him. You hear me Luna? You have to! He'll live if I have to order him to. I am his Queen. I bet if she ordered him to, he would. He lives by a code and he obeys the people who matter to him. You told him he could save Harry; he was falling apart until you gave him the push he needed. You can't abandon him now! I won't let you! I don't care if you are the Heiress of Rowena! I am the Queen of Slytherin, you are its princess and you will do as I say!"

Luna choked on a sob, swallowing, "I hear and obey."

Sophronia hugged, "I am sorry but you have to be strong…"

Luna turned and clung to her friend, "Thank you…"

The Slytherin Queen gave her a shy smile, it was the first time she had truly used her position. She felt bad about it but Luna had needed to hear it.

The Slytherin Queen gave her a shy smile, it was the first time she had truly used her position. She felt bad about it but Luna had needed to hear it.
"Where is Draco?" Lucius asked as he tried desperately to calm his mate.

"With a Veela Healer…Harry is with Eli…" Severus gasped.

"Sirius' son?"

"Yes…he looked awful…so pale…covered in blood…Draco…he was as pale as snow…he's so weak…"

"What's wrong with them?"

"Magical Coma…near death…"

Lucius felt a chill, Draco…near death? He was still mourning the lost of the child he hadn't known about.

Luna gasped, "That's just not possible. How did you do that?"

Lucius stared at her, "How did he do what and what did he do?"

Luna blinked at him, "He banished all foreign magic from his body."

Lucius pulled up Severus' left sleeve.

The Dark Mark was gone…

His nose twitched, he bent to sniff.

A sickly sweet smell came from Severus…

Remus leaned in sniffing as well.

The two looked at each other and then Severus sagged in their arms.

Lucius whispered, "The curse?"

Remus gave him a nervous smile, "He broke it…himself…"

It brought home just how powerful Severus really was…

To break the curse…

Remus swallowed, "They needs us…the boys…"

"Think Severus needs a healer…" Lucius nodded, summoning a house elf.

"How might Stria be serving Master?" the house elf bowed appearing at once wringing its hands.

"Take us to Andromeda. Immediately."

Stria grabbed them and they were gone.

Leaving Sophronia, Luna, Neville and Blaise surrounded by stunned Gryffindors, Slytherins and
Hufflepuffs.

Chapter End Notes


A/N: Okay so you are all going to hate me for this probably. This is the last chapter of this fic. I'll post the beginning of the sequel soon. Yes it's a clifffy sorry about that. It seemed to work as a conclusion for this part. Well I hope you are happy that Severus is pregnant again. He didn't just break the curse he removed it, which is something like magically erasing it. He is physically his real age but he no longer bares the Dark Mark or Dumbles' curse. He still bears the emotional scars of those events but not physical.

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!