Resurrection

by Sugahhuney

Summary

7th year Battle of Hogwarts

Harry Potter stood before Voldemort, knowing he had to die, for Voldemort to be killed. Surrounded by laughing Death Eaters, Harry wondered why, why did his life had to end this way. Why did he have to be the one to sacrifice his life, for people who barely cared for him. As the green light of the Avada Kedavra spell raced towards him, he wondered, 'If I had to do it all again, would I still make the same choice, I wonder?'
June 23, 1991

Harry woke up with a start, banging his head on the low ceiling of his cupboard. Wait…what? What was he doing back here? It really wouldn’t surprise him if this was his version of hell. Doom to live out eternity serving the Dursley.

He wordlessly cast dies et tempus, a handy little spell which showed the date and time to softly glow in the air. It was June 23, 1991, 6:00 am.

Harry reached for the dangling string, turning on the cupboard light. Looking at his body, he realized he was ten years old again. Was it all an elaborate dream? If not, any minute his Aunt will be banging on the door, telling him to wake up and get breakfast.

Dudley will come pounding on the stairs, yelling at him to wake up, because they are going to the zoo. It would be Dudley’s birthday, and he would complain about getting thirty-six present this year when he received thirty-seven last year. If only it was true, but nothing good ever happens to him.

Harry went through his day in quiet shock. His dream was reliving itself down to the last detail. Harry sat in the back of the car with Dudley and Pier Polkiss, heading to the zoo. Harry realize this might be his chance to change the way his life was heading.

Perhaps this time he might be able to save the others, to save himself. This time Harry spoke quietly to the snake and made sure to avoid being body checked by Dudley when he saw the snake was active.

With no accidental magic, the trip to the zoo went quietly, not that Harry avoided being starved, his Uncle found any reason to beat and starve him.

The next day during his housekeeping chores, Harry pilfered a discarded notebook, along with some sharpened pencils. Hiding them in his cupboard until later that night. It would be five more weeks until his birthday, which means, his Hogwarts letter would soon arrive.

He marveled that he retained his memories of what will happen, realizing it was better to write down the most important details he needed to remember. Primarily, he… Harry Potter, was a Horcrux, and there were five other Horcrux he would need to find before dealing with Nagini and Voldemort.

He would also need to get into the chamber of secrets in his first year, to talk some sense into the basilisk, perhaps he can avert that mess that was the second year before it starts.

There was also scabbers/Peter Pettigrew to deal with, plus also getting his godfather Sirius Black free from Azkaban. There was so much he had to do, how did he accomplish all this crap in the first place! Most of it, he should deal with as it comes up, like that Umbitch.

Harry also made a note to find Lord Riddle’s bones, and get rid of them. Not that he planned to let himself be entered in the Triwizard Tournament, but better safe than sorry. He argued with himself whether he should let himself be put into Slytherin, or stay in Gryffindor.

It still would mean dealing with Draco, but it also meant he would be able to get closer to Professor Snape. He would have to think on that a bit more.

The philosopher stone was not that big of a deal as they made it out to be the last time around. There
was no way for the Voldemort possessed Quirrell to get the stone out of the Mirror of Erised, perhaps this year he will focus more on his studies, he needed a better grounding in spell casting.

While he was sure he would seek out Hermione as a friend, Ron was still up in the air. Perhaps their friendship will be much smoother, with all the changes. Harry closed his eyes, trying to remember if he missed anything important that needed to be dealt with soon.

If things go per the last schedule, he would have a month between his shopping trip in Diagon Alley and when school began. If he came back here his school things would be locked up and he would spend a month doing more chores than Merlin could count.

He could spend the month at The Leaky Cauldron, but that could get expensive. He would have to think about that more clearly. He would need to spend at least a week, getting more supplies than the first time around, including a second untraceable wand. He looked at his notes, making changes on what he thought should be a top priority.

- Getting someone other than Hagrid to take him to Diagon Alley
- Securing a week’s stay someplace safe
- Acquiring a second wand
- Revealing scabbers, getting Sirius freed
- Getting the diadem from the room of lost things
- Getting the basilisk on his side

Quidditch is out, he had far more important things he needed to concentrate on, and while flying was fun and all, it won’t help him greatly in the fight to come. He could always buy a Firebolt when it’s all over. On a clean notebook page, he made a list of the additional books he would need to buy.

- Ingredient Encyclopedia
- Charms of Defense and Deterrence
- Extreme Incantations
- The Book of Charms & Spells
- A Compendium of Common Curses and Their Counter-Actions
- Defensive Magical Theory
- Dark Arts Defence: Basics for Beginners
- The Dark Arts Outsmarted
- The Dark Forces: A Guide to Self-Protection
- Guide to Advanced Occlumency
- Protection Charm Your Mind: A Practical Guide to Counter Legilimensy
- A Collection of Above Three Hundred Receipts in Cookery, Physick, and Surgery
- Magick Moste Evile
- Secrets of the Darkest Art
- The Rise and Fall of the Dark Arts
- The Healer's Helpmate
- The Decline of Pagan Magic
- A Study into the Possibility of Reversing the Actual and Metaphysical Effects of Natural Death, with Particular Regard to the Reintegration of Essence and Matter
- Manners for the Victorian Gentleman
- Manners and Rules of Good Society
- Victorian Etiquette - The Basic Rules of Etiquette
- Victorian Children’s Etiquette
- Practical Household Magic
- Legislative Guide to the Proper Use of Magic
- Magical Misdemeanors in the Modern Law
Harry stopped writing, his list longer than he intended, but necessary, there were many things he knew he had gotten wrong, and many people he had unintentional offended.

There weren’t any books on Wizarding Culture, as it was something learned from your parents and family, of which he had none. The Victorian books came close enough, it would not hurt at least, the rest he must learn along the way.

The *Magick Moste Evile* and *Secrets of the Darkest Art* he would have to check Borgin and Burkes for, or at least see if they can find it for him. Flourish & Blotts would do for the rest of the books, what could not be bought right then, could be ordered, and sent by owl.

Harry did some rough calculation, he estimated he had about 120,482 Galleons in his trust fund, or £602,410.00, by the time he died he had 319,995 Galleons, or £1,599,975.00. He knew most of that was from his inheritance from his godfather, hopefully, he can change that outcome. He would rather have Sirius in his life than the money.

Between buying school supplies, uniforms, a decent trunk with solid security—remembering all the times his trunk was broken into—the extra books, decent clothing, and getting a decent pair of contacts, he would need approximately 2,000 Galleons to cover everything and still get the quality he needed.

The *Magick Moste Evile* and *Secrets of the Darkest Art*, the trunk and possibly his second wand would be the most expensive items he bought. He also knew from experience that Headmaster Dumbledore would always send him back here unless he somehow could get Sirius declared innocent.

If he could keep a low profile until the letter came and hide it before Dudley can snatch it, he could send his response back and ask for assistance in shopping. He would post the letter from his neighbor Ms. Bride Duibhsíth mailbox.

A little old lady, who was always kind to him, and the only one in the neighborhood that never believed all the lies about him. Ms. Duffy, as she once told him to call her as it was easier to pronounce for a small child, welcomed him into her home, always had a kind word, warm food, and a tender hand caring for his hurts.

Harry would live with her if only he was allowed. The Dursely hated her because she was old and not the most beautiful. What she lacked on the outside, she more than made up for on the inside. To repay her kindness, Harry always tried to do small jobs around her house, that she could never manage.

He would sneak over there whenever he could, mostly when he was locked out of the house. Ms. Duffy always told him there was a season for everything, and one day his season of change will come. He wondered if this was his season of change, being sent back.

Harry had some time before his letter arrived, he planned to make the most of it helping his friend as much as he could. The last time, with all the disruption, he was unable to see her and left without saying goodbye.

When he came back for summer, she was no longer next door. It was getting late, and Aunt Petunia will wake him early to make breakfast, Harry closed the notebook, he now has at least a tentative
plan to work with, he closed his eyes and fell into a light sleep.

It was morning already, arriving sooner than Harry could have wanted. He was up making breakfast for a small army, knowing none would be left for him. His stomach was beyond complaining, being used to the lack of food on a long-term basis.

The Dursley will be gone all day and left a chore list only a half mile long. There no way he could finish everything, and still visit Ms. Duffy. It was days like this he wished he had learned wandless magic so he could finish his chores when no one was around.

He looked at the list, he was going to get punished no matter what, and if that was the case, Harry finished the dishes and ran over to Ms. Duffy’s house, knocking on her door loudly, the dear old lady was a bit hard of hearing. The door opened slowly, revealing a sight that would make others run. To others, Ms. Duffy would be considered a hag, a true vision of what a witch appeared.

She peered at Harry out of one rummy eye, a fearsome smile widens as she cackled gleefully. Harry stepped closer, hugging her tightly, he had missed her all those years after he left.

Ms. Bride Duibhshíth wrapped her arms around the young boy, her voice deep and soft, heavy with a Scottish brogue, which only Harry ever seems to understand clearly. She drew him into her house, shutting the door softly.

“Aye a chuilein, whatna has yer so upset. Ye think ye saw a banshee the way yer holding these auld bones so tight. Come, mo leanbh. Ah am sure those dobbers didnae feed ye again. Aye, I ken sum scran will a dae you sum good.” She ran her wrinkled fingers through Harry’s messy hair. The lad could do with a decent bath and some good food. She pushed Harry towards her bathroom, “Yer howfin mo leanbh, aff with ye for a good scrub. Leave those rags by the door, will find ye a clean goonie.”

Harry shook his head as he headed to the bathroom, he would have felt offended, if it was not a normal occurrence whenever he managed to get over here. Harry opened the cupboard under the sink and pulled out the basket Ms. Duffy stored there for him.

It was filled with bath bombs, bubble baths, body washes, facial washes, shower gels, shampoos, conditioners, and hair custards, body sprays, deodorants, and colognes. Harry chuckled, she went shopping again, there were things he would never have gotten at the Dursley’s. Searching through his bath treasure trove, he saw that she bought two sets, one in a variety of mint, and the other citrus. She had also replaced his toothbrush, toothpaste, and mouthwash, he was finally going to enjoy a thoroughly cleansing bath. Turning on the hot water tap, he added two zingy lemongrass fizzers, plus a good scoop of Epsom salt. While the bath filled, he arranged the other items needed for his bath nearby.

Harry crumbled a bubble bar called Brightside under the running tap and added You’ve Been Mangoed bath oil, the smell of citrus and lemongrass intensified filling the bath with luxurious bubbles. He turned on the cold water to cool down the bath enough for him slide in.

It’s been a long time since he had a hot bath, he soaked, letting his body warm up before reaching for the ocean salt scrub to wash the grime embedded in his skin. Harry smiled, Ms. Duffy always tried to
spoil him, his skin felt so soft after using the scrub. It felt wonderful to have clean hair again, he thought as he washed then conditioned it.

He just felt so much…lighter! Letting the water out of the tub, he gave himself a quick rinse under the shower, before cleaning out the bathtub. Wrapping a warm fluffy towel around himself, he dried his hair, using the hair mustard to tame it somewhat, the facial wash to scrubbed his face. Lastly, he cleaned his teeth and freshened his breath. He wondered where she bought his bath supplies, he would love to take them to Hogwarts.

Harry opened the door to find an old fashion nightgown hanging on the doorknob, he smiled as he slipped the softest cotton gown he has ever felt on. Making sure he left the bathroom cleaned, he padded into the living room, where a tea tray waited laden with biscuits and tea.

A tray sat to one side, a bowl filled with steaming scotch broth and warm fresh baked brown bread. Harry pour Ms. Duffy a cup of Scottish breakfast, the only kind of tea she preferred, adding a splash of milk and two sugars.

He served her first before fixing his own cup, he preferred more milk in his as the tea was much stronger than the English breakfast, stirring two sugars into his tea, before taking a most welcomed sip. Harry placed a cushion on the floor, getting comfortable before the coffee table to tuck into his bowl of soup.

There was more broth than meat and veg, he didn’t complain as he knew his stomach couldn’t handle much solid food right now. Ms. Duffy made the most delicious soup and the best homemade bread!

Bride sank into her cozy armchair, sipping her tea as she watched over her adopted child. It warmed her heart to see him relaxed. She sighed, at most, she can hide him here for a few days before they miss their unwilling slave, having to do for themselves that long was beyond the dobbers.

At best, she will be able to get some good food into the boy. They sat talking about inconsequential nonsense, sharing quiet laughter. Harry told her about possibly going to a boarding school, his parents had applied to when he was born but shared that he did not think the Dursely would allow him to go.

The old woman cackled, her one good eye twinkling, she quickly made the plan that if he could do his school shopping, in lieu of returning to that hell, he can stay with her until school started. She would make arrangement to get him there, he can be sure of that.

Bride knew this would be the last time she would see him once he left for school. She would make the most of it, she estimated her savings, she planned to make sure Harry had some basic essential, and leave the rest to him once she was gone. Perhaps if she could speak to whoever came to take Harry school shopping, she could have them arrange a bank account for Harry, that he could draw from.

Bride sat in thought, as Harry gathered the dirty dishes, taking them to the kitchen to be washed. Later he curled up on the sofa, reading one of his favorite books, as Bride nodded off in her chair.
Severus didn't think doing a favor for Minerva was going to lead to this!

It was a week later when someone knocked on Bride’s door. Harry hid in the spare bedroom that was his when he stayed. Their routine was familiar, they know eventually one of the Dursley would come here searching for him.

Bride toddled to the door, playing up the old decrepit woman shtick. She peered out the barely open door, planning to instill fear into whoever dared to knock. An unfamiliar man stood impatiently gazing back at her, tall and scrawny, dressed in all black. His hair went past his wide shoulders in greasy waves. Dark chocolate eyes looked out from the pale white skin. Only a crooked nose marred the regal features.

“Good evening Madam, I am looking for Harry Potter, would he happen to be here?” A rich, sultry, tenebrous voice swept past Ms. Duffy, drawing Harry out of hiding. His eyes widen when he saw Professor Snape. Harry’s legs refuse to work, the last time he saw the professor, the man was dying in his arms. Bride opened the door wider, beckoning the man to enter.

“Aaricht, jist wha in the warld are ye? Yer be a skinny malinky longlegs! Sit! Sit! Ah will mak sum tea!” As Bride tottered off to the kitchen, Professor Snape turned his scrutiny to the paltry excuse for a child before him.

“Mr. Potter, I presume?” An arched brow raised in disbelief, this cannot be Lily’s child. The Professor wondered what in Merlin’s name was going on.

Minerva had asked him to do the home visit, which they both found strange. Harry Potter’s family should already know about magic, therefore not warranting a home visit. Did the Headmaster really leave the child with an old crone?

Harry sat on the edge of the couch, nervously fiddling with the hem of his hand me down shirt. “Yes Sir, I’m Harry Potter,” Harry studied the pattern on the rug unwaveringly.

“Young man, it is polite to look at the person you are addressing.” Professor Snape’s voice snapped in irritation. Harry recoil at the man’s irritation, he knew the man was good at heart, but years of being on the receiving end of the Professor's animosity and rancor were very hard to overcome.

Harry sat straighter and lifted his gaze hesitantly. “Mr. Potter, would you care to explain to me, exactly what is going on?” Snape pinched the bridge of his nose, fighting off what he knew was going to be a monster headache.

“Well Sir, this is Ms. Duibhshíth home, you can call her Ms. Duffy. She lets me hide out here, when things get bad at the Dursely, um, that where I really live, well, when they allow me to stay most times. They hadn’t fed me for two weeks and left me home alone to do all the chores, so I snuck over here to Ms. Duffy. She gave me food and let me bathe in her bathroom, and told me that I didn’t have to go back until I started school.”
Just then, Bride ambled back carrying a tea tray. Severus unburden the woman of her labor, setting the tray on the antique coffee table. From the robust scent of the tea, Severus deduced it was a Scottish blend, more robust than what was served at Hogwarts. Fortunately, Professor McGonagall had introduced him to the delights of said tea.

He watched as Harry automatically slid off the couch, kneeling at the tableside. He made Ms. Duibhsísíth tea without being asked, carefully handing the cup and saucer with two biscuits added on the saucer.

Harry carefully poured a cup for the Professor, quietly asking, “Would you like milk or sugar, Sir?” The boy had some manners it seemed, unlike the students he was used too, making sure others were served before serving himself.

“Yes, one sugar and just a splash of milk please.” After fixing and presenting Snape his tea and a few biscuits, Harry made his own cup, settling on the floor instead of the couch to enjoy his own cup.

Severus used the distraction to think through his plan, Harry was being abused, from all signs he could see. It’s obvious this woman was a muggle, so he could not speak about magic and Hogwarts.

He must be careful in how he explained Harry’s need to go away to school and to get his school supplies, yet not give away too much information.

Harry solved part of his problem for him. “Sir, are you from the boarding school my parents applied too when I was born? I overheard the Dursely saying that a letter should be arriving soon and that they were not going to let me go, much less pay for my schooling.” Severus bristle hearing such rot, just who did Albus leave the child with!

“First, my name is Professor Severus Snape, and yes, I am from the Hogwarts Boarding School, which is in Scotland. There I teach… chemistry, as well as head one of the school houses, of which there are four. My goal today is to introduce to you some of the basics of the school and garner your willingness to attend. If you are willing, I have decided to take you to London where we will gather your school supplies. This will entail staying overnight in London if that is acceptable?”

Bride spoke up then, setting her teacup down on the arm of her seat, “The boy dinnae have much,” Bride tried to soften her brogue enough to be understandable, speaking slowly to the dark man, “A have some money set aside, A trust ye to git the boy some clothes that will fit him and anything else he needs.”

Turning to Harry, Bride motioned to him, “go wash up and git ye ready to leave, A have a few more word to say to him.”

Once Harry left the room, Bride turned to the Professor, staring at him hard, before nodding to herself. She nodded at a box sitting on the mantel above the fireplace.

“Can ye git that. A want ye to open a bank account for the boy, it is my life savings. Ah ma fading, and A won’t be seeing the child when he gits back from this school. Stray dawgs get treated better than that child. Whoever left that boy with those dobbers, did wrong by that child! This is the least ah can do, the child will need clothes and things a growing boy needs. Ye watch over him, dinnae try to rob him, or ah haunt ye till the end of yer days.”

Severus opened the chest carefully, inside were stacks of carefully bound 100-pound notes. He looked up in shock at the old crone. “Aye, A have enough to tide me and the boy until I send him off to school. Ah won’t last much longer past Martinmas.”
Severus Snape gently closed the chest, this stranger cared more for the boy than his own so-called family. The boy was nothing he was lead to believe, He was now sure the boy lacked even the basic training he was due. He wondered if the child knew about magic or that he was a wizard, he would have to spend his time wisely in Diagon Alley.

First, would be a trip to Gringotts, he would need to see where best to place this windfall of the boy.

“Ms. Duibhshíth, I swear on my life, that I will watch over the boy, and see that he grows up well. I can’t say that he will not go back to his family, but I will make sure that he has what he need to survive his summers. I will keep him at the school during the rest of the holidays.”

Bride nodded, sinking back into her chair, her mind at rest for now. She would save her talk to Harry closer to when he left for school.

Harry wandered back into the sitting room, fresh and clean smelling lightly of mint. His shirt and jeans were worn but fitted better than the rags he wore before.

He carried a worn backpack, which he packed his nightshirt and a change of clothing, and personal supplies. Severus had already decided to allocate £1000.00 to buy the child some decent sturdy muggle clothing.

Harry gathered the dirty dishes and took them to the kitchen to wash before they left, he would not leave this chore to his kind guardian angel. This impressed the Professor greatly, who nodded his head in appreciation of the act.

“Turas math dhuibh! Be a good child and mind the Professor, A will see ye soon. Am pure done in, A gonnae rest now!” Bride shambled off with great effort, her cane tapping slowly as she headed off to her room to rest.

Harry locked up behind them, making sure to tuck the key safely in his backpack. Snape lead them down the block to a deserted wooded lot.

Focusing on his young charge, he dreaded asking the question but needed to know, “Mr. Potter, what do you know about magic?”

Harry shuffled his feet, not wanting to answer but knowing he must. With a deep sigh, he stood straight as he knew his Professor required, looked at the man as he answered.

“The Dursely would like me to believe it’s not real. They tried beating it out of me or starving it out, which never worked. Freakish things still happen around me sometimes. The word is forbidden anywhere near them. I know magic is real, I just wish I could learn to control it better. It sure would have been a great help with all the chores I have had to get done each day. I think what magic I have has spent more time healing my hurts than anything. I heal faster than Vernon can hurt me. His thrashings were getting increasingly vicious.”

Severus, closed his eyes, burying his anger beneath his occlumency shields, he wanted nothing more than to hunt down the vile creatures and demonstrate how cruel a riled wizard can be.

“Mr. Potter, there is much we will need to discuss tonight, but for now, I am going to apparate us to London. It is one of the magical means of transportation wizards use. I would like to side apparate
with you, which means I would have to hold you securely against my person. Is this acceptable? We will use the Knight Bus for our return trip. Now hold on and take a deep breath.”

Harry buried his face against Professor Snape’s stomach, breathing in deeply the scent of herbage and potions. Severus twisted them to the right, and the familiar hooked behind the belly button sensation followed. Severus followed through with his step landing them in a dark alley beside the Leaky Cauldron. He gave Harry a few moments to find his equilibrium, before drawing apart.

“Mr. Potter, we have two days to get you situated. First, let me take you to Gringotts. It’s the bank the wizarding world uses to secure its fortunes. A word of advice young man, Gringotts is run by a clan of creatures known as Goblins. They are both bankers and a fierce warrior race; they are also easily insulted and hate having their valuable time wasted. Wait to be acknowledged by a teller before approaching, give them a proper greeting, then explain succinctly the reason for your visit. I will be handling today's transaction, so pay close attention for future reference.”

Harry nodded as he reached for Severus’s hand, something he would never have had the guts to do before, but something a newly introduced to magic scared abused child might do.

Severus hand wrapped around the boy’s much too thin hands, every bone can be felt beneath the calloused and marred skin. He could feel the bumps where the bones did not heal properly.

With a deep calming sigh, Severus lead the boy out of the alley and into the Leaky Cauldron. It was dark and a bit eerie inside. Harry glanced around from beneath his long bangs, he wondered if the Professor would announce his presence like Hagrid had done before. He would greatly like to avoid such a scene and would seriously like to avoid meeting Voldemort possessed Quirrell anytime soon.

‘No’ he thought, ‘Quirrell shouldn’t be here this early, should he?’ He was glad he wrote down everything he needed to do, details of his past life were starting to get a bit fuzzy, as already events were changing.

It would have been easier to escape notice with Hagrid accompanying him. Severus was more responsible, he would never be able to escape unnoticed. He will just have to come back later to get what he needs.

Severus bowed to the goblins guarding the entrance of Gringotts, Harry followed suit and traipse behind Severus, he took his time paying attention to the details of the bank and surroundings. The goblins were all dressed in finely tailored suits.

The walls and columns of the bank were beautiful statuario marble with gold veins against the luminous background, the floor was highly polished blue granite. The Canterbury quartz countertop tied in the gold of the statuario marble and the dark color of the blue granite.

Several huge diamond-laced chandeliers dominating the dome ceiling declared the wealth of Gringotts Bank. Harry only knew what the different building materials were because his aunt was always pouring over remodeling brochures, leaving them out when the neighbors visited hoping to instill jealousy in how grand the Dursely’s house was going to be compared to theirs.

Harry never really paid much attention to the details the first time around, too caught up in learning he was magical and in learning the truth about the death of his mom and dad.

Harry waited alongside Severus for a free teller, leaning into the older man for comfort. He finally dawned on him that he had died, that the man beside him had died as well. Harry should not even be here right now, reliving his life again.
The weight settled onto his soul like an anchor. He really didn’t know if he had the strength to do it all again. His doubts and fears spiraled inside his mind threatening to drown him in despair.

Harry suddenly found himself pulled tightly against Severus body, a gentle hand rubbing his back and carding thru his hair, Severus’s soothing deep voice washed over him offering words of comfort.

Harry felt the wetness on his face, he hadn’t realized he had been crying. The dark-haired child glanced up at his mentor, silently thanking him. Before more could be said an elderly Goblin beckoned them forward. Severus took the time to gently dry Harry’s face before motioning the boy towards the teller.

The goblin glanced over the two males standing before him before speaking. “Greetings Potion Master Snape... young Mr. Potter, I am Rangor. How may Gringotts assist you today?” The voice was craggy yet dignified.

Severus bowed his head slightly before speaking, “Greetings Rangor. May the gold of Gringotts forever flourish and fortune smile upon you Rangor. It is Mr. Potter first time visiting Gringotts and accessing his account, and I would also like to open a secondary account for Mr. Potter.”

“Does Mr. Potter have his vault key?” Rangor asked as he looked through the log book to find the name of the Potters account manager. Severus glanced at Harry with a questioning raised a brow.

Harry shook his head, “I have never had a vault key, Sir, I didn’t know I had a bank account, the Dursley made me work for my keep because they never received any help for taking care of me, but I don’t think they have the key either Sir. They hate magic and anything to do with it.”

Both older men stared at the small boy, Rangor in complete shock. Severus was yet again having a hard time controlling his anger at how Lily’s child was treated. Rangor motioned to a younger goblin, giving him a note to pass along to Bannot, the Potter’s account manager, requesting a meeting with the Potion Master and young Mr. Potter.

“If you both would have a seat, someone will take you to an account manager to help sort out everything. May your endeavors be fruitful Potion Master Snape and yours as well young Mr. Potter.”

Severus returned the sentiments knowing they were dismissed, he guided Harry over to a waiting area filled with comfortable chairs. Rather than let Harry sit by himself, he drew the young boy onto his lap cuddling him close.

He needed to be able to whisper instructions into Harry’s ear as well as confirm to himself that the boy was safe in his arms. He already dreaded what he will learn later that night about the child’s life.

If life was fair, this boy would have been his son, his and Lily’s child. He had spent the last ten years trying to hate the boy because of James Potter. Harry rested his head against Severus' shoulder, there was no hesitation or fear, just acceptance that the Professor would allow the comfort.

Severus signed tiredly, an unwilling favor for McGonagall was turning his life upside down. There were complications he refused to think about at this moment. Right now, he needed to get through meeting the account manager and getting Harry’s school shopping done.
Severus spoke softly against the side of the boy’s ear, so only Harry could hear what was said. Severus explained about the money Ms. Duibhshíth gave him and what his plans were for the new account.

“Harry, there are so many things that are unknown to you. I promise tonight we will talk more but for now, I promised Ms. Duibhshíth I would look after you, I swore it on my life and now my magic that I will take care of you from now on. I do not know who it is that may have your vault key, but I believe a new one should be reissued to you. I would like to keep a hold of it if that is ok with you. I do not believe a child should hold such responsibility at such a young age without proper training.” Severus stated as ran his hand soothingly down Harry’s back.

“Ms. Duibhshíth gave me a chest filled with Muggle money. She wants me to use it to help take care of you, would you agree with me opening an account and using the money to buy your school supplies and muggle clothing? I will also issue an allowance from the account for spending money while at school, but I will purchase any personal items you may need replacing.” The Professor watched Harry’s face for any minute changes signifying he was against the idea.

Harry had mixed feelings, in his past life he would have given anything for someone to take care of him, yet he was used to taking care of himself, not always very well, he admitted truthfully. He knew how strict Severus was, as a Professor having Severus in a closer relationship would make it difficult to get what he needed to be done, but did he really want to pass up this opportunity?

Harry weighed the pros and cons, he would honestly rather be under Severus care than Molly and Headmaster Dumbledore, for one Severus believed he was abused from the little he saw, unlike Molly who brushed it aside or the Headmaster who constantly returned him to that nightmare each summer.

Harry peeked at Severus returning the Potion Master’s intense gaze. Harry saw sincerity etched into the lines of Severus' face. “Yes Sir, I would like that very much,” he blushed as he answered smiling shyly.

Before they could go further with the conversation, a young goblin appeared, beckoning them to follow him to one of the private meeting room. There to greet them was an older goblin who graced them with a small smile. This goblin's features were vastly different from Ironclaw and Griphook, the two goblins Harry remembered from before.
While his ears were pointed, they were more subdued, his nose ventured towards being bulbous rather than pointed. His face was more human in appearance, his eyes held a hint of kindness. Before the goblin were stacks of thick folders spread neatly across the desk. Account Manager Bannot waved towards two leather chairs situated in front of the desk, inviting them to sit.

“Potion Master Snape… young Mr. Potter, I am Senior Account Manager Bannot. How may Gringotts assist you both today?” Bannot spoke in a soft cultured voice as he gazed intently at them.

“Greetings Senior Account Manager Bannot. May the gold of Gringotts forever flourish and fortune smile upon you, I am escorting Mr. Potter today as it is his first excursion into the wizarding world. Unfortunately, he is ignorant of his accounts and has never seen or held his vault key. Secondary, I was given charge of a small Muggle fortune, with the edict that I open an account for Mr. Potter to help take care of his day to day needs.” Severus drew the chest from his robes as he finished his explanation.

Bannot nodded as he reached for the chest, placing it to one side. He opened one of the thick folders, glancing at its content. He gazed fell to Harry for a moment before he spoke.

“Mr. Potter before we continue further, let me ask you, how much do you trust this man?”

Harry was quite taken back by the question, he was again venturing into new territory he had never had to deal with. “With my life, Sir!” he answered with firm conviction. Bannot nodded, muttering to himself before broaching another question.

“Are you willing to be under this man’s guidance Mr. Potter, financially, socially, and physically?”

Harry wasn’t quite sure what the goblin was getting at, but he nodded. This would be his first time having Severus control his finance, but the Professor had always looked out for him physically, although socially was a new concept.

“Mr. Potter I would need a verbal agreement please.” Bannot rebuked softly. Harry blushed even as he answered, “Yes I trust Professor Snape with my life, and yes I would be willing to be under his guidance financially, socially, and physically.”

“Would you willing accept discipline from Potion Master Snape Mr. Potter?” Bannot eyes bore into Harry’s waiting for his answer. “I don’t think anyone willing accepts being punished, but I wouldn’t fight it from the Professor, as long as it was fair and I did deserve it, I guess.”

The words stumbled out of his mouth, he remembered all the detentions and the odd smack to the back of his head when he failed to pay attention in class and study hall. To be honest, Snape’s cutting remarks and his sharp tongue was feared more than his detentions.

Severus remained quiet throughout the interrogation. He knew that Bannot had to be sure of Harry’s agreement for Severus to make decisions on any account bearing Harry’s name. His brow rose at the stipulation of socially and physically, and he wondered what the goblin was playing at.

Bannot nodded, satisfied with the answers he had gotten. He removed several pieces of paper from the folder before him, laying them out for their purview while he explained.

“I am the Account Manager for the Potter family, one of the prestigious accounts under my guardianship. There have been several irregularities over the years with the account and several connecting accounts. Starting with the sealing of the will by the Ministry, as well as several Ministry ordered financial transaction. Strictly speaking, Heir Sirius Orion Black, as the godfather to young Mr. Potter is the only person allowed to make any withdrawal from the main account. As Heir Black
is currently indisposed, young Mr. Potter needs a guardian that is willing to further his growth, rather than their own self-interest.”

Severus sat up upon hearing this, Ministry ordered could only mean one thing, someone tried to gain access to Harry’s account and was refused. It came down to either releasing the money or facing another Goblin-Wizard war.

Bannot lifted his gaze towards the Professor. “Potion Master Severus Tobias Snape are you willing to take Harry James Potter under Muggle and magical guardianship?”

Severus drew in a shocked breath, his head swung towards Harry, only to find an elated smile filling the young boy’s face. ‘Well that answers that question,” Severus thought. There were so many complications to accepting, but that look of happiness overrode all of that, for once Severus did a very Gryffindorish thing and agreed without thinking through the consequences.

“Yes Master Bannot, I... Potion Master Severus Tobias Snape, Professor of Hogwarts School of Wizardry, do hereby declare my willingness and ability to take Harry James Potter under Muggle and Magical guardianship financially, physically and socially to ensure that he becomes a productive and respected member of Wizarding and Muggle society. So Mote It Be!” Severus declared.

“So Mote It Be!” Bannot and Harry echoed. Bannot flashed a devious smile before continuing.

“Gringotts will assume all cost and will handle the paperwork involved, this will take some time so unfortunately, young Mr. Potter cannot live with you immediately. First, Master Snape, there is the matter of your inheritance test that you failed to take upon reaching seventeen.”

“Inheritance test? Why would I need one done? My mother was disowned by the Prince family, and as my father was a Muggle drunk there was nothing to inherit from his family.” He questioned with a puzzled look.

“Master Snape one never knows what will show up in an inheritance test which is why it is mandatory at the age of majority. For the paperwork to be solid, be official, as well as legal, we shall perform the test now.”

Bannot laid a potion-treated parchment on the desk before Severus, with great respect he passed the Gringotts ceremonial boline, the highly-polished curved silver blade gleamed in the lamplight. Severus grasp the white dragon hide wrapped handle with due respect. Above the bolster, centered exactly between the heel and the spine of the knife was the Gringotts seal.

The blade was extremely sharp, Severus only needed the slightest of pressure to draw blood. Four fat drops felled onto the parchment. Severus wiped the blade with a handkerchief which he pocketed, before handing over the boline. He watched as Bannot wandlessly cast a scouring charm to thoroughly clean the blade, before replacing it back in its chest.

Glancing back to the parchment, Severus saw that it was nearly completed. He reached out taking Harry’s hand in his as the parchment glowed signaling completion. Bannot held the test in his hands, glancing at it and nodding smugly.

“Just as I thought. Master Snape, you have done yourself a great injustice.” He said as he slid the test towards Severus.
Official Gringotts Inheritance Test

Name: Lord Severus Tobias Snape-Prince

Born: 9 January 1960

Parents: Tobias Snape [Father] (Deceased)
Eileen Snape née Prince [Mother] (Deceased)

Grandparent(s): Lord Marcus Caracalla Prince [Grandfather] (Deceased)
Lady Helena Augusta Prince née Gaunt [Grandmother] (Deceased)
Jacob Snape [Grandfather] (Deceased)
Mathilda Bertha Snape née Williams [Grandmother] (Deceased)

Godparent(s): Unknown

Wife: None

Children: None

Inheritance: Prince Lordship

Creature Inheritance: Affinity towards vampirism

Soul Mate(s): Blocked/Unknown

Ability(s): Animagus, Potions, Occlumency, Legilimensy, Dueling, Flight, Skulking

Magical Familiar(s): unknown

Seats: Four Wizengamot seats illegally held by Albus Percival Wulfric Brian Dumbledore

Vault(s): Severus Prince Trust Vault
Prince Family Vault
Potion Master Snape-Prince Personal Vault.

See Vault Folders

**Possession(s):** Various Magical Items, Prince Books, Portraits

Various Potion Lab Equipment, Furniture, and Accouterments. See Possession Folders

**Property(s):** Prince Manor - Protected by Blood wards keyed to the Heir and Lord Prince.

Spinner’s End – Inherited from the Muggle family. Protected by personal wards.

Treasure Bay- Private Island in the Caribbean protected by Blood wards keyed to the Heir and Lord Prince.

See Property Folders

Witness By

*Bannot Willbreaker*

Senior Account Manager

*Gringotts Bank - Clan Skull Crusher Warrior Class*

Severus collapsed into the chair in shock at what the test revealed, giving Bannot time to assess both the young men before him.

“Let me make it very clear about what we are proposing gentlemen. We at Gringotts do not take kindly to the accounts of our clients being meddled with. Young Mr. Potter it takes only one glance to tell me that you have not been given the care that a young child should be given, considering that fact that 140 galleons, which equates to £700 has been withdrawn monthly for your care and well being. Young Mr. Potter, I cannot discern how you may have benefited from 15,960 galleons. You are too small in stature and much too thin. Your clothes do not reflect that any decent amount
galleons, or pounds in your case, was spent on you.”

Bannot steeple his fingers resting his elbows on his desk as he continued. “Gringotts is tired of the Ministry meddling into our banking and our clients’ affairs. In this regards we wish to secure as many of our accounts as possible, starting with Master Snape and your's young Mr. Potter. In exchange for handling all aspects of both your accounts and legal work, we request that Master Snape take full guardianship of you Mr. Potter with the eventuality of a full blood adoption in the future once an assessment of relationship has been done within a years’ time.”

“While I have no objection to this Master Bannot, I highly doubt Headmaster Dumbledore, much less the Ministry, will agree readily to my guardianship of Mr. Potter. There is also the Dark Lord to consider, and the fact that I was a Death Eater cum spy for the Light Faction.”

Severus scrubbed his face wearily with his potion stained hands, these were the things he did not stop to consider when he gave his oath. He knew it was safe to discuss these facts openly with Master Bannot as it will go no further.

“The Headmaster spoke of blood wards protecting him at his current home from the Dark Lord and the other Death Eaters. All though from what little I have seen, they have not protected him from his own family. The Headmaster will be very adamant that he is returned to his family for his own protection, he will also not vacillate in using the fact of me being Marked to regain control of Mr. Potter.”

Harry sat silently absorbing everything he heard, trying to control his anger. The Dursley were getting money from his account to take care of him. He calculated the amount in his mind only to grip the arms of the chair tightly in order control his magic.

Nearly £80,000 was taken from his account over the years. £80,000, yet he was starved, beaten, worked nearly to death. Left at home, while they went on extravagant vacations and spoiled his fat, lazy cousin with mountains of gifts.

While Harry was still fighting to come to terms with what he had learned, Bannot and Snape continued to hash out the details of the arrangements.

“Master Snape we will consider these additional details, but we still feel this is the best option. We cannot reveal further details until young Mr. Potter has reached his majority and has taken his Inheritance Test. We feel that you are the best option for making sure this comes to fruition. You, yourself will need to learn the duties of your Lordship and in doing so you can also teach and guide Mr. Potter in such area.”

“Now for the details of what this arrangement will entail. Assuming Mr. Potter is in a safe place until he attends his first year at Hogwarts, you will take the time to secure him what he needs for the school year. This will include any additional training and tutoring he may need. I have here a copy of his Muggle school records for you to purview at your leisure. I would also suggest a thorough
medical, as we have not found any beyond his time with his birth parents……”

Harry tune back into the conversation as Bannot requesting a full medical.

‘Wow, this is new.’ Harry wasn’t sure what to think anymore, nothing was quite the same as it had happened before, all because he hid out at Ms. Duffy before his letter arrived.

He was now glad he wrote down all he remembered and needed to do, small details were starting to get a bit fuzzy with each new change. It didn’t help that his submissive, weaken personality at this age was largely in control, although his mindset was older.

‘Wait! The Goblins had his Muggle school records? Had someone been trying to keep track of him after all? Then why didn’t I know all this the last time?’ Harry face scrunched up deep in thought, ‘The last time… I never met with an account manager the last time, only the tellers and the cart goblins. Hagrid had my key the first time, and Mrs. Weasley the second year, and I had finally gotten my key from the Minister of Magic the third year after Fudge had bought my school books. I spent the rest of the summer before school started in Diagon Alley.’

Harry realized that was the only time he ever held control of his key. He lost it the next year when Mrs. Weasley did his school shopping while Harry was at the Quidditch World Cup, and again while Harry was stuck at Number 12 after the trial, ‘in all fairness I never held my vault key after my third year.’ He was starting to develop a massive headache with all the thoughts swirling through his mind.

Severus was also developing his own headache, there was only so much anger one can stow behind occlumency shields. “So, to recap Master Bannot, the child will need additional Muggle and Wizarding tutoring as he is inadequately prepared for Hogwarts and the world he is entering. As we have decided, you will personally manage both our accounts and invest in both Muggle technology and international Wizarding business. You and I will meet quarterly to go over any questions and the accounts.”

“Currently I am the child’s Magical guardian, Gringotts will quietly work on the full guardianship paperwork in both the Muggle and Wizarding world leading to full blood adoption. For the time being, Mr. Potter will stay with me during the school holidays, but there is a possibility he will need to go back to his relatives during his first summer. Two options present itself in that case. One, I prepare him with all he needs before he is returned and make weekly visits to his relatives’ home, or two, I acquire a place in the area for the summer where the child can escape to, as he has done with Ms. Duibhshíth.”

Bannot closed his eyes considering the Potion Master’s words. “I believe option two would be best. The year would give us time to acquire such a property and ward it properly for both your protection. We can discuss this in more details once we find a suitable place.”

Severus nodded in agreement. “This leaves the medical exam, I believe I would like Gringotts to
arrange for a Goblin healer from the Healer Clan to perform the exam, Sir. The child would be thoroughly examined and the result properly documented. Upon their recommendation, I will brew any potions the child may need.”

Bannot was quite surprised by this. Wizards tend to only want their own wizard healers in such a capacity. That the Potion Master trusted the Goblin Nation Healers to perform the exam quelled any doubts that this was indeed the right path to take.

“I will leave you both to discuss any issues while I contact the Head Healer about an appointment. Afterward, you will both need to sign all the paperwork involved setting everything in motion.”

Bannot laid out the paperwork for Master Snape to go over with the young boy, before leaving to contact Head Healer Larrot.

Taking a deep calming breath, Severus turned to witness Harry rubbing his temple wearily. ‘Seems I am not the only one developing headaches over this mess’ Severus reached into his robes, pulling out a travel vial filled with a mild headache potion. In an act of rare compassion, Severus pulled the child onto his lap, gently feeding him the potion as he massaged Harry’s back soothingly.

‘This boy should have been Lily’s and my child, not that blasted Potter.’ Severus sighed before realization struck him. “Mr. Potter…Harry, do you understand what was discussed before?”

Harry gazed lifted towards his, the lingering pain easing as the seconds passed by. “I think so Professor?” he answered in a confused voice.

“Harry there are matters we need to discuss in depth about tonight, but there are some issues I need you to be aware of now before we sign anything.” Severus steadied himself with a fortifying breath.

“Mr. Potter, I am a former Death Eater. A Death Eater is one who followed the Dark Lord, the man who killed your parents. Your mother was a childhood friend of mine that I loved very much. I will explain all this in greater detail I promise, but for now, know that I tried to save her…. and you and in turn became a spy for the Leader of the Light fraction.”

Severus expected the boy to pull away in anger or at a minimum disgust. The child surprised him by leaning closer laying his little head against Severus’s chest, prompting the man to try and smooth down the wild mess of hair.

“I loved your mum so much Harry, and I swore on her grave that I would always protect you.” Severus kissed the top of Harry’s head softly, “Harry if everything works out the way Master Bannot thinks it will, not only will I be your guardian…. Harry, you will be my son, my child. How do you feel about that Harry? I am not an easy man to live with, I will be strict and I will expect you to behave and act with a certain level of maturity as my child. But know that I will take very good care of you and love you beyond reason. I will not spoil you but you will not lack for anything.” Severus laid it all out, knowing he would have to explain in more details later but giving the child this moment to think of his words.
In Harry’s former life, he carried a deep dark secret, a wish not even his hardcore friends suspected. The reason he always acted out, especially in Professor Snape’s class, hoping the man would react differently. A wish that the dark man was his father, or in part treated him as he would his biological son.

At the Dursley, Harry was a freak, worthless, a waste of life. At Hogwarts, Harry was either loved or hated, depending on the fickle mass’s mood. Either way, Harry was left to his own devices, neither seriously punished for any infraction, rather, he was rewarded for behavior that should have caused him to be expelled.

Harry captured Severus’s free hand, gently caressing the pale skin as he thought about Severus’s speech. Harry would dream of this hand disciplining him, not letting him get away with putting himself in danger, not allowing him to act out, to defy authority. Showing him that he was worth the time, the effort, that someone gave a damn.

He realized it was there all along, but hidden from him. He had to die to find it. He knows how harsh, how demanding the man can be. Life as Severus Tobias Snape son would be interesting that’s for sure. Harry smiled to himself as he continued caressing the stained hand in contemplation.

“I would love for you to be my Da.” The soft words hung in the air. The boy’s face hidden behind the wild mess of hair, his fingers still caressing the back of Severus’s hand. The boy continued to surprise Severus yet again.

“I doubt you will think so a month from now, so a compromise. We will sign the paperwork, and after our discussion tonight and a year trial period, I will ask you again before we do anything permanent. This will give you a chance to see what being under my guardianship will entail. We will go over the rules and expectations later little one” Severus mused.

“Sure Sir” Severus garnered a hint of happiness mixed with the meek answer. ‘Why do I get the feeling this child will give me more gray hair than spying ever had?’

Chapter End Notes

Thanks to my first readers, I am so happy you like the first few chapters. Updates wont be weekly but will try to make them as regular as my muse will work with me.
This was shopping on a new level for Harry, with some unexpected surprises.

**Saturday, July 13, 1991**

The trip to Gringotts...had very unexpected results, unexpected... but not bad. The meeting rounded off with Severus and Bannot ironing out all the account discrepancies, investments details, and lastly Harry’s healer appointment.

The paperwork for Harry’s magical and muggle guardianship was signed, a drop of blood from both invoked Lady Magic’s helped legitimize the paperwork from being contested. Not that it would stop the idiots from trying too, especially the Headmaster. The rest would be finalized once the child's medical exam was completed.

Severus contemplated the next item on their agenda. Gringotts took longer than expected, limiting how much shopping could be done today. School supplies could wait until tomorrow, clothing for Harry was a definite priority now.

“Harry, I think a late lunch would be in order, then acquiring a trunk should be a must before we do any shopping. Tomorrow we can obtain everything else you require.” Glancing down at Harry, Severus smiled softly, “so the only decision left is, are we having lunch in Diagon Alley or in the Muggle world? Your choice little one.”

His new ward’s face light up at being given a choice, a simple choice really, one that made Severus ached to have some quality alone time with Harry’s former guardians. He reached down to gently caress the top of the child’s messy hair.

“For today only, I will allow you to choose any place you like for lunch, no matter how ridiculous or unhealthy it may be. Going forward I expect you to eat a healthy, balanced meal limited in sweets and useless junk. After your Healer exam on Wednesday, I will have a clearer understanding of what your nutritional needs are and create the appropriate potions for you.”

Harry stood thinking for a moment of all the places he had ever heard Dudley bragged about going. “If it’s ok, I would really like to go to the Rainforest Café, my aunt and uncle took Dudley there, and it sounded like a lot of fun.” Harry asked shyly, he had seen the commercials at Ms. Duffy and the restaurant seemed like so much fun.

Severus cast a tempus spell with a wave of his wand. It was just after one pm, not enough time for clothes shopping, picking up a trunk, working in a nap and still enjoy a place like Rainforest Café.

“There would not be time to fully enjoy The Rainforest Café little one.” Severus watched as Harry’s face went blank, possibly believing that it was a tricked offer.
“However, I believe your birthday is in two and a half weeks. How about we save it for then, we can spend the day going to places you want to visit and then enjoy The Rainforest Café afterward? I was thinking something along the lines of McDonald's, or Wimpy, or the Shake Shack. I surmised that you have never had a milkshake little one. How does a big juicy burger with chips and a large milkshake sound for lunch?”

Wimpy was another place Dudley was always bragging about, and to be honest, it was a great consolation for The Rainforest Café, and if Harry really got to spend his eleventh birthday at The Rainforest Café with his new Da, that would be just wicked.

Harry nodded shyly, remember at the last minute to give a verbal answer. “I have never been to any of those places Sir, and no, I’ve never had a milkshake before. So, either one of those three places would be lovely Da.”

Hearing Harry called him Da yet again sent a thrill of pleasure throughout Severus. Pulling up a mental map of London, he knew that a Wimpy would be closest to Diagon Alley and to muggle shopping area.

‘There is one located on Southwark Park Road, we can have lunch there and spend some time shopping in Leadenhall Market for most of Harry’s muggle clothing and accessories. Which reminds me I better book a room at Amba Hotel for two nights. It would be much safer to stay in the muggle world than to stay at The Leaky Cauldron, yet still be near enough to Diagon Alley to get Harry’s school shopping done.’

Severus gave his plan deep thought, revising as needed before presenting it to his child. Harry shrugged not really caring one way or another, content to leave it all in Severus’s hand. Severus pinched the bridge of his nose as he eyed his child, Harry grinned up at his Da shamelessly, prompting an irritated, yet fondly mutter brat, from Severus.

Their first stop was a store located in an alley off the main street of Diagon Alley. The stores here were posher than on the main throughway. Harry completely missed this street his first time around. The shops had no signs. no way of informing the shopper of what treasures they hid inside.

The windows were darkened and the doors were formidable, intimidating the average shopper. Harry remembered an expression he heard once, ‘If you have to ask, it's more than you can afford!’ This street screamed it.

Harry’s steps faltered a bit. Severus looked down at the boy, “Are you ok child?”

“Da, I think we are in the wrong place. This looks like more than I can possibly afford!”

Severus brow arched, not sure whether to laugh or be sad that Harry thought he would be paying for his own supplies. With a put-upon sigh, he gladly informed his child of how things will be conducted from now on.

“Harry James Potter, did you honestly assumed that I would allow you to pay for your own supplies? Do you not know the meaning of magical and muggle guardianship?”

The boy had the audacity to look up at him with a raised brow and an impish quirk to his lip. Severus
could have sworn the boy muttered, “and who is the dunderhead,” under his breath. Severus’ hand itched to administer a swat to his son’s behind but valiantly refrained.

“Granted your experience with guardianship leaves a lot to be desired, but be that as it may, I am now responsible for your care. This means child, that I will pay for everything from my account, and as you will now have a certain status to maintain socially in our world, it falls to me to present you according. So, if there are no more comments from the peanut gallery, shall we proceed?”

Harry grumbled under his breath as Severus aimed his dreaded arched brow in his direction, earning him that swat to his bottom he avoided earlier, gently propelling him towards a store located three doors down. Severus laid his hand gently upon a rune etched into the bronze door. Harry squashed a squeak of surprise as the door swung open.

“Most of the stores found here are membership only. You must be of sufficient social standing, wealth, and political standing to even be considered. The family name is also considered, hence my membership through the Malfoys.” Noticing Harry puzzlement, “I shall explain all later little one. For now, just observe.”

The room they were standing in was amazing. There were several arrangements of overstuffed dark grey leather couches. The walls were a medium grey with a suede texture, the floor, dark grey slate. Highly polished black ebony wood was used for crowned molding and accents throughout.

The couches were grouped around glass and stainless-steel coffee tables, which held crystal vases filled with perfectly white blooms of hydrangeas. Black wool rugs with piles so deep, Harry wanted to slip off his shoes and sink into them, rounded out the settings.

Against one wall a floor to ceiling window stood. The ebony wooden frame a stark contrast to the grey walls. Floor to ceiling dark grey drapes framed the view of an early foggy morning on a storm-swept beach, waves silently crashed on the shore as he watched.

At the opposite end from the scenic window was a wall covered in dark slate, which water flowed over in soft rhythmic tones, pooling into a trough filled with river rocks in various shades of grey, white, and black.

Centered between the seating areas, hung a beautiful Schonbek chantant crystal pendant chandelier, which illuminated the area in a soft silver glow. This place screamed money!

Severus guided Harry to the nearest seating arrangement. Harry sunk into the most comfortable chair he had ever experienced in his life. He looked around realizing there was no receptionist desk. Severus sat beside him, his poise relaxed, one leg draped over the other, silently studying his nails on one hand.

Before Harry could say anything, the ebony door opened soundlessly. A very tall, muscular, well-dressed man step forward through the portal. Thick, long, dark, wavy hair framed a flawless amber complication. Hazel, almond shaped eyes sat above an aquiline nose, it curved outwards from the midpoint area and protruded a tad too far from his face, but added much appeal to the overall handsome visage, finishing with wide full lips, peeking out from a dark, stylishly trimmed short boxed beard.

Deep, elegant, cultured tones greeted them. “Lord Prince, it has been ages since you have graced us with your presence.” A handsomely shaped brow rose, even as his head inclined slightly in greeting.

Severus rose, his face a blank masked, inclining his head in return. “Good afternoon Lord Shafiq El-Amin. May I present my ward, Harrison James Potter. He will be starting school this year and we are
Lord Shafiq contemplated his guests in silence, or at least Harry thought he was contemplating. The man didn’t gush and swarm him like everyone else had done in Diagon Alley upon hearing his name. The man’s gazed locked intently with his Da, before stepping further into the room, the door closing soundlessly behind him as he took a seat across from them.

“Please sit,” the man gestured back towards their seat. “May I offer you both some refreshment?”

Severus sat with as much grace and poise he could muster. He was NOT expecting Lord Shafiq to be in attendance. It was just his damnable luck to not be received by one of the other knowledgeable sales clerks.

“Please, that would be most welcomed, Sir.” Severus’ voice softened a smidgen, yet his face remained emotionless. “Your health has been well Sir?

“As well as can be expected, all things considering.” Shafiq folded his dark grey gloved hands neatly onto his lap, turning his head to nod in approval at the house elf who popped in silently with a tea tray. The elf, dressed in an understated uniform, levitated the tray onto the glass coffee table.

A crystal pitcher of cold lemonade, condensation frosting the outside, and a platter of miniature quiches. Harry was able to identify a few by sight, mushroom and asparagus, possibly ham and cheese, spinach with bacon, and one that looked like a rainbow of various types of tomatoes.

The elf poured lemonade and ice into three cut crystal goblets, then served three miniature plates with a variety of quiches, each place before they were set with a pristine white napkin and a highly polished fork.

Harry waited, carefully observed his Da and Lord Shafiq behavior in this setting. Both men took their napkin, spreading it carefully over their thigh before resting the plate on top. Harry watched for a minute, as both began to eat, yet continue their conversation. Following suit, Harry carefully copied their movements with his own napkin and plate.

The savory tarts were still warm and tasted amazing! His favorite so far was the colorful tomatoes. Severus set his plate and fork gently on the table with a minimum of noise, folding the napkin to lay it on top to signal he was done. Harry copied his Da, trying his best to look as if he had poise all his life, and this was all common to him.

The pleasantries over, Lord Shafiq got down to business. Between careful sips of lemonade, Severus and the Lord worked out the details of Harry’s new trunks.

“For his everyday trunk, I believe a wardrobe room, personal storage, and possibly a library to start. Perhaps a study or office, as well.” Yes, that would come in handy for Harry, there would be times when visitors would possibly distract the boy in their small quarters. “For his school trunk, I believe wardrobe, personal storage, a separate storage for potions and ingredients, a smaller library, as well as storage for his stationery supplies.”

Harry wondered why the man wasn’t writing it all down until he noticed an elegant fountain pen charmed to take notes, writing away in flowing, precise script. He really wanted to ask why two trunks, but for once held his questions until they were out of the store if you can really call it a store.

“He will also need a proper school bag with separate compartments for his school books, stationery and completed homework. A cooling compartment would not be amiss for snacks as well.” Severus
gave serious consideration to this next request.

“Last he would need a travel bag. It needs to be small and unassuming, very much easily overlooked. It should contain the following compartments: a storage space for potions and salves, a preservation compartment for food items, another compartment for his summer school assignments.”

Severus fingers gently tapped against his leg lost in thought of what else needed to go into this particular bag. It would be the bag his son would take with him back to Privet Drive. He would be damned if his son did not have what he needed to survive being sent back next summer by Dumbledore.

“A compartment for a limited change in clothing also, the other compartments should be large enough to hold a three-month supply. Blood and magical signature locks, keyed to both of us, in addition to the standard wards and protection.”

Harry missed Lord Shafiq’s eyes snapping towards Severus at this last request, before flickering over to Harry. Severus, however, did not, his lips tightening slightly at the corners with a tiny nod of his head, in answer to the unasked question.

“I shall have everything arranged and delivered later today. You are staying at the Leaky Cauldron?” Even Harry couldn’t miss the slight disdain that leaked into the gentleman’s voice.

Severus hesitated a moment before answering with a sigh, “No, I was hoping to make reservations at the Amba Hotel for the duration of our shopping trip.”

“I would suggest staying a full week, there is no need to overwhelm the child. I would also suggest a visit to Paul Smith.” Harry found it strange for a sales clerk, even if he is a Lord and a very handsome one at that, to make such suggestions that bordered on orders. Lord Shafiq El-Amin was a very strange man.

“You will find reservations at the Amba Hotel under my name when you have completed your shopping this evening. I will arrive at ten this evening to settle our account. Please make sure you do visit Paul Smith, an appointment will be secured for you and your son, Lord Prince.”

Severus bit back a groan and the litany of insults he wanted to unleash on the man. “Insufferable git!”

Taking the dismissal for what it was, Severus stood and thank the man for his time, took Harry’s hand in his and headed out the door without seeming to be running with his tail tucked between his legs.

As Severus stood outside, taking deep calming breaths, Harry gently tugged on the sleeve of his Da’s robe. “Um, Da? Just who was that person?”

Severus mentally groaned and cursed himself for being several kinds of fool, next time Minerva will be doing her own blasted student visits.

“My betrothed, Harry. Lord Amir Hazim Shafiq El-Amin was….is my husband to be.”
Chapter Summary

Harry and Severus learns unknown truths about each other.

Chapter Notes

Apparently I like to torture myself with emotionally writing. Hopefully this will be the last emotionally charge chapter for a while.

‘Whoa, his Da was engaged to be married?’ Harry thought to himself in amusement, ‘Seriously, where was this man last time around!’

“If you can hold your questions until we make it to the restaurant I promise to answer as much as I can in public. The rest will have to wait until we get to our hotel room.” Severus stated hoping to forestall the tsunami of questions he could see brewing on the boy’s face.

“Ok, it’s a deal!” Harry happily agreed. ‘Oh, this is going to be so worth it!’ Taking his Da’s hand, the little brat skipped merrily beside the long-suffering man as they head back onto the main market lane of Diagon Alley. Severus decided to walk to the *Wimpy* restaurant, glad that he did so, as Harry’s babbling amused him greatly.

He watched as his child took great pleasure in the simplest things, the sun shining warmly on his face, taking pleasure in just being able to look through different store windows, always running back to take hold of his father’s hand. Only Harry’s inability to ask him to buy items he clearly wanted, marred Severus enjoyment.

The twenty-minute walked turned into forty as Harry turned into a curious cat, having to peek into every nook and cranny along the way. Severus didn’t mind, combine with the shopping they still had to get done, bedtime would be a breeze later on this evening.

Settling into an out of the way booth, Harry looked at his menu in amazement. Yeah it was a muggle restaurant, and sure the food at Hogwarts was the best he had ever had, but it was so different being here with Severus….as his Da. Harry smiled just thinking about that. He never had simple experiences like this growing up before.

Thanks to Ms. Duffy, he was able to eat a bit more now, rather than if he was taken straight from the tender loving care of the Dursleys. Everything looked so good on the menu, but he was still hesitant to order what he liked. Maybe he should just stick to the basic kid’s meal deal.
Severus studied his son as the lad chewed worriedly on his lower lip, hesitant to choose wrongly from his menu. ‘Enough of this already!’ Severus gently tugged the menu from Harry’s hand, laying it flat on the tabletop between them.

“I will warn you now, that I prefer you to eat much healthier items. Your diet will include a larger portion of fruit and vegetables, I know you young brats prefer an unhealthy amount of junk and sugar. Having said that, I did promise you that you can choose whatever you wanted as your treat for lunch. So, let start with what appeals to you more on this menu.”

Harry hesitantly pointed to the junior cheeseburger. ‘At this rate, we will be here all evening trying to order.’ Severus hummed at the thought, then quickly made the decision.

“How does the junior cheeseburger with a side of chips, and a strawberry milkshake sound? I planned on have a salad so you can have some of mine’s, but I think I will also order you a carrot and cucumber snack pot. If you can not finish it now, you can take it with us while we finish shopping in case you get peckish later. Sounds good?”

Severus was rewarded with the most brilliant, happy smile from his son. “That sounds brilliant Da!” Crisis averted, Severus gave the server their order, then steered the conversation to mundane subjects until their food arrived.

Severus had ordered the crispy battered codfish salad, he portioned out a small section of fish and salad, depositing it on Harry’s plate. “If you cannot finish it all, I would prefer you at least finished the salad and leave the fries.”

Harry nodded as he tucked into his lunch, savoring each bite. He dutifully ate his salad and the small bite of fish. Oh, he really did enjoy that, the salad was cold and crispy, with the touch of tangy dressing his Da dabbed onto it.

He didn’t think he would have a problem eating vegetables at all this time around. They were a far cry to the overcooked one his Aunt made when she decided to cook at all. Ms. Duffy tended to ply him with broths and more solid foods that, in her words, stick to his ribs.

Severus, having ordered a pot of tea for one to go with his lunch, absently stirred his tea, waiting for the questions to start.

“Da? Why did I need two trunks and two separate bags?”

‘Well…this is surprising’ Severus thought, this was the last question he would have expected to be hit with first.

“The first trunk will remain in my quarters, it will be where you store all your things while we are at Hogwarts. The second trunk is for your dorm room. This will hold only your school necessities, such as books, uniforms, and your stationery. This will minimize the chance of your dormmates stealing anything of value. Same with your school bag, the less you have to tote around, the fewer chances of homework being lost or damaged.”

Severus ate silently for a few minutes before continuing. “The last bag …. I wanted to be prepared in case you are sent back to the Dursley next summer. The paperwork will not be completed by then, so the chances are very high the Headmaster will have his way. I plan to make sure you have enough nutrient supplements, and other potions in case they are needed, also, I will make sure you have adequate nourishment during that time. Ms. Duibhshíth disclosed to me…. the possibility of her not being nearby when you returned at the end of the school year. Therefore, I need to think ahead about that possibility.”
“Oh yeah, you told me she left some money with you.” Harry nibbled on a salty fry, before taking a lovely slurp of his strawberry milkshake. He was literally in food heaven at the moment, letting his mind wander aimlessly at what other questions he may want to answer right now.

“Do you really mind being my Dad? I mean, I doubt you woke up this morning thinking you’re going to find yourself a son?”

Severus was not fooled by the callousness the question was tossed out. The question mattered to him. Severus’ face softened into a smile as he reached over and gently tweaked the lad’s nose.

“What do you think?”

Harry blushed, ducking his head hiding the shy smile. He hummed softly as he felt Severus’ hand ruffled his hair. His tummy was starting to get a bit full, he was only halfway thru his burger and fries.

“No Harry, I didn’t wake up expecting to be a Dad at the end of the day, but to answer your question, yes I am really ok with how everything turned out. At the end of the day, I would not change anything, even for all the gold in the world.”

“Even though you meet your b…be….um husband to be?” Harry asked innocently.

Severus cursed silently in his head. The young scamp had to be a Slytherin the way he snuck that question in.

“I promise I will explain the full details tonight, but for now…. In the wizarding world, there is tradition called arranged marriage. It is especially essential among those who are titled. Parents chose the husband or wife from another entitled family based on a number of criteria, such as lineage, political strength, wealth, leadership, and the ability to reproduce.” Severus reached over and snagged a fry from Harry’s plate to his son’s amusement. “This way ensures that family lines do not die out and that their children would be protected should the worst happened. It is not a perfect system, and yes, the worst can happen, but there have been some wonderful matches made.”

Harry thought about that for a moment. “Is your match one of the awful ones?”

“No child, it was not or should say is not an awful one. My guardian wrote the contract, carefully choosing Amir because Amir reflected the values my mentor cherished the most. Amir is a strong leader, and very strict, yet he is loving and gentle. He strongly believes in our traditions and practices the old rites. He also shares a unique view of family culture with my mentor.”

Severus leaned back into the booth, sipping his tea pondering his life choices. “We would have been married already, but for the choices I previously made. My…mentor became unstable mentally, looking back now I realized he chose Amir as a way to protect me if something should happen to him. Instead, I rebelled, I was still in love with your mother and wanted to protect her and you. I…. trapped myself into a situation that did not allow me to go back to my old life.”

Harry slid out from his seat and climbed onto his father’s lap wrapping his arms tightly around him. Severus smiled, sadness leaving a faint mark on it. He gently kissed the top of Harry’s head, breathing in the faint smell of citrus, his hand gently rubbed his son’s back soothingly.

“Meeting you, Harry…this situation….it has given me the chance to rectify past mistakes. For that, I am most grateful.”

Harry rested his head against Severus’ chest listening to his father’s heartbeat. He never realized just how much this man had sacrificed for him before. No, not again, never! He will change the outcome
Severus pulled Harry’s plate closer and began to feed Harry by hand. He should feel mortified, really, he was ten years old, even older if you count his memories. It should not feel so bloody good being cuddled and fed like a baby on his father’s lap.

Harry mentally gave the dissenting voice in his head the finger, never having enjoyed someone taking care of him in this way, he was going to enjoy every blasted minute of it, public and mental opinion be damned.

Lunch finally over, the leftovers packed away in a to-go bag, father and son headed off to the clothing stores in Leadenhall Market, their goal to make a dent in the various store’s inventories. Clothing had to be bought a size bigger, as Severus was hell bound to make sure his scamp filled out some during the school year.

Sturdy denim in a variety of colors, T-shirts with tasteful designs, light summer jumpers made it into the shopping carts. These Harry would need for weekends and downtime while at Hogwarts. Thick socks, piles of boys underpants, undershirts, cotton vest were added next. Severus stood before a rack, working through the pros and cons of adding shorts to the growing pile of clothing, the weather in Scotland was not really conducive to shorts, Severus finally decided.

Next came a variety of sleepwear, in assorted colors and designs. Two sets of bathrobes and sleep robes made its way into the cart. When Harry asked why two sets. Severus patiently explained that one set of each would remain in his quarters, while the other set would be stored in his dorm trunk.

Finally, they made it to the sections containing, jackets, fleeces, and hoodies. Harry watched as item after item sailed into the basket, as Severus nitpicked his way through what was available. Harry felt relieved, thinking they were done, only to be guided deeper into the store towards the changing rooms.

No, Harry drew the line at having to try on everything. No, no, no, no, NO! Harry stomped his feet staring down his git of a father. A hard swat to his defenseless behind, and a stern admonishment that his behavior would be discussed later had Harry scurrying into the changing room with his first set of clothing.

Standing before the mirror, Harry gently rubbed his stinging behind. “Merlin’s beard, remind me to never throw a tantrum around him again!” He really dreaded the “discussion” later on if that swat was anything to go by.

“Come on, nothing for it now, you’re the one that stuck your foot in it, will just have to deal with it as it comes.” Changing into his first outfit, Harry had to admit, for a man who wears nothing but black, Severus really had an eye for style and comfort.

Edging his way out the changing room cautiously, he presented himself, twirling around and feeling all kinds of ridiculous, showing off the clothing. This continued, with Severus either nodding to an outfit or vetoing it, for the next hour, working through the pile of clothing.

Severus chuckled softly as Harry moaned and groaned once they were done and heading to the cashier. Severus stopped suddenly as something caught his eye, prompting Harry to stifle another
moaning fit. He really didn’t want to add to the trouble he had already found himself in, but shopping for clothes was exhausting!

Harry really hoped it wasn’t another outfit that caught his Dad’s eye. Instead what Severus presented him with was the most precious teddy bear Harry had ever seen. The black fur was soft and curly, with a soft, silky shine. The paws and snout were a soft cream color, with a black accent for the nose, mouth, and paw marks. The eyes were deep emerald green and sparkled happily in the light. The bear was dressed in a Highland outfit of deep forest green and gray with silver accent. Harry was absolutely in love with it!

“Ok, this makes going through that torture all worthwhile.” Harry quipped while hugging the bear to his chest.

“This is not a reward for your behavior, young man, we will still be having that discussion before your bedtime tonight. But every lad needs a friend he can tell his secrets too, someone to watch over him.” Severus stern visage softened as he ruffled the boy’s messy mop.

Harry skipped after his Da, idly chattering to Tobby about how mean his daddy was. Harry made sure Tobby was the first to be checked, that way he could hold him while the clothes were bagged. The voice was back, berating him for his childish behavior, teasing him about how he planned to save the world, holding onto a teddy bear. Part of Harry knew he should not give into his childish impulses, but he fucking gave his life already for the cause, would he really be all that selfish if he indulged for a bit this time around?

Besides, he can at the very least, enjoy this summer of brief childhood before the real work began.

Their next stop was another fancy store located at Charing Cross. It would be their final stop of the evening, and thankfully the Hotel was not too far from here. Severus explain that the owner was actually a wizard that had done very well for himself in Muggle fashion.

Paul Smith descended from Helga Hufflepuff, and while not the current heir to the Ancient Hufflepuff Title, did very well in his chosen field, creating high fashion for the discerning. While his main line is men’s fashion, he branched out into women and children fashion as well.

Paul greeted Severus with a hug and a warm smile. “Severus, it’s been too long. Come, come, you are unfortunately in my capable hands today. Amir made sure to stress that a full wardrobe is needed for both you and your ward.”

Paul eyed Harry curiously, “I saw Lucius recently, he failed to mention such new development.” He prattled on in seemingly harmless chatter as he pulled out a measuring tape and went to work.

Severus bemoaned the fact that Lucius will now know about his ward before Severus could break the news to him, himself. His brother in all but blood, will either kill him outright or make sure Severus never wanted to sit again in his life.

“To be honest I was quite surprised when Amir called himself to make the appointment, even more, surprised when I found out it was for you Severus dear.”

Sometimes the best defense is pure silence, Severus let the man prattle own with his statements that
were really questions and his way of digging for information. Severus was already in enough hot water, he refused to turn up the fire under the pot he was sitting in.

Paul moved onto his next target, a very confused Harry. Glancing at his Da, Harry saw the nearly invisible head shake, warning him to not say a word.

Paul pulled and position, taking innumerable measurements, prattling on and on. He commented on the size of the boy, that he must surely get his looks from his mother as he looks nothing like Severus, a never-ending flow of comments and opinions.

“Alright, all done! Amir already specified the types of clothing needed. It should all be ready and delivered by Thursday.” Paul held up a hand, no doubt curtailing Severus litany of profanity and insults. “I already have the details of where you’re staying. Honestly Sev, it’s not the first time I had to dress you. I know what styles and colors favor you, what material and cut you prefer. Now this little one, I can have some real fun dressing.”

Severus indulged in rolling his eyes at Paul, muttering about bloody fashionista divas with sadistic streaks. The man only grinned, even more, ushering them out the store and onto the street. Harry was totally perplexed about what had just happened, but still happy that whatever did happen, was over very quickly.

It was now nearing seven pm, the streets were filled with workers heading home, late afternoon shoppers visiting the myriads of bookstores and various shops. Harry grew tired with each step as they headed towards the Amba Hotel.

The hotel was majestic in its old-world architecture. Harry could see why it would appeal to wealthy pureblood wizards. Right now, though, he could care less about what the bloody hotel looked like outside, as long as a nice soft bed awaits inside.

Severus guided an increasingly tired child towards the front desk, which fortunately was vacant of guest and visitors.

“Good evening, I believe there are reservations for two under the name Lord Shafiq El-Amin?” Severus politely inquired.

The young lady behind the desk smiled in welcome as her fingers flew over the computer keyboard searching for their reservation.

“Welcome to the Amba Hotel. Yes, Lord Shafiq reserved the King Family Suite for you, Lord Prince. You will be checking out on Sunday the fourteenth. Everything has already been taken cared off. Here are your room keys, the bellhop will be delighted to show you to your room. Also, Lord Shafiq has requested to join you for dinner, later on, Sir.”

Severus nodded in thanks for the message, even as a string of curses and insults flowed through his mind. Of all the high-handed, domineering, stubborn…Severus gently pinched the bridge of his nose in the elevator, trying to calm down.

He had not seen the blasted man in ten years, yet, he was still as infuriating. If Severus was truly honest with himself, he would admit he missed this, having someone take control, and take care of
him for a change, but it would be a cold day in Hades before he would admit it, even in his own mind.

Severus shook his head to clear such thoughts from his head. Right now, getting Harry situated for the night took precedent. A firm discussion on what is considered acceptable behavior, a light dinner, a long overdue talk, a nice warm bath, and finally bedtime for his brat. Only then will he entertain the thoughts of Amir.

The bellhop opened their door for them, expertly naming and pointing out the amenities of the room, setting the thermostat to a comfortable level for them, and turning down both king size bed. He placed the room service menu where it can be easily found, before asking if there was anything else he could help them with.

Severus shook the young man’s hand, inconspicuously slipping him a generous tip. The bellhop was very well trained, thanked him without even glancing to see what he was given, deftly pocketing it. Wishing them a good night, he left them in peace.

Harry had never been in such an extravagant room before, inquisitiveness got the better of him as his tiredness vanished, happily poking into everything. Severus really had to temper this curiosity of his child before it became the death of him.

“Harry, please call Ms. Duibhshíth and let her know you are all right.”

Severus sat down, glad to be off his feet after the kind of day he had. He perused the room service menu, after making sure Harry did as he was told. If Severus was really smart, he would tuck Harry into bed then meet Amir at the Hotel restaurant to minimize any scolding he knew was coming his way.

“Settle our account, my arse! The man is just itching to tan my bottom.” Severus mutters to himself. Unfortunately, there was now a line forming for that honor. Starting with Lucius.

Severus listened with one ear to Harry’s happy conversation, as he regal Ms. Duibhshíth about the wonderful time he had, the food he ate and all about Tobby. Severus became alert when the light of Harry’s voice dimmed, and the phone was passed to him.

The conversation was short and to the point, and Severus thanked Merlin every day that Harry had Ms. Duibhshíth in his corner. Not only had the Dursley been over harassing the poor woman about the whereabouts of their missing servant/nephew, but the police had also been called, and her place searched.

There were also people dressed in funny costumes, poking around her home. At this point, Severus calmed her down and informed her that Harry will be staying with him until Sunday, by then things should hopefully calm down. Harry will just have to spend the rest of the summer indoors at Ms. Duibhshíth, to not let on he had returned.
Harry spent twenty minutes scowling at the walls, stuck in time out after a blistering scolding about his temper tantrum at the muggle store. As far as punishment goes, it was beyond boring, but it was vastly better than the thrashing he would have gotten from Uncle Vernon.

Harry was finally freed from his torment when his dinner arrived, a bowl of classic green pea and ham hock soup, served with freshly baked bread, and a tall glass of milk to round it off. His mouth watered as the delicious smell filling the room.

Harry placed the tray on the coffee table, before sitting on the floor to enjoy his dinner, this way Severus could remain comfortably seated on the couch. A safer subject was broached before wading into deeper darker waters.

“Da, will I have to have a marriage contract too?” he asked as he dipped a chunk of bread into the tasty soup, careful not to let any drip onto the table, floor, or himself on the way to his mouth.

Severus nodded, “It would be advisable. After the blood adoption, you would be the holder of two Lordships, both Potter and Prince. Other than the fact that you are herald as the savior of the wizarding world, you may find yourself pursued by those who are only interested in your money and fame.”

Severus watched the child eat, grateful he did not slurp his soup, nor spoke with his mouth full of soup and bread, and seem to have a good basis for table manners he could build on.

“As you are young and were not raised in the wizarding life, I will allow you some time to choose a potential husband or wife. This will give me the chance to have them thoroughly investigate. I would, however, not bandy it about, our situation is such that the Ministry or even the Headmaster, can step in and create their own marriage contract for you instead.”

“Ok, so I can give you names of possible people I would consider being married too, but don’t tell anyone, cause the choice would be taken out of our hands before the Goblin paperwork is final?”

“Correct.”

“So how did your own marriage contract come about? Did you get a choice of who to marry Da?”

Severus sighed, knowing this conversation had to happen eventually.

“Harry, I told you a little about being a Death Eater and following the Dark Lord while we were at Gringotts. You also know that He was the one that killed your parents. The full story is a lot more complicated and I need you to listen to everything before you react. Understood?”

Harry nodded quietly, most of the story he already knew from his previous life. Hopefully, he would learn more about his new father.

“My own father was very abusive, physically and mentally. He grew worse when I received my letter from Hogwarts. Fortunately, I could escape his wrath for nine and a half months out of the year. Unfortunately, my mother could not. During my primary school years, I would often escape to your mother’s house, your grandmother was a loving, kind woman. Your grandfather and grandmother had tried to obtain custody of me many times, but sadly all attempts failed.”

Harry used this break in the story to place his dinner tray on the table, before climbing onto Severus’s lap to snuggle for the rest of the tale.

“At Hogwarts, I was sorted into Slytherin, where I was a bit of an outcast. My clothes and school supplies were second hands in nature. I was shy and gangly, and apparently too smart for my own
good. I was bullied not only by a group of Gryffindors who were the same age as myself but some of the more aristocratic members of Slytherin house.”

That is until Lucius stepped in. The Prince of Slytherin, Prefect, and leader of the house of snakes. Lucius took a young boy under his wing and guided him in proper wizarding etiquette and protocols.

“I was invited home that Yule Season to meet his adopted father. Lucius biological father had passed some time ago, and Lord Slytherin took over guardianship raising him ever since. Back then, Harry, the Dark Lord was a very different person. He was strict yes, but kind, and loving and did not tolerate abuse of children.”

Severus gently carded his fingers through Harry’s hair, his thoughts on the man he once called father.

“The Dark Lord and Lucius found out about the abuse I endured at home. It became a standing order that I spent every holiday be it Yule or summer at their home. Lucius and I had to maintain high educational standards, and it was common for one or both of us to end up over his knees for correction of one misdeed or another. But overall, he praised our efforts freely, showered us with love and affection.”

“When at school, Lucius was the one that handled any discipline needed. Thanks to your father and his friends, I often found myself in a precarious position. I gave back as good as your father and friends gave. Which lead to my creation of some dubious spells, and Lucius was not above paddling my backside when I landed myself in hot water when I could simply have walked away to avoid confrontations.”

Harry tucked his face against his father’s chest hiding the smile at the thought of his Da getting paddled. Severus told of how his biological father eventually killed his mother, which led to Lord Voldemort gaining full custody with adoption.

“Lucius already had an active marriage contract with the Blacks thanks to Lord Malfoy. I believe that he knew something was not quite right with himself mentally. The one last sane act that my father did was to find someone who could take over for him and protect me. Hence Lord Amir Hazim Shafiq El-Amin, someone the Dark Lord had gone to school with and shared his values on about family.”

Severus remembered the dark times, watching his father descend deeper and deeper into madness, having Lucius and Amir trying to shield him from the worst of it. Amir took over all discipline, school, and wizarding matters. Severus may grouse about Amir’s high-handed ways, but he dearly loved the man and had missed his presence in his life the last ten years.

“It all came to a head when the prophecy came about. When I found out that Lily, and thus you were the foretold child, I begged my father to spare Lilly’s life, that Halloween night I was banned from leaving the mansion, yet I snuck out anyway hoping to get Lily to a safe place. When I saw the carnage…”

Harry reached up to gently caressed his father’s cheek, wiping away the tears that he was sure his father did not know was there.

“When I saw the carnage, I could not go back, you were still alive, it was then I tied myself to Albus and to Hogwarts in order to protect you.”

It was moments like this that Harry sometimes wished he was never born. This man would have had a happy life, married to a decent man, had he never existed.
“NO CHILD! NEVER, NEVER LET ME HEAR YOU UTTER SUCH NONSENSE EVER AGAIN!” Severus growled holding Harry tightly.

It was only then, he realized he had spoken those words out loud.

“Harry, you are more precious to me than you can imagine, I would spend eternity in hell, just to make sure you are able to smile in happiness. I would not change my past one bit, for it would mean never being able to have you here with me, my precious child.”

They both took some time to calm down, seeking affection from each other. Soon, Severus sent Harry off to bathe before bedtime, while he began the arduous process of sorting Harry’s clothing. His first task was to see if what Harry brought with him was serviceable or utter trash.

As Severus emptied the bag, a notebook fell out onto the bed. ‘Must be Harry’s primary school summer homework. Which reminds me, I should review the files that Bannot gave me.’ Setting aside the notebook, Severus continued on with his task.

Severus smiled, Harry was having too much fun enjoying the rain shower head. Shaking his head at the silliness of his child, he sat at the table to review Harry’s educational file. A frown soon appeared. Harry’s grades were dreadful, the contrast to the intelligent boy he spent the day with vast.

Severus reached for the notebook, to see if Harry’s work really did reflect the grades, only to be confronted with a horrendous shock. Anger welled within him, warring with what his rational mind was trying to tell him.

Memories of the elaborate torments the Marauder’s orchestrated welled up within his mind. Severus gripped the table hard. No! There has to be another explanation, there has to be.

Harry refreshed from the lovely shower, walked mindlessly into the room, unaware of the anguished his notebook had caused. The utter silence is what alerted Harry to something being wrong.

Taking in the scene, Harry noticed his notebook, the one he wrote all he could remember when he first came back, laying open on the table before his Dad. Emotions at war could be seen in his father’s face. After the emotional day, his Da was having a hard time dealing with this latest shock with occlumency.

Severus watched his supposed son intently, watched as his eyes fell on the open notebook. He saw the look changed in Harry’s eyes, gone was the childish delight, instead, a battle-worn deadness appeared, something much more suited to battle-scarred warriors, not a ten-year-old child.

Harry strode directly to his father, capturing his face in his hands and gazed deep into his eyes.

“Use legilimency, I will open my mind to everything so you will understand. It easier than me trying to explain. Please Da, you have to trust me.” Harry pleaded.
Severus took several deep calming breaths, clearing his mind. ‘I’ll be damn if I tear apart my son’s mind foolishly’

He gently pulled his son onto his lap and gently entered his mind, a mind Harry laid open, revealing every detail of his life before. Severus watch in horror, realizing just who the Dursleys were. Each school year added to the horrendous feeling of the kind of life this child had lived. He saw what became of his brother and his family, of his own Father, the Dark Lord, Tomas Marvolo Riddle. He saw to his sickening horror, the death of Albus at his own hands, and his own death by his Father’s.

He saw his child learning the terrible secret hidden from him, and yet faced with walking to his own death alone.

Severus withdrew gently, holding his child, trembling as all he had learned. Again, deep calming breaths were needed, and he went over everything in his own mind. There were blurred areas in the memories, primarily the earlier ones, some of them grayed out. There were no memories of them ever meeting before Harry’s arrival at Hogwarts.

Severus could only deduce that with each new decision Harry made, caused new memories to be written, overwriting his past ones. Before Severus could pursue that thought, a new one took precedent.

He needed vials, He needed to make copies of Harry’s memories before they were totally lost. Kissing his sweet child temple softly, he ordered him to get ready for bed while he stepped out for a moment.

Confused, Harry only nodded as he slipped from his father’s lap. Harry dressed in new clothes for the first time in this life. Soft cotton underpants, clean well-fitted pajamas, and thick socks, free of holes, made his smile even as he pondered if his Da was ever coming back.

He settled on the couch with Tobby, flicking through the channels on the TV, just because he could. Not long after, Severus hurried back into the room, setting a small wooden box on the coffee table. The box rattled as it thunked against the wood. Severus opened the lid to reveal rows and rows of glass vials.

“Harry. I need to make some copies of your memories. This is the only way we can prove that what you went through really happened. I can already see where some of your earlier memories are being overwritten as events happen differently this time around. Would this be ok? Would you allow me to do this?”

Harry smiled in relief bordering on tears, he really thought he would never see this man again, he nodded in agreement. Severus quickly walked Harry through what he needed him to do, while he extracted strand after strand of memory, storing each in its own vial.

Severus gently closed the lid as the last memory was stored away. His child worn out and almost dead to the world, Severus cast a strong protection and warding charm on the box before placing it on the table next to Harry’s files.

Standing before his son, half asleep on the couch, he couldn’t resist a gentle caress, brushing his thumb gently across the pale cheek. Severus gently picked up his son, carrying over to the nearest bed. Gently tucking the bedding around him, as Harry snuggled down into its warm depths.

Harry’s life, his life, so many lives in shamble. How did his boy survive without going mad? How did he?
Severus sat in the growing darkness, contemplating what could have been, what might have come to past.
The room darkened as Severus sat, his mind flooded with everything he had learned since he woke up and met with that blasted Deputy Headmistress. It was more than his shields could tolerate in such a brief time, his brain opted to simply shut down.

He stared unseeingly at the Gringotts files before him, his fingers idly caressing the lid of the box holding his son’s memories. Every time a disturbing thought intruded, his mind viciously squashed it.

Severus drifted in this vacuousness, dodging emotional thoughts of betrayals and abuse, and the sincere desire to visit a horse face giraffe and two gravity-defying moons that orbited her.

‘Aconite also known as wolfsbane, majorly used in the Wolfsbane potions, but also in the awakening potion. Ashwinder eggs used in love potions and as an antidote to ague.’ Severus' distressed mind offered adequate distraction by listing potions ingredients and their uses, gratefully it worked, his
brain could always count on any aspects of potions to occupy the man’s introspection.

Lord Amir Hazim Shafiq El-Amin strode through the lobby of his hotel. The Amba Hotel was perfect. Designed with every understated muggle comfort in mind for the wizarding elite, who prefer the Amba to the Leaky Cauldron. The well-trained staff greeted him in soft cultured tones as he made his way towards his private suite.

Unbeknownst to the muggles, or even the wizarding elite community, The Amba Hotel was the largest employer of squibs and muggleborns in the British Isles. Squibs abandoned in the Muggle world were taken in, and in some cases rescued from an abusive situation, and taken to the family’s private orphanage. There they were given the best education and encouraged to become more than they dared to dream.

Politicians, engineers, mathematicians, and scientist have all began from humble beginnings at their orphanage. Muggleborns, who could not make a place for themselves in the wizarding world, found a home with them, working as part of security details within The Amba, or in other career paths within the multitude of organizations owned by the Shafiq family.

As Amir waited for the elevator to take him to his husband-to-be, his thoughts wandered to their current project, creating a free private school for the children of Knockturn Alley. A school where the children will be given the same opportunity as squibs and muggleborns.

Those that aspire to greater heights would be sent to schools abroad, the rest, if so inclined will be fully trained in lucrative trades to better support their families or found employment within the family’s various business ventures.

The only payment asked in return is a willingness to work hard, but mostly the participants and their family’s silence. For decades, the Shafiq family worked from the shadows, taking in the lost, the forgotten, the unwanted, creating a vast network of loyal clan members. The school, like the orphanage, would not be known to the public and hidden away for the safety of the children.

Amir stepped off the elevator into a well-appointed corridor as a gentleman stepped out quietly from one of the few doors on the floor, closing the door behind him. The man greeted Amir in deference.

“Good evening Mr. Wavern, anything unusual to report?” Alden Wavern was the head of Amir’s entire security force. This floor of The Amba was solely for Amir’s use, housing his own suite, the guest family suite which Severus and his ward were staying in, the security suite where Wavern was stationed, and quarters for his personal servants and house elves.

“Here are the reports for today Lord Shafiq.” Wavern handed over the daily report from the various departments “I have begun the initial investigation into the matter you requested earlier, I should have the first stage completed by Monday, Sir. I have also begun the hiring process of the new detail. I should have a preliminary list of potential security personal for you by Wednesday.”

Lastly, Wavern handed over a blue folder, “This is the report on the feasibility of hiring werewolves as part of our organizations. With the proper accommodation made for the full moon, I believe they are an untapped pool of potential we can utilize.”

Amir nodded in agreement to the first assessment. “I will be spending some time with Lord Prince
this evening, I shall go over the reports later, we can meet for breakfast to go over anything that needs to be discussed. Have a good evening Wavern.”

Wavern bowed as he was dismissed, heading back to the security suite to make sure the evening shift reported in and knew their current assignments. Amir tucked the reports into his briefcase and headed to the guest suite, letting himself in.

Amir was surprised to see the room dark, with very little ambient light from the moon filtering in through the unshuttered windows. The boy, he could see, was asleep, tucked into one of the two king-sized beds. Severus sat at the small dining table, fingers absently caressing a wooden box while staring vacantly at the papers before him.

“Severus?” Amir called out softly as he walked around the room turning on the lamps and drawing the curtains, filling the room with warm welcoming light. Severus was lost in his own world, unaware of his betrothed's presence in the room.

Amir’s hands rested on Severus' tense shoulders, his long, elegant, yet strong fingers gently kneaded out the knots, soothing away the tension.

“Habib alby, what had you so lost in thought?” Amir’s fingers caressed the skin of Severus’ neck softly as they drifted higher to bury themselves in soft dark hair. His husband-to-be unconsciously leaned into his touch, seeking comfort.

Amir moved to sit in one of the more comfortable armchairs in the seating area, pulling Severus with him, and settling the man on his lap. Severus snuggled down, burrying himself in Amir’s embrace, resting his head on broad shoulders, breathing in deeply the scent of home and safety.

“Jasmine, Sesban” Amir called for two of his house elves softly, whom both answered his call quickly and quietly, popping into the room silently. “Sesban, we require dinner brought to the room, please. For starters, pan-fried scallops dressed with mango and lime salsa, also a tartine, warm golden cross goats cheese on puff pastry, with a crisp endive and walnut salad will do nicely. For the entre, linguine tossed with forest mushrooms and creamy garlic white wine sauce. Also, a bottle of Chapel Down Bacchus if you will, Sesban.” Sesban bowed with grace, popping out as quietly as he had entered with Sir’s dinner order.

“Jasmine, I am assigning you to Lord Prince, specifically his ward. Take care of his needs and keep him from harm.” Amir ordered quietly. Jasmine bowed, “As you wish Master.” She silently popped out to prepare for her new task.

It was the delicious smell filling the room, that drew Severus back to awareness, that and the loud grumbling protest of hunger from his stomach. Amir chuckled hearing Severus’ grouchy stomach complaining.

“Come habibi, you must eat. We have a very long discussion ahead of us, and an account we must
Amir's quiet voice startled Severus, who suddenly realized he was entombed in the man’s embrace.

With a soft, highly, embarrassed groan Severus peeked up at his very-soon-to-be, there is no way to avoid it, overbearing, demanding, high handed husband. It would be just like Amir to feed him than wallop his backside, ‘Blasted, infuriating man!’

Despite the litany of insults now coursing through his mind, Severus' self-preservation kicked into high gear. He knew he had to tread very carefully, and if luck and fate were on his side tonight, he may be able to scrape by with delaying his punishment, at least the physical one. He highly doubted he could avoid being grounded Shafiq style, or gaining an extensive list of new decrees.

Severus knew in his heart he deserved the punishment, but with all the things he had learned today, mentally it would shatter him, in ways he could not cope with tonight. Severus decided pliancy rather than obstinacy was the correct route to go tonight.

Amir saw the hesitant peek from his love and smiled inwards. Severus, as always was a complicated man, his behavior always difficult to predict. Amir wrapped his arms securely around his betrothed, as Sesban transfigured the coffee table, into a usable dining table from which Amir could eat and feed Severus from his lap.

He mentally prepared himself for his husband-to-be mouth to fire off insults and condemnation at the arrangement. He was pleasantly surprised and highly suspicious when Severus meekly allowed himself to be fed.

Severus for his part enjoyed being in his current position. The first bite of scallop with the wonderful burst of citrus and fruit and the kick of spicy heat pulled a moan of delight from him. He blushed at the noise he was making, but damn it was good. It had been ages since he enjoyed the finer things in life.

The warm goat cheese tartine was just as amazing, Severus snuggled deeper into Amir’s arms, taking advantage of the pampering before the yelling, and crying started. Incessant cautious peeks at Amir's face told him that Amir was not buying his meek behavior one bit.

He sighed, feeling his buttock clenched, a shiver of fear and arousal ran a path through him. He hated to admit it but he was getting hard just thinking about the amount of control Amir had over him.

Severus studied Amir’s hand, elegant long fingers with well-trimmed nails, the amber gold skin soft to the touch, the palm callous free. He knew from experience that this aristocratic hand that seemed to avoid the labors of arduous work, stung like hell when forcefully applied to a naughty bottom, unfortunately, mostly his misbehaving behind.

Amir whispered words of comfort and love to his wayward betrothed, ecstatic to have him once more in his arms. Even more overjoyed to have him pliant and eating without fuss. The meal passed pleasantly between sips of excellent wine and delicious food. Sesban cleared the table leaving the chilled bottle of wine and one glass.

“Amir? I know there are things we need to discuss and settle between us, and I know that there is no
excuse I can offer for my behavior, but Gods, Amir I have missed you all these years. I have been idiotic about so many things. Today, I learn some disturbing information, too much disturbing information.”

Amir took a sip of his wine, contemplating Severus words. Before answering, he wordlessly cast a one-way silencing ward around the sleeping child’s bed.

“Habib alby, before we discuss the matter between us, I truly want to know what had you so lost in thought when I first arrived.” Amir captured Severus’s chin, tilting his head to meet his gaze. He kissed the delectable lips presented to him, tasting the remnants of mushrooms and garlic and hints of the Chapel Down Bacchus. “Talk to me habibi, tell me everything, TRUTHFULLY,” Amir warned sternly.

The fear/arousal made its appearance once again, leaving Severus’s body tingling and hard. Taking a deep breath, he started from the very beginning, the night he ran away. He could feel Amir’s anger building with each detail. He admitted to meeting the Headmaster prior to that fateful Halloween night, to spying for the Light side, and to the unbreakable oaths he gave that fateful night.

“I want to know exactly what the oath states, Severus.” Amir snarled savagely from between tight lips.

Severus swallowed hard, hiding his face behind his hair. “I swore to protect Harry Potter to the end of my days and even if it should cost my own life. To keep him from harm, even if Lord Voldemort should arise again.” Severus whispered the words, each one pummeling the nails into his coffin known as stupidity.

Severus honestly expected to end up tossed over Amir’s lap at this point, he held his breath waiting, only releasing it when a terse command to continue came. Severus detailed the threats he received from Albus, his experiences with the Death Eaters Trials, his deal with Albus to work at Hogwarts as the Potion Master.

As Severus confessed, he noticed the same pad and fountain pen from earlier taking notes as he spoke. Merlin’s balls, this confirmed he was in serious trouble. He knew he would have to give memories to back up what he said as well, just in case he missed any details.

Severus shifted off Amir’s lap and headed to the folders spread out on the table. There he found and made copies of all the files Bannot gave him earlier that day. Severus slid back onto his love’s lap, snuggling back into Amir’s arms.

Handing over the folder, he began his explanation of how his day started, his visit to Little Whinging, Surrey and his discovery of Harry Potter’s living conditions. He described Mrs. Duibhshíth and her generous gift to the boy, and the inevitability of her not being there if his son were to be returned to the blasted Dursleys.

Severus outlined Senior Account Manager Bannot's plan for Harry and himself, from teaching him how to manage a Lordship, to the full blood adoption in a year’s time, to buying a home in Little Whinging, Surrey that Harry can escape too if he were sent back to those Muggle pigs.

Amir took some time to scan the documents Severus gave him. As he read the reports, he made note
of areas he would need to discuss with Severus tonight. The rest can be dealt with after Wavern has his way with the information.

“Severus, I do not see medical reports for the last nine years?” Severus nodded in agreement.

“Yes, apparently Gringotts could not find any medical files beyond when his parents were alive. I planned with Bannot to have the Goblin healer clan do a comprehensive medical exam. His appointment was scheduled for Wednesday. We are presuming it will be an all-day affair, in case any surprises show up.”

“I will be contacting Bannot to include a comprehensive exam for yourself as well.” Amir said as he quickly read Harry’s academic reports once more. Severus really wanted to protest, but honestly, he did not have a leg to stand on in this case, preferring to self-heal and self-medicate, rather than rely on idiotic, air-headed healers and medi-witches.

“Harry does not appear to be ready for Hogwarts, not based on these academic records.” Amir’s eyes sought out Severus.

“The child really is very intelligent, unfortunately, it was beaten into him that he must not do better in school than his cousin.”

Amir finally finished with Severus' inheritance test, mildly surprised, yet very happy to see that Harry Potter was not Severus’ biological son. As far as Amir was concerned, it did not matter overall, only on how long Severus would be able to sit after their discussion.

He set aside the reports, his gazed settled on Severus as he mentally prepared himself for the emotional shit storm brewing.

“Why Severus?”

“If you had asked me that question… when everything had newly happened, I am sure that I would have had a noble answer and could nobly justify my reasons. Looking back Amir, what I did was the height of foolishness, knowing what I know now… I had put myself on a dangerous path Amir, one that… if circumstances had been different……”

Severus wrapped his arms tightly around Amir. “The path I was on…Merlin’s beard! It would have led to very deadly consequences Amir. The only good consequence is that by accepting guardianship over Harry, I am now able to face the mistakes I have made and make a better future.”

Severus thought back to Harry’s memories and knew it was time to face realities and forged the path fate decreed him to be on, living a life with Amir, Harry, and his future children. Now, he just had to convince Amir that raising Harry was the right thing to do. As much as he loved Amir, he would never want to expose Harry to more abuse.

“Amir, I just wanted you to know that, other than running away, I never breached the marriage contract. I have never slept with anyone or even considered it, hopefully, that information will save me from certain doom. Just…please give us a chance? Give Harry a chance… I do not want to have to make a choice like this again. Other than that, I fully accept what will happen and I am sorrier than you can ever know!” Severus' words rushed out before he lost his nerve, fiddling with the buttons on Amir’s silk shirt waiting for the yelling and recrimination to begin.

Amir's fingers lightly caressed the pale cheek facing away from him, his thumb brushing away the errant tear that cascaded down his loves cheek. Sighing deeply, he pulled Severus’ head against his chest hugging him. He would need time to assimilate all he had learned, and even then, he was sure
“Tell me, other than what you and Bannot discussed, do you have any other tentative plans to consider?”

Severus took a moment to think things over before answering.

“For the coming week, finish Harry’s school shopping tomorrow, then there is his healer exam on Wednesday. On Monday, I was hoping to test him academically to see what areas I will need to concentrate on. At some point, I will also need to pay Lucius a visit to rectify things between us, I need his help to figure out what to do about Father.”

Amir held the glass of wine to his lips, for which he was grateful, wetting his parched throat.

“As for the near future, finding a long-term live-in-tutor to help with Harry’s Muggle education and finding a house for next summer is all that I can foresee right now. I will understand if you want to end the marriage contract, honestly, I had thought you did that long ago. I am not the same impressionable boy, I have grown slightly bitter over the years Amir. A bitter, sarcastic recluse.”

“Mmmm, nothing a very warm bottom cannot cure.” Answered Amir with a smile. Severus practically glowered at the man huffing in indignation.

“Amir! I am too old to be punished in such a way!” Severus really wanted to smack the smirk off Amir’s face, he settled for muttered curses and obscene insults calling Amir’s fathers ancestry into question repeated.

Amir smiled serenely, “There is my habibi, I knew this compliance could not last, and for the record, my mother would never stoop so low as to cohabitate with a mule, magical or otherwise! You know how I feel about the use of such language Severus. You are already on very thin ice, yet you still insist on shaving it thinner. You know my ways, they have not changed in the time of your disappearance.”

Severus rolled his dark chocolate eyes in feigned disgust. Amir set the empty wine glass on the side table. His hand gently rubbed Severus’s back as he pulled his thoughts together.

“Severus, I would like to continue the marriage contract, but as so much time has passed, I also believe I should take this coming year to once again court you habib alby. I want to get to know you once again, bitterness and all.” Amir chuckled lightly before continuing. “I would also like to spend the year getting to know my future son, as we will be married before we both adopt him next year. This will also give me time to assess and plan how to educate him on his heritage.”

“I have the items you requested my love, but it is late, and you have a long day tomorrow. I have a meeting with my head of security in the morning, and I believe shopping should take you all morning, let us meet for lunch here so we can sort out the trunks and bags. There are a few components I need to explain fully before use.”

Severus shook his head, Amir was still the dictatorial, overbearing, bossy, presumptuous man in existence.

“You still have all the personality of a Mongolian Deathworm, I suppose I shall have to marry you next summer, as much as it greatly pains me. And has it ever occurred to you that you cannot always control what I do with my time? What if I do not want to have lunch with you tomorrow, you bloody git? And another ….”

Severus’ self-preservation watched as the idiot dug himself into a very deep hole, compliance was
thrown out the window in place of a good vitriol rant building up steam.

Sesban and Jasmine popped silently into the room, Jasmine to check on her current charge, gently tucking the comforter around the sleeping boy. Sesban quietly tidied the place as Amir dragged a cursing Severus towards the bathroom. Both highly amused at the antics of their masters.

Severus was in fine form, unfortunately using Amir to vent all the anger he had garnered that day. To say Amir was in shock was putting it lightly if the flush that spread across his cheek was anything to judge by, some of Severus’ insults were beyond the pale.

Amir dragged his ranting miscreant towards the bathroom, barely getting a word edgewise to defend his honor.

“I do not have……SEVERUS…….I have more brains than a damn CYCLOPS…….My MOTHER never slept with a damn YETI…….ENOUGH!!!”

Sesban sagely shook his head at Jasmine, as their Master Severus got his mouth thoroughly washed out with bitter, acrimonious soap by a scolding Master Amir. The elves broke out into quiet laughter; the coming years will be very interesting indeed.
Chapter Summary

Severus and Harry finish shopping for Hogwarts. Really, a nice quiet day!

Chapter Notes

Glossary

Scottish Gaelic
Dadaidh: Dad, Daddy
gar-mhac: grandson

Egyptian Arabic/Arabic
Ahebbouka: I love you
Habibi: My love
Albi: My heart
Sa: Son
Ya ibni: My son
Jetey: Father
Arnoub: bunny
Habeebi: sweetheart

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Harry sat on the bed giggling as muttered insults and threats wound its way from the bathroom where his Da was furiously scrubbing his teeth and trying to wash out his mouth. Harry smiled to himself as he slid out of bed to get a start on his day.

The boy stood in the bathroom doorway, watching his dad, trying to bury the laughter that threatened to bubble out as Severus constantly threaten various parts of Lord Shafiq’s anatomy. The laughter broke out when a light tickling hex landed on Harry, causing him to fall to the floor gasping as he squealed with laughter.

Severus finally rinsed and wipe his face with the towel resting beside him on the counter. He really hated Amir this morning, the blasted soap left the most bitter taste, that no amount of brushing could rid him of the nasty aftertaste. With a wave of his wand, he canceled the tickling hex on his squealing child, pulling the laughing brat off the floor and into a hug.

“Good morning to you my giggling urchin. What has you in such a happy mood, Harry?” Severus smiled as he set Harry down and laid out the boy’s bath things. He eyed the toothbrush once more, but it was a hopeless cause trying to get rid of that confounded bitter soap taste out of his mouth.

“Just happy dadaidh!” Humming as he set about brushing his own teeth, he smiled as he saw all the things he brought from Ms. Duffy set out for his use.
“Dadaidh?”

Spitting out a mouthful of foam, “Oh, dadaidh means father in Scottish Gaelic. Ms. Duffy has been teaching me words, she calls me her gar-mhac, thinks that means grandson. Anyway, that’s why I call you Da, sort of shorten from dadaidh.” Turning back to the sink Harry finished his task before, he was looking forward to a nice hot bath and trying on his brand-new clothes.

Severus pinched the bridge of his nose, “Just what I need a multilingual enfant terrible!”

“A what? What’s a un…un-f-font terrible?” Harry asked as he ran the water for a bath, adding two Intergalactic mint bath bombs, the scent of peppermint rose on the steam filling the bathroom.

Severus idly picked a bottle labeled Dirty Springwash, answering absently as he read the ingredients on the bottle. “Enfant terrible is a French expression, traditionally referring to a child who is terrifyingly candid by saying embarrassing things to parents or others.” Severus noticed that most of the products were similarly themed, and appeared to have the common ingredient of mint. “It can also connote a successful ”genius“ who is very unorthodox, striking, and in some cases, offensive, or rebellious, or in your case a brat.”

“Dirty springwash, Dirty body spray, Dirty styling gel, Dirty toothy tabs, Dirty massage bar, Dirty solid perfume, seriously, are you really getting clean with products idiotically named?”

The only non-mint, dirt named product was a solid shampoo bar called Brazilliant and a conditioning one called Jungle. Granted everything smelled amazing, he wondered how Harry came across them.

Harry laughed as his dad went through each product reading the ingredients and scowling at the various names.

“You can blame Ms. Duffy, whenever I manage to make it to her place, she always has stuff like this waiting for me. She usually buys two different scents; this time one set was in mint and the other in citrus.”

Harry settled into the soothing peppermint waters, reaching for the Dirty springwash and the loofah, relaxed into the bath while washing.

“I know the stuff she buys for me is better than the stuff the Dursley gets for Dudley. Usually, all I get is a hosed down in the back garden with the garden hose, or if it’s winter and I’m lucky, a quick five-minute cold shower in their bathroom. That’s why I don’t complain about anything Ms. Duffy gets for me, she does not have too, you know?”

“Mmmm, thoroughly understandable, perhaps we should find a suitable thank you gift for her? Which reminds me, we still have your school supplies to get today, and His Grand High Handedness has decided the three of us will be having lunch together. He has also ordered us to bypass Eeylops Owl Emporium and the Magical Menagerie. I have no idea what that cursed man is thinking of, I swear.”

Severus rested the jar of Mr. Dandy’s Hair Candy on the counter, catching a glance of Harry’s crestfallen face. He reasoned that the little brat was hoping to acquire his owl once more. But in all honesty, he believed it would be better for Harry to have a less distinct animal that would not stand out like a snowy owl. On the other hand, there was no reason the child could not have an owl solely for personal extramural needs. Well, that was one birthday gift down.

“Also, His Majesty has also assigned two house elves to us. Jasmine and Sesban, Jasmine will be
seeing to your personal needs, here at the hotel and at school for the time being. Sesban has been assigned to me, but will also answer to you if you need help with anything.”

“House elves, why would he assign a house elf to me? I mean I’m nothing to him.” Harry wetted the shampoo bar and rubbed it into his wet hair.

Severus, intrigued with the idea of shampoo and conditioner in the form of a bar, studied Harry as he used each one, noting how well it lathers and how little waste there was in its use. He sat on the side of the tub, fingers stroking through his son’s hair, testing the consistency of the shampoo, ever the brewer.

“You do realize that, if all goes as plan, you will be my son, in name, magic, and blood. Which also means that when Amir finally drags me to the altar, he would be your father as well Harry. Trust me, even if you had not realized that fact, Amir surely has. I would not put it past the blasted man to have your future already planned as to what Magical University you will be attending.”

Severus poured clean water over his son’s tilted back head. Harry rolled his eyes, he knew it had more to do with his father’s testing the strands of his hair to see how well the shampoo bar worked, rather than helping his son finish his bath. It brought a smile to his face, some things never change. Severus took the conditioner bar from Harry’s hand and applied it to his son’s hair, taking mental notes as he did so.

“Da? What if he doesn’t like me? What if he doesn’t want me around after you get married?” Harry bit his bottom lip as other thoughts flooded his mind, ‘What if he is a disappointment to them both? What if they think he is a freak like the Dursley? What if he really is a worthless freak?’

Harry suddenly found his head tilted backward, soft warm lips kissing his forehead gently. He gazed up into warm chocolate eyes filled with love.

“Harry, I will always protect you, from Amir if need be, but Harry, I may have given you the wrong idea about Amir. He will never abuse you, Amir is very anti-abuse. Amir and I have an unusual relationship, I insult the man, and he glares me into submission, it is not much but it works. I promise you, Harry, you will not find a more loving, caring man in existence.”

Severus slather the conditioner into Harry’s hair making sure each strand was well covered, then gently massaging.

“Granted, that does not mean he will let you get away with murder, so prepare to face the consequences of your action. The worst you can expect is a well-spanked bottom and getting grounded until your one hundred. To be honest, you would have more to fear from me rather than Amir.”

Harry tilted his head back, smiling mischievously at his Da, as the man mock scowled at him while rinsing out his hair.

“Just give it a chance love, I promise you things will be all right.”

“Ok Dad, I promise to give him…. us…. everything a chance.”

“That is all I can ask of you, now finish your bath. We have a morning of shopping to finish before dining with his High Handedness.”

“Daaaddddd, I’m pretty sure you aren’t supposed to talk about him like that in front of me, it might lead me to have little respect for him. I mean what if I accidentally called him a high-handed git with the brains of a chizpurfle, the personality of a fwooper, and the lovability of a Cornish pixie, in all
honesty, it wouldn’t really be my fault, as it is what you are constantly saying about him, daddy.”

The brat had the audacity to gaze directly into his face with a look of pure innocence. Severus really, really ached to dunk the little urchin under the water.

“You know you are supposed to take my side, not Amir. I can already see that I may be outnumbered.”

Harry laughed and gave his dad a very wet hug, smiling up at him. Tweaking the imp’s nose, he gave Harry one last kiss on the forehead before pestering him to hurry up with his bath.

“Oh, I should warn you, Amir has an unlimited supply of very nasty bitter soap, that he stockpiled for individuals with, as he refers to it, bawdy mouths. Trust me it is not an experience you will enjoy.” Severus delivered his parting shot while exiting the bathroom with a devious smile.

Breakfast, Severus had to admit, was most enjoyable. Harry was filled with curiosity about their day, Severus’ life, the world around him, not only asking his Da questions but also sharing his own sometimes childish, sometimes surprisingly mature insights.

The elves popped in to serve a breakfast of porridge topped with diced fresh peaches, plates of freshly sliced cold tomatoes and cucumbers, warm slices of multigrain bread with little pots filled with honey, butter, and strawberry preserves. There was a pot of fragrant Darjeeling green tea and pitchers of milk and orange juice.

Harry realized his Da was not kidding about being healthy. He watched as his Da spooned out a small bowl of porridge for him and fixed a small plate with cucumbers and tomatoes. The amount was just enough for him to eat and not upset his still stunted stomach.

Harry tasted his porridge before adding a small dollop of honey, finally digging in to enjoy his first morning with his dad. Jasmine poured a glass of cold milk for her ward, smiling brightly as her new little one said thanks to her. Once making sure both their wards were content, both Sesban and Jasmine set about tidying and cleaning the room.

Jasmine popped out to make a snack packet for Harry to take with, in case he got hungry during his shopping trip. Bottles of icy water, along with chilled julienned rainbow carrots, multicolored bell peppers, jicama, thin asparagus, English cucumber, green beans and sugar snap pea pods, sprigs of green onions, and whole cherry tomatoes with green goddess dressing for dipping should tide both Master Severus and Master Harry until lunch time.
During the rest of breakfast, Severus outline their morning of shopping. Keeping in mind what he read in his son’s notebook, wands were the first order of business as they would take the longest, a visit to Ollivanders and the Spiny Serpent were in order. Moribund’s for the more obscure and darker books on Harry’s list. Knowledge was knowledge, even if it worked out that his father can be cured, it was best to prepare.

They would tackle Knockturn first before continuing their shopping in Diagon Alley. After Ollivander's would be Flourish and Blotts, followed by Slug & Jiggers Apothecary. Potage’s Cauldron Shop and Wiseacre’s Wizarding Equipment for his cauldron, scales, vials, and telescope.

If there was enough remaining time, Severus thought he may be able to place the school’s order at the Apothecary for the coming year. Uniforms could wait until just before school started, this should give him time to get some much-needed weight on his child.
Their plan of attack set, the wizards prepared to head out. Wallet pouch on hand, backpack with chilled bottles of water and snacks packed, and one hyperactive child in tow, his highly recognizable scar glamoured, Severus was ready to get this morning over and done with.

Severus was astonished to meet a slightly more matured Harry on this shopping trip. His curiosity reigned in, a more focused Harry help to speed the shopping along. First stop was Knockturn Alley and the Spiny Serpent for Harry’s untraceable wand. There was very little foot traffic this early in the morning, as they came to a small wooden door with a big black knocker. A large display window at the storefront was filled with huge ornamental vases that obstructed further view into the store proper.

Severus gripped the knocker transfusing a minute amount of magic as he knocked once. Standing back from the door, they waited a few minutes before the door opened to the most unusual person Harry had ever seen.

The man stood at the most, five feet two, dressed in a dapper tailored pin stripped dark gray suit with a baby blue silk shirt and matching gray tie. Pale olive complexion, graced with dark retreating hair slicked backward was the best of his features. Small narrow eyes gazing in opposite direction and small thin lips were hidden beneath shockingly bushy black eyebrows and mustache. Harry fought valiantly to bury his laughter, ‘He has more hair on his face than he has on his head!’

The strange little man smiled welcomingly at Severus, moving aside to allow them to pass inward. As long as Harry lived, magic will always astound him, the inside of the shop was far beyond what one would have thought seeing from the outside.

The interior was intimate, with cream walls illuminated with soft recessed lighting. The matching warm honey-colored wood baseboard and cove molding wound around the room, melding into the darker honey colored ceiling. A floating wall, painted in rich caramel, stood centered behind an elegant glass display counter, two shadowy entrance to a back room camouflaged on either end.

The odd little man guided them towards the counter and two opulent counter height chairs, this time covered with caramel and gold scrollwork brocade with matching dark caramel wood accent. Honestly, who would have thought a place like this existed in Knockturn Alley.

Harry did not sit down right away, instead, waiting until introduction was over and he was invited to was a very polite thing to do, he remembered that much about social convention. So, he waited quietly until his father made the introductions. “Master Frederick Basil Pennywhistle allow me to introduce to you Mr. Harrison Jamieson Potter, who will be soon be attending Hogwarts. He has express interest in a custom wand that would allow him to begin practicing before school starts.”

Harry stood tall, made eye contact, and gave a small smile as he held his hand out to be shaken, “Good morning Master Pennywhistle. It is a pleasure to meet you, and thank you for taking the time to help me today.”

Harry was quite shocked as the man spoke, ‘Godric’s knobby knees! How the hell that itty bitty man produced such a voice!’ A rich and profound mellow bass exuded from the hair covered lips of Master Pennywhistle. Truly a man of contradictions.

Following his Da’s lead, he finally took a seat after Master Pennywhistle gestured towards the chairs as he stepped behind the display counter.

“First let me explain how my store is set up, then we can proceed to create your wand. Before you in the display case are samples of wand wood types, magical cores, and focus gems.” The diminutive
man gestured to the floating wall behind him with three lighted recessed display cases. “Behind me, each display case holds samples of wand shaft designs, handle designs, and wand finishing.”

Harry followed the odd little man’s every movement as the man turn back to the counter display case to collect a black velvet lined tray filled with small wood block samples.

“At the least Mr. Potter, all wands must contain a minimum of one wood type and one core type. However,” Pennywhistle carefully laid out the small wooden tiles into separate groups, “… they can have a dual-core or a blended core in their wand. Although,” he paused in speaking while organizing the groups into neat lines before he continued, “it is ill-advised to have more than two cores as that can cause fatal backfires.”

“While it is not possible to blend the wood of the wand, you may Mr. Potter, have a wand handle of one type of wood and a Body or wand shaft of another. Normally in such cases, the handle stands for The Heart of the witch or wizard. The body of the wand generally represents the witch or wizard’s outward appearance.”

Master Pennyworth took a step back from the counter and made an elegant gesture towards Harry. The man’s cultured voice, elegant mannerism, and odd looks were in such contrast, Harry filed away all his observation to think about later.

“Harrison, you need to pass you dominant hand above the woods. One or more may resonate with your magic. Do not choose on the first pass, continue until you have assessed each one, then on your second pass select which one or ones pull at you the strongest. The same procedure will be done for the cores and if needed, the focus stones.” His Da explained softly to him.

Harry held his hand over the first group of wood samples, he felt the various pulls from the wood, some were very weak, others push against his magic in an irritating way. One pulled strongly at his magic. In the second group, again, some pulled weakly at his magic most repelled him. In the third and last group, the first sample resounded with his magic sending shivers throughout his body.

Harry pulled his hand back, taking a deep breath and centering his mind. This was so vastly different than what had and will happen at Ollivander’s. He wondered if he would get his old holly wand back this time around.

“This time Harrison, once you feel the strongest resonance or pull to your magic, pick out that sample and set it aside please.” His father instructed. Once again, Harry held his hand over the first group of samples. He picked out a light brown wooden tile with a spiral grain, the texture was coarse and uneven beneath his fingers. A warm, playful sensation swirled throughout him as he set the block aside, before continuing his search.

The second choice was the one that pulled strongly at his magic before. He picked up a black wooden tile, with no grain that he could see, the texture was smooth beneath his fingertips. Harry felt as if he had found a lifelong friend.

Pennyworth replaced the wood tiles back onto the tray, before retrieving the second tray of core samples. The items laid out were not as extensive as the first tray. The wand master placed Harry’s wooden tile selections onto a small glass serving tray at the end of the counter.

Harry repeated the same motions as before, moving his hand over the samples, taking note of how each one felt. There were feathers and scales of many textures, sizes, and patterns. There were also coils of various colored dragon heartstrings and various pieces of horns and antlers.

On the second pass, Harry pulled out a semi-plume feather, the rachis was solid black, the barbs at
the tip were dark red, while the fluffy barbules lower down were a soft cream color mixed with dark black. The second item was an illuminant white tail feather that was absolutely beautiful. The power Harry felt from both feathers was amazing. Pennywhistle placed the newest selection next to the wood tiles before replacing the core tray and retrieving the display tray with the focus stone.

Severus watched as Harry flew through this process, choosing agate and tourmaline, Pennywhistle only showed the basic samples of each type of gem. One of the master’s greatest skill was knowing which exact variation was needed for each individual wand.

The final and more mundane selections were made after a round of questions from Pennywhistle. Satisfied, the shopkeeper turned his attention to Severus.

“Basic or comprehensive package Master Snape?” Pennywhistle inquired casually.

“Actually, we will be purchasing the complete package. Please address delivery to me, Master Pennywhistle, preferably by an elf.” Pennywhistle nodded and he made further notes on the order.

“Mr. Potter, one final question, do you perhaps prescribe to any alternate Muggle fashion subculture such as grunge, goth, street, steampunk, punk, or hipster? It would make adding and designing certain elements of your wand and accessory much easier.”

Harry look towards his dad in question before answering. “Sorry, I don’t really have a set style, but I do think the gothic stuff might be interesting.” Pennywhistle nodded as he added it to his notes.

“Master Snape, your order will be delivered on Friday nineteenth by five pm by my shop elf Monrey. Usual account particulars Sir?” With a nod in agreement from Severus, Master Frederick Basil Pennywhistle escorted his clients to the exit, bidding them a pleasant day.

Their next stop was right next door at Moribunds. As with the Spiny Serpent, the exterior was in keeping with the rest of Knocturn Alley, dark, grimy, and unkempt. Severus held the knocker infusing it with a small charge of his magic before knocking once.

This time the door opened by itself, which Severus pushed open further, allowing Harry to enter first. The young man walked into an amazing room of amber light, leather, and wood. At first glance, it appeared to be an elegant gentleman’s study. The air was cool and smelled of aged books, wood, and leather.

The ceiling and walls were painted a copper brown where it could be seen from the not quite floor to ceiling mahogany cabinets and packed bookshelves. The flooring matched the cabinetry, polished mahogany inlaid randomly drawing you further into the room.

In the middle stood an intimidating mahogany desk, bare but for a triad of antique candlesticks with lit amber smokeless candles. An imposing antiqued tufted red leather chair sat behind the desk. Before the desk sat two matching red leather captains chair. An Aubusson rug, with a gold border of acanthus leaves, Venetian red ribbon, and a circular gold center medallion lay beneath the visitors’ chairs and the desk.

Behind the desk arrangement stood glass and wood cabinets, of which the doors were clearly locked.
The rest of the room housed shelves upon shelves filled with leather-bound books. Some of the cabinets had lower storage areas with glass and wood doors from which rolls of scrolls peeked out.

There was no overhead lighting, instead, the room glowed in low soft amber, creating an interesting play of light and shadow throughout the store. From one such shadowed area step a stunning, yet commanding woman dressed in a beautiful off shoulder African pagnes of black and gold.

Da stood at five feet eleven inches, yet, as this amazing woman hugged him, she towered over him by four inches at least. Da smiles returning the hug, before turning to introduce Harry to this monumental woman.

“Lady Alexa Euphemia Stratingfordshire-Moribund my I introduce to you my ward Harrison Jamieson Potter.”

Harry stared in awe at the majestic face that was heart shaped with a wide unlined forehead and lightly pointed chin, and high cheekbones. Hooded sloe eyes peered back at him, enchanted slanted dark plum he could get lost in so easily. A slightly convex nose guided you to her sensuous bowed lips. Her salt and pepper hair framed her face in long afro ringlets adding another three inches to her height.

The stunned boy could not help but let his gaze wander along the lines of her body, even as his father masked his smirk of amusement. Lady Stratingfordshire-Moribund was graced with broad muscular shoulders that tapered down to narrow hips and very, very long beautifully proportionate muscular legs. Her flawless glowing mocha skin belied the age and wisdom that shone from her eyes.

It was the merriment in her eyes and the smug look of amusement that broke Harry out of his captivation. Completely decomposed, his hand gently rubbing the back of his flush neck as he offered a flustered smile as he apologized.

“My apologies Lady Stratingfordshire-Moribund, you are truly captivating. Please excuse my lack of manners, it is a great pleasure to meet you.”

Severus wrapped his arms around the embarrassed boy, kissing the top of his head softly. “Lady Stratingfordshire-Moribund is a direct descendant of Seh-Dong-Hong-Beh, a distinguished leader of the N'Nonmiton, most commonly known as Dahomey Amazons. Lady Stratingfordshire-Moribund is the only recognizes Magical N'Nonmiton in the wizarding world, Harrison.”

“Severus, you and I have known each other for far too long to be so formal. Harrison please, you can address me as Lady Alexa or we will be here all day.” Her laughter was dark and sultry, her voice carried a hint of cultured French.

Severus smiled fondly at Alexa, his old mentor in martial and magical arts, She was his unofficial Defense Master, Severus has yet to find a battle master that could eclipse Lady Alexa’s.

“Sorry for being so stupid but what or who are the N'Nonmiton, Da?

It was Lady Alex who answered as she guided them towards the middle of the room towards the
visitor’s chairs. As she sat behind the desk she began her brief discourse on the history of her people.

“N’Nonmiton, first of all, means our mothers, Harrison. My people originate from Kingdom of Dahomey, which today, is the present-day Republic of Benin. Dahomey was a warring nation who actively participated in the slave trade, turning it to their advantage as they captured and sold their enemies. Yes, Harrison, my people were deeply apart of the slave trade, but not the Amazons.”

"The Dahomey Amazons are the only documented frontline female troops in modern warfare history. We were trained to be strong, fast, ruthless and able to withstand great pain. Our main job was protecting our King on the bloodiest of battlefields, emerging as an elite fighting force, we were the last warriors standing in battle unless expressly ordered to retreat by our King. We Dahomey women fought to the death—defeat was never an option.”

For a brief moment, Harry really wanted Vernon to meet Lady Alexa, he wondered if the biased man would dare to spout the rhetoric Harry has heard countless times.

“IT may seem like a horrible life to some, but despite the brutal training we endured as the King’s soldiers, for many women, it was a chance to escape lives of forced domestic drudgery. Serving in the N’Nonmiton offered women the opportunity to rise to positions of command and influence, taking prominent roles in the Grand Council, debating the policy of the kingdom. We could even become wealthy as single independent women.”

Severus knew that Alexa was just not brawn and beauty. Alexa’s mind was incredible, graduating at the top of her class from the Magical University of Alexandria. Everyone was entranced by her beauty, blindsided by her brutality, and left numb and speechless by her intellect.

“Wow, your just so amazing Lady Alexa!” Severus chuckled at the outright admiration in his son’s voice. Unfortunately, Severus had no grounds to comment on as his own experience first meeting Alexa was on par with Harry’s.

Alexa smiled softly, Harrison reminded her so much of Severus, all the signs were there hidden behind the shy smile and cheerful demeanor. The failure to thrive—knowing Severus, they were collecting school supplies, which should put Harry at ten soon to be eleven years of age. At the most, the child should be about four feet eight inches and weigh nearly ninety pounds.

She guessed that Harrison had a moderate case of Marasmus caused by an inadequate intake of protein and energy and plain old starvation that his magic was valiantly fighting against. It was still very early in the morning, barely nine am, yet the child was already flagging as he sat there.

The way Harrison walked showed signs of favoring damaged body parts that were not healed correctly. He also never came too close, always standing outside of striking distance. Even sitting in the chair gave away clues. The way he sat on the edge always watchful, not sinking into the chair without care.

The slight signs of regression whenever Severus touch or hold him, a glaring contrast to the aged look in the boy’s eyes, coupled with the negative comments about himself confirmed her diagnosis. Alexa knew the child was now in the best possible care with her former student. Turning her attention back to Severus, she got down to business.

“So how may I help the both of you today?”

“Alexa, Harrison was raised in the muggle world, he knows very little about our world, or how to maneuver within it. I also plan to fully educate him on the theory of magic in all its forms. He has a long road ahead of him and I wish to prepare him as much as possible.”
Alexa opened a drawer to her right and pulled out three pairs of white cotton gloves, tossing two pairs to Severus while pulling on her set.

“Ok, let start with books on *Wizarding Victorian Etiquette - The Basic Rules of Etiquette* and *Wizarding Victorian Children’s Etiquette*. Fortunately or unfortunately, Harrison, depending on how one looks at it, the British wizarding social structure is still based on old Victorian ideals.”

Alexa placed two books flat on the desk, one bound in leather, the other bound in a bright blue cloth, while retrieving a simple folding book stand. The first book placed on the stand for their perusal was thick, bound in leather and embossed with gold. The book sat in the V of the book stand, allowing room to read but preventing the aged book from laying too far open.

Severus gently paged thru the book, noting the condition. The book was well preserved, not really antiquated, it was perfect for teaching and to reference from. Setting the book carefully aside, he placed the second book on the stand. *Wizarding Victorian Children’s Etiquette* was bound in bright blue cloth, with gold and block prints of well-mannered children at play on the cover. The book was slim, the pages were filled with colorful illustrations, more in keeping with the attention span of younger minds. With the right protection spell in place, this would be a good book for Harry to keep with him to reference from as he learns.

Alexa followed up with two more books. “I doubt you would need this one quite as yet Severus, but better to have it on hand.”

Both books were bound and decorated the same as *Wizarding Victorian Etiquette - The Basic Rules of Etiquette*. Harry wondered if they were from a set. *Manners and Rules of Good Wizarding Society* and *Manners for the Victorian Wizard* were placed gently on the desktop. Severus saw they were indeed a matching set, the conditions were excellent. He placed the books with the others.

“There are excellent Alexa and exactly what we need. I also have a small list of books we require to round out Harrison's education. *Magick Moste Evile, Secrets of the Darkest Art, The Rise and Fall of the Dark Arts* to start. *The Decline of Pagan Magic and A Study into the Possibility of Reversing the Actual and Metaphysical Effects of Natural Death, with Particular Regard to the Reintegration of Essence and Matter* would also be helpful. And if possible, a set of law books.”

Severus wrote out the list of the books he required: *Legislative Guide to the Proper Use of Magic, Magical Misdemeanors in the Modern Law, Magical Moral Perspective, and Unforgivable Curses and their Legal Implications*.

Alexa studied the list, walking along the shelves, double checking the titles. She carefully collecting four books one at a time and one scroll, despoiling them gently before Severus.

“The *Rise and Fall of the Dark Arts, The Decline of Pagan Magic, Legislative Guide to the Proper Use of Magic* self-updating addition, and *Magical Moral Perspective* I have in stock which are these four books. The scroll is *A Study into the Possibility of Reversing the Actual and Metaphysical Effects of Natural Death, with Particular Regard to the Reintegration of Essence and Matter* would also be helpful. And if possible, a set of law books.”

The rest I will have to obtain from our vaults.” Alexa pulled out an order form and wrote the details of the missing books. “I can have them delivered on Thursday the eighteenth at the close of the business day by my shop elf Cilla. Shall I include any study guides and treatise as well?”

“That would be wonderful, thank you, Alexa.”

“Anything for you Severus, well within reason that is.” Alexa laughed soft. “I shall send the account particulars with your final delivery.” Alex wrapped each book in acid-free paper and carefully
placed each in carefully in a drawer. When all the other books are retrieved from the vault, the entire order will be sent together.

“Alexa I forget to inquire, how is your baby sister Nawi?”

Alexa gave him a sad smile. “Nawi passed away in nineteen seventy-nine, my dear. It really saddens me, I have tried for so long to convince her to come live with me, but she refused to leave Africa. It was a miracle she made it to one hundred, at least she lived the life she wanted, terrorizing the men in the nearby villages.”

Severus shooked his head, “Your sister was always irascible.” Alexa kissed Harry’s cheek in farewell, flustering the poor boy, laughing softly, she gave Severus his kiss and a warm hug, whispering softly into his ear, “Take very good care of him, Severus.” With a nod, Severus gathered his poor blushing son and entered the stuffy mid-morning air.

Their first stop in the Diagon Alley was a small park that catered to shoppers who needed to rest their weary feet after gallivanting from store to store. Taking Harry’s Muggle knapsack, Severus unpacked the chilled offerings, handing Harry a bottle of cold water and the plastic container of fresh veggies and dip. Taking out a matching set for himself, they both enjoyed the snack while discussing where they were heading next.

“Let’s tackle Ollivanders next, as that may take a long time as well. Once we get back to the hotel and have had lunch, I would like you to take a nap my little snakeling.”

Harry’s face scrunched up at the word nap but didn’t voice his opinion, instead, he chose to savor the taste of the green goddess dressing as he dipped a juicy cherry tomato, eating it whole, giggling as the juice ran down his chin.

Severus gave a playful put-upon sigh, shaking out a napkin to wipe the urchin’s chin, he decided to tease his little brat.

“If only Alexa could see you now.” Harry face instantly turned red, the tomato deciding to take a side trip down a different path than towards his stomach.

Severus chuckled as he patted his coughing son’s back. “DAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAD!” whined Harry as he glared at his father.

“Hey Da, I have a question….if Lady Alexa had a sister, how come she was the only recognized Magical Dahomey?” This time Harry chose a stick of asparagus to nibble one while waiting for his dad’s answer.

“Well, the reason for that is Alexa’s baby sister Nawi was born a squib, but that never stopped Nawi from being one of the fiercest N’Nonmiton. Nawi is considered to be the last of the Dahomey Amazon. In all actuality, the muggle world does not know about Lady Stratingfordshire-Moribund, actuality, even the Wizarding world knows very little about her. She tends to be a very private person, taking on defense apprentices whom she felt would appreciate, and survive her training.”

Severus muttered the last part of that explanation, remember just how harsh and brutal that blasted
woman could be. Banishing their trash, the duo set off in the bright morning light to finish their shopping.

Harry’s feet hurt. His blisters had blisters, and he swore he had blisters in places that should not have blisters. Wearing new and fitted clothes was awesome until you had to break them in with a bout of shopping in Diagon Alley.

His father was relentless when on task. At Ollivander’s, his Da glared Ollivander into forgetting the theatrics, saving them some much needed time. If Harry was a betting man, he would have lost the shirt off his back, thinking he would have acquired a different wand. Now Harry wondering is it was circumstances or happenstances, fate or the meddling of a certain someone. His Da confiscated his wand until his birthday, muttering under his breath about avoiding temptations.

At Flourish and Blotts, not only did they pick out the extra books Harry researched, but Severus added a few more he thought was needed. Quill handwriting practice books, supplementary books on wand movements, elementary wizarding history books, his dad also found an elementary guide to knife techniques used in potions, as well as a beginner’s manual of actions and reactions of magical herbs and potions ingredients.

Slug & Jiggers Apothecary was interesting, watching his Da skip over the pre-made potion kits, choosing instead to seek out the freshest and best ingredients. He took his time teaching Harry what to look for, showing him how to test for potency. Severus carefully explained about always buying more than what was needed, as brewing sometimes have a tendency of going sideways when you least expect it.

“Always plan ahead, you may find that you will have to redo a potion or wish to practice a recipe again to get better results.”

Their next stop was the Apothecary wholesaler. Severus already had a list prepared, and being a valued client, the shopkeeper would only select the best ingredient to deliver to Hogwarts before school started.

The rest of the shopping was quickly handled after that. Sesban and Jasmine took turns popping in to collect their shopping, preventing them from having to lug them around. Now, standing in the elevator heading to their floor, Harry leaned against his dad, eyes closed, his body worn out from the outing. He hated to admit his dad was right, a nap does sound really good right now.

Father and son entered their hotel suite to find Amir, relaxing in the sitting area, reading some paperwork. Around him were various items, but what caught Harry’s attention was the bird stand were sat a beautiful peregrine falcon. Harry carefully edged his way toward the bird, reaching out a
tentative hand to gently stroke the beautiful feathers. The bird of prey preened, loving the attention, playfully nipping at Harry’s fingers.

“Good afternoon Lord Shafiq.” Harry greeted quietly as he petted the bird.

Amir smiled at the shy boy. “Good afternoon Harrison, did you enjoy your shopping trip with your father?”

Harry nodded happily, “Yeah, it was fun but very tiring. I’m glad to be back here though.”

Severus crossed the room to join Amir on the couch while this exchange was going on. Stretched out on Amir’s lap was an exquisite smokey black cat with gorgeous golden eyes, the cat was one of the largest Severus had ever seen.

Raising its head, the sultry animal decided to make acquaintance with Severus lap, curling up with a lazy purr of contentment. Rolling his eyes at the cursed animal’s audacity, Severus gently stroked the soft fur, observing that the cat wasn’t solid black but had even darker stripes against a smokey black background.

“Shall we order lunch then? While we wait, I can explain a few things about what I bought today.”

Amir reached out to capture Severus’s hand, bringing it to his lips in a gentle kiss.

“Ahebbouka, Severus. Did you have a good day, Habibi? You look tired, perhaps a nap after lunch would do you both some good.”

The past day’s events were finally catching up to Severus, and it had only been one day, he still had a week to get through. For once, Amir did make sense, a nap would be lovely after lunch. He laid his head against Amir’s shoulder, sighing in contentment, the cat’s purring soothing him at the same time.

“That sounds lovely, albi. Have you decided what we are having for lunch?” Severus asked sighing contently. Amir gestured for Harry to join them on the couch. The child was hesitant at first, then gathering up his courage, sat gingery besides Amir, who pulled him in to cuddle against his side, gently ruffling the lad’s hair.

“I do not bite sa, no matter what your cantankerous father may say. Also ya ibni, you do not have to refer to me as Lord Shafiq, I would be very happy if one day you were comfortable enough to address me as jetey, Harry.”

Harry blushed, testing out how it felt to say the word, “Thank you, jetey.”

Amir smiles softly, “Now I thought the poached salmon and sole fillets, served with crisp baby vegetables and an aromatic saffron broth would be perfect for lunch. I shall order a half portion for you, Harry. I believe that would be a perfect light lunch with some warm bread and olive oil for dipping.”

Sesban popped silently into the room to take their lunch order. Amir rounded out the order with a melon fruit salad and a nice tall glass of cold milk for Harry.

“Now while we wait for lunch to arrive, I believe there is time for a little show and tell. First, are the trunks. This model is equipped with a gentleman’s wardrobe for easy organization of your clothing and accessories. There is also an easy access general storage area for larger items. I have also installed a combination library and study. It is also equipped with a snack bar and a half bath. This trunk will remain in your father’s quarters.”
The trunk was beautiful in its simplicity, dark wood and rich leather accented with brass studs. His initials elegantly written centered on the lid. There was three coat of arms gracing the front panels of the trunk.

"Those are the Potter, Prince, and Shafiq coat of arms, my child. You must never forget your heritage, no matter what the future may hold or where it takes you."

“Yes, jetey!” Harry nodded happily. This was so much better than his old trunk, and this was just his personal trunk. Severus watched all this silently, allowing the two to bond without his interference.

“Now, this is your school trunk. I have installed five separate areas. This trunk will be blood warded and will need your magical signature to also open. I have equipped it to accept three separate blood sample and magical signatures, namely your father's, mine's, and of course your's.”

“Oh, that is so cool!” Harry began to warm up with excitement.

“In this model, I have installed a basic wardrobe, for your uniforms and regular clothing. A small library for your school books along with a small study, equipped with a full bathroom. For times when the common room is too noisy or you can not make it to the school library.”

“Perfect, this way there will be no reason or excuse for you to be out after curfew, Harry.” Severus pipped in suddenly, earning a glare from his son.

“I should hope you do not find many reasons to be out after curfew, little one,” Amir added sternly.

“No, Jetey, Dadaidh. I promise to behave at school.” Harry squeaked out.

“Now to continue, There is a compartment for your Potion ingredients and accessory. A smaller one for storing your stationery supplies. And last, a larger compartment for miscellaneous storage such as a broom if you should have one eventually.”

“This trunk is also equipped with a featherlight rune, an auto shrink and unshrink rune and a levitation rune, just to be on the safe side. I suggest not taking these trunks back to the muggle world just yet. We will collect you on the thirty-first and make sure everything is set and work the way they should be.”

Jasmine popped in right then, absconding with the trunks to pack away the items already purchased.

“Now for your school bag.” Amir produced a very handsome tooled leather shoulder bag in black. The clasp was the Hogwarts coat of arms. Hogwarts coat of arms was also embossed on the front panel of the bag.

“This bag had five compartments, one for your daily school books, a separate section for your finished homework so they can stay nice and neat. There is a special compartment for your potion ingredients and accessories, this way they will not get contaminated and can be kept safe. There is a section for storing your parchment, inks, and quills. And last, a chilled and preserving section for snacks. The bag is imbued with a featherlight charm, it also utilizes wizarding space, so everything stays nice and neat. The embossing on the bag will change to the crest for your house. There is also blood warding and magical signature protection on the bag.”

Harry held the bag lovingly in his arms. He was so overwhelmed with so many wonderful things. No one had cared enough to give him such fine things. He was so used to poorly maintained hand-me-downs and cast off. Harry himself only bought the basics when he shopped for himself.

“Thank you, Jetey, Dadaidh. Everything is so wonderful.”
“You deserve the best Harrison, and I will make sure that is what you will receive. Now, let me introduce you to Horus, the spoiled falcon you were admiring earlier. He is now yours. He will make sure no one interferes with your mail and will protect you with his life if need be. I plan to teach you the fine art of falconry, hopefully, it will be something we both can enjoy together.”

Reaching over to drag the boneless cat from his lover's lap. “This is Anpu, he is a Chausie, one of the most intelligent and loyal cats in Egypt. I would love for you to have him, Anpu and Horus will protect you while you are away from home.

Anpu squirmed his way out of Amir’s grasp and sauntered over to Harry’s lap to sit and stare deep into the child’s eyes. A loud rumbling was heard as Anpu rubbed his body against Harry’s chest before he suddenly bit into the meat of Harry’s hand. The air sizzled with magic as the familiar bond settled into place.

Harry body filled with warmth and happiness, he suddenly realized he was feeling Anpu’s emotions, the cat was purring loudly, gently butting his head against Harry’s hand demanding to be scratched. It wasn’t that Anpu spoke directly to Harry, but he could understand Anpu on an instinctive level.

“Thank you jetey, I will take really good care of them, I promise!” Just then the elves popped in with their lunch. Harry’s stomach rumbled, the food smelled incredible. Soon everyone was settled in around the dining table with his Da portioning out a small amount of green salad onto a plate for him.

It suddenly hit Harry how incredible everything was. He had died and came back, he was still trying to process that fact. He was now the ward of Severus Snape the most hated Professor of Hogwarts and Snape had an arranged marriage. Harry may never have to go back to the Dursley, never have to endure their torture again.

Harry didn’t know whether to cry or laugh, what if this was all some crazy, fucked up dream? He felt a gentle touch on his cheek. Looking up his dad was brushing his thumb gently against his cheek wiping away a tear.

“Everything will be ok, arnoub, I promise. We will always love and take care of you, little one. I think it been a very long day, a nice bath would do you well. Can you eat some more for me, habeebi?” Amir pulled Harry onto his lap, gently rubbing his back and whispering words of comforts. Cajoling him to eat a little more food, to drink more milk.

Severus summoned Jasmine, asking her to run a warm bubble bath for Harry and to lay out a pair of pajamas for him to change into. Once Amir determined Harry had eaten enough, Severus scooped him up and carried him off to the bathroom.

‘Really this boy was just too light.’ Severus thought to himself. He undressed his tired little boy and lowered him into the warm bath. Harry was struggling to stay awake and help, but his Da gentle touch was lulling him further into sleepiness. Soon, he found himself snuggled into bed with Tobby tucked in at his side.

Severus and Amir continued their lunch that Sesban kept warm while they put their son down for his long needed nap. Amir could see his love’s energy was also starting to flag as well.
“Thank you, Amir, you were so gentle with him,” Severus commented softly as he took a bite of his poached sole.

“There is no reason to treat that boy any other way but gently, habibi. I have an idea for Harry’s tutor, but we should discuss it later after you have had your own nap.”

Somehow, Severus knew that he will dread the person Amir chose, Yes chose, he knew it was already a done deal, Severus will either accept it gracefully or after a very long discussion which Amir will do the talking and unfortunately he, Severus, will do all the listening.

For some reason, Severus dreaded Harry returning to Ms. Duibhshíth. “Amir was just biding his time, until he has me all to himself, before turning me over his lap, I just know it damn it!”

Amir smirk, it was so easy to read Severus when his defenses were down like this. He knew his wayward husband was worried about his punishment.

“It will come soon enough, my love.” Amir threw the comment out casually, laughing softly as Severus began muttering curses under his breath.

Chapter End Notes

Veggie Cup Recipe
https://theviewfromgreatisland.com/green-goddess-veggie-dip-cups/

Dahomey Amazon

A/N
One of the reason it takes so long for me to write a chapter is the amount of research I put into what I write. As one of my favorite writers on AO3 states 50 fact/50 fiction. So hopefully it was worth waiting for. Enjoy!

I willbe working on the next chapter of Yellow Hair Green Eyes next!
Chapter Summary

Finally the end of Sunday, Severus learns who Amir plans to hire as a tutor for Harrison, and um, things get a bit heated.

Chapter Notes

First, I want to thank all my readers for their comments and kudos! Mostly for sticking around while I had to deal with some issues. Love you guys!

Ok so not entirely happy with this chapter, I have rewritten it a few times, but I think its find for advancing the story a bit.

While we have some major setbacks with hurricanes and such, we also have some opportunities I could not really pass up.

So all in all, I can go back to devoting some time to writing once again!

Translations

Enta Habib Alby W Hayaty Ya Habibi - You Are The Love Of My Heart And My Life, My Love

Amir sat in the quiet room, reading the reports from his meeting with Mr. Wyvern that morning. His face darkening in anger the more he read from one report, which he put aside vowing to order a deeper investigation.

The soft breathing of both Severus and Harrison calmed him, he had much more important things to focus on now. He laid aside the report on his son’s new tutor to go over with Severus. There was also the meeting with Master Bannot to discuss with Severus about some minor changes that would need to be agreed upon.

Tamarisk, Amir’s personal elf and head elf of his household, popped in with a tea service and a mild headache potion. Smiling fondly at his longtime friend, Amir thanked him softly for his thoughtfulness.

“Master Hazim, I have found the item that you once made for Master Severus, do you wish for me to make it more presentable? I know it is forward of me Master, but I still think it would be a most excellent first courting gift!” The old elf bounced happily at the thought of his masters finally getting their act together.

Amir heard the faint stirrings of Severus beginning to wake. With a slightly evil smile, he finally replied to his elf, “Ah Tamarisk, in all honestly, I think the first courting gift should be that leather
and polished wooden spanking paddle, don’t you think? Severus would surely get more use out of it than the other one?"

Amir laughing ducked the pillow that was tossed his way, alerted by the fierce cursed muttering that proceeded the pillow. Amir cast a one-way silence ward around Harrison’s bed to let him rest a bit longer.

Glancing at Tamarisk, Amir nodded in acquiesced to his elf’s earlier request. Amir had many years to build upon his betrothed first courtship gift, he smiled hardly able to wait for Severus reaction. He sighed deeply, this gift might just curtail Sev’s reaction on who the live-in tutor turned out to be.

He watched as the love of his life stretched his long lean body, working out the kinks from sleep. He smiled as Severus sauntered over to him, his expression the picture of innocence, his brat was slowly emerging from beneath the crap that had buried his true personality.

Severus sat on Amir’s lap rather than beside him, wrapping his arms loosely around Amir’s broad shoulders. Severus had time to think seriously while waiting to fall asleep for his nap, to reorder his priorities. He walked away from his chance of happiness once, he would not be foolish to do so again... BUT... and it was a very big but, one must take into account one major pain in the arse that was Albus Dumbledore.

Courtships were a fickle entity that could be and can be easily waylaid. Being a marked Death Eater was adding fuel to that particular fire. Add being Harrison’s Magical and Mundane guardian was adding nitro to the ticking time bomb that was the Headmaster. Their bonding was tentatively set for next summer, Severus knew of only one way to stave off the meddling old bastard.

Laying his head against Amir’s muscled chest, he figured he had better get his ideas out of the way before the meltdown later over who was chosen for Harrison’s live-in-tutor. His Slytherin side was out in full force, self-preservation slapping him upside the head to not make their situation worst that it could possibly get.

With a huge sigh, Severus waded gently into the rough waters, “Amir? Um, just how must trouble am I in?”

The smile that flashed his way sent shivers down his spine and his ass cheek clenched tightly, it was never a good thing when Amir smiled in that particular way.

“Let me guess trying to see just how much of a fuss you can get away with later?” Severus really wanted to smack that smirk off the irritating man’s handsome face....well that or kiss those beautiful lips until they were swollen.

“You are grounded, no personal brewing until we are bonded unless you have my permission first and you can convince me to allow it. You are ban from gathering potion ingredients until Ostara. Once we have sorted out everything and Harrison is secured at Mrs. Duffy, we will deal with you physical punishment, which consists of a very long discussion between my hand and a paddle with your bottom. Does that answer your question darling?”

Dammit! There was no wiggle room he would definitely have to reign in his temper later on. Best to get what he needed said over with before his mouth gets him killed.
Glowering at his husband-to-be, Severus presented his thoughts “Amir, I love you with all my heart, but I do not want to have a courtship. There is too much at stake and too many meddlesome people that can tear us apart. Amir….I want a year and a day. I would like to be handfasted, Amir.”

Severus rushed through his thoughts and explanation for why, about how manipulative Dumbledore could be and all the ways he can try and succeed in breaking them apart if they proceed with a courtship.

“The way I have thought it out, we can have the handfasting ceremony two days before Harrison’s birthday. This way we can have our official bonding the day before Harrison’s twelfth birthday and perform the blood adoption on his birthday.”

“There is a very old Oak tree in the Forbidden Forest with a guardian dryad named Balanos. They are the guardians of the Forbidden Forest, both have a very old and powerful aura. If we are allowed to perform the ceremony in their presence and garner their blessing, along with a Gringott’s goblin to witness the ceremony, it will make it that much harder for the Headmaster to destroy our family.”

Amir gazed deep into Severus’ eyes as Severus finished his frantic spiel. He was truly amazed, he was almost sure that Severus was planning to back out of the arrangement, not find a way to make it impossible for him to run away again.

“We do not have to consummate the union….that is not until the official bonding, but otherwise I know you will have Absolute head of house rights.” Severus finished in a soft whisper.

“You are truly amazing, habib alby,” pulling Severus close Amir whispered softly Arabic words of love in Severus’ ear. “Enta habib alby w hayaty ya habibi. If we do this Severus you can not change your mind because I can not do this again. If you are mine then you are mine, even in the afterlife you will always be mine, as I will always be yours, habib alby.”

“I have one question for you, habib alby. Would you like to plan our Handfasting and our Official Bonding, or would you prefer that I handle all the details.”

“I can plan this anyway that I chose?”

“Yes, habibi. I will not interfere, all I ask is that you keep me updated on what you have planned and that you do not overly stress yourself. Please ask and accept help if and when you need it.”

Severus rested his head against Amir’s shoulder, leaning in slight to nuzzle into the crook of his neck, breathing in deeply of Amir’s spicy scent. He really thought he would have to fight to get Amir to agree to his plan, the man was such a stickler for propriety at times. Now for the hard part.

“Severus, how about we move the rest of the discussion to my room? Jasmine can keep an eye on Harrison, and this way he won’t accidentally get hurt when you destroy the room.”

Severus huffed in irritation, “As if I would lose control and destroy the room much less hurt my son.”

“Our son, habibi. Harrison is our son.” A cat that ate the cream smile appeared on Amir’s face when he stated that fact as uncontestable.

Severus was really tempted to stick his tongue out at the smug bastard, “I highly doubt that what you have to tell me will cause me to lose my temper to the point I will hurt OUR son or damage the room.”

“Nevertheless, habibi, nevertheless.”
Amir was never more glad that he had the forethought to magically ward his personal rooms. Running his fingers through his hair, Amir righted a singed Swagamuffin Loaf armchair before settling into its overstuffed depth. Sesban and Tamarisk were current repairing and righting the damaged. Fortunately, anything of value or were irreplaceable had been removed before he had moved the discussion to his private rooms.

Amir’s gazed drifted to were Severus was currently stuck in an empty corner, a bar of bitter soap planted between his lips, his wand confiscated and locked away in his room vault. Something he should have considered doing in the first place before broaching such volatile subject.

Severus glared at the wall before him, literally stuck in the fucking corner. Amir cast the blasted spell and no matter how hard he tried he could not break it. His body was still vibrating with unreleased anger. ‘Slytherin’s rancid arsehole, why in the nine levels of hell did Amir had to choose Remus damned dementor fucker John he should be skinned and his pelts used to clean dirty bedpan of diarrhea patients Lupin!’

Severus thunked his head against the wall. He was soooo deep in trouble! His self-preservation was dropped kicked right out the bloody window, he was beginning to think he should have been a thrice-cursed Gryffindor at the rate he was digging himself into trouble with his husband.

‘Your mother is a (Bleep) (Bleep) (Bleep)-ing (Bleep) lorem ipsum (Bleep) (Bleep) (Bleep) Admitiumvenium (Bleep) (Bleep) (Bleep) (Bleep) treguna (Bleep) (Bleep) (Bleep) (Bleep) (Bleep) hippopotamus (Bleep) (Bleep) (Bleep) (Bleep) Republican (Bleep) (Bleep)-ing Daniel Radcliffe (Bleep) (Bleep) (Bleep) with a bucket of (Bleep) (Bleep) (Bleep) (Bleep) in a castle far away where no one can hear you (Bleep) (Bleep) (Bleep) (Bleep) soup (Bleep) (Bleep) (Bleep) with a bucket of (Bleep) (Bleep) Mickey Mouse (Bleep) (Bleep) with a stick of dynamite (Bleep) magical (Bleep) (Bleep) (Bleep) Alakazam!’

Even in his bloody mind, he was starting to censoring his speech, DAMN SOAP! Yeah, that was the straw that broke the camel’s back. Severus thunked his head against the wall again. He was torn between being pissed off about Lupin, being mad at Amir, and mourning for his poor behind once Amir gets his hands on him.

Dinner that evening was a bit strain on the part of his soon-to-be-parents. Harry idly ate his beef and vegetable stew as he watched his da mutter and swipe at his tongue constantly, trying to get rid of the bitterness. His jetey showed signs of fighting the urge to smack his da upside the head for his antics. Harry ate in silence enjoying the show while contemplating the recent turn of events.
He woke up from his nap, fully rested, to an empty room. Jasmine quietly popped in with a cool glass of water, setting it on the bedside table. Anpu, his feline familiar lay bonelessly across his lap, his deep content purring vibrating Harry to the bones.

Harrison flopped back, burying himself in the confines of the very comfortable bedding. There were no chores, no demands, no uncle trying to hit him with meaty fists, no aunt taking a swing at him with frying pans, no cousin using him as a punching bag. No screeching voice tore him from sleep.

Harry’s tummy was full, he had slept more this weekend that he could ever remember. He glanced around for his fathers but found the room empty of other occupants. Sitting upright once again,

“Master Harrison needs to drink the water, please. Master Severus would not be happy if Master Harrison gets dehydrated.” The squeaky voice scolded him gently as the little elf set about tidying the already clean room.

“Yes, Jasmine.” Harry felt he will be saying that phrase a lot in the coming years. The water felt so good going down his throat, he had not realized just how thirsty he really was. “Jasmine where are jetey and dadaidh?” he asked, setting the empty glass on the side table before arching into a lazy stretch.

“Masters are in Master Amir’s room talking. Master Harrison eat his snack, then jasmine will take him to his fathers.” Jasmine levitated Anpu of Harrison and onto the couch before shooing Harry out of the bed toward the sitting area where a tray sat waiting for him.

Half of a sandwich--bologna and cheese on cinnamon raisin bread--with plain crisp and baby carrots, and a tall glass of cold milk. The portions were very small, which Harry was very happy about. He curled up on the floor nibbling on a carrot as Jasmine remade the bed.

Soon Jasmine was leading Harrison down the hallway to Lord Shafiq’s room, Harry giggling at the little happy elf was bouncing off the wall because Harrison was her’s to take care of. The elf was practically admonishing him to not call any other elf at Hogwarts, it was her duty to look after him.

“Yes Jasmine, I promise.” he couldn’t stop the smile that filled his face.

Harry froze as the door open to destruction and mayhem. The air was filled with the residue of magic that sizzle across his skin like static when he stepped into the room. The walls were riddled with blast marks, the furniture was singed and some even blasted to bits.

His jetey was righting a singed armchair that looked really comfortable, while Sesban and an unknown older elf were trying to set the room to rights. He da was stuck in a corner of the room. Harry got the feeling that now was not the best time for a visit and started to edge his way back out of the room.

He hadn’t survived this long not to know to be in the room with this much anger vibrating in the air. He had just reached the doorway when his father spoke.

“Harrison, come here little one. You have nothing to fear, little rabbit.” His father held a hand out for Harrison to come join him. Shuffling his feet, Harry slowly made his way towards his father, who gently pulled him onto his lap.
“Did you and da have a fight?” Harry asked quietly.

“No, darling. We did not have a fight. Unfortunately, your dad was not happy with whom I planned to hire as your personal tutor.”

Harry glanced where Severus was huffing and mutter in the corner. “Why jetey? Who did you plan to hire?”

“His name is Remus John Lupin, he is a wizard and a werewolf. A very intelligent man who has been dealt a very hard lot in recent years. He was also a dear friend of your biological father and apparently the bane of Severus existence at Hogwarts. While I understand your father’s resistance to the idea, hiring Mr. Lupin is the best option for not only your educational needs but for your safety as well.”

Harry giggled when Amir lost the battle with himself and smacked Severus upside his head with the admonishment to behave. While Harry understood why his dad was upset, he was very happy with his jetey choice. This time around he hoped he would get to know Remus on a more personal level.

Harry yawned already tired and sleepy, even though he took a nap. He was allowed to watch television for an hour after dinner before Severus guided him back to the bathroom to get ready for bed. As Harry brushed his teeth, Severus filled him in on the plans for the next day.

“Son, tomorrow I need to address the matter we discussed before, therefore I plan to meet with Lord Malfoy to discuss the issue. I would like you to start on your lessons, read the first chapter of each of your school text, also work on your penmanship with the quill if you would. Amir will be here to supervise, so if you have any question he will be more than happy to help you.”

Severus gently carded his fingers through Harrison’s hair.

“As you know, your father plans to hire Mr. Lupin, as much as I detest the idea, it really is a good proposal. I am sorry Harrison that you had to see such indecorous behavior from me.”

Harry turned to hug his father around his waist. “Da, I do understand and its ok. Ahm, just how much trouble are you in now?”

Severus sighed heavily, “ I will count it as fortunate if I am able to sit for your birthday dinner, child. The downside is he is leaving me to agonize over what he considered a reprieve, he is waiting until you are safely back at Ms. Duffy before dealing with me.”

Severus guided his son towards his bed, gently tucking him in with toby. Smiling as he kissed his son’s forehead gently, Severus told him not to worry.

“Amir will never hurt me nor you, child. This will remind me to keep my insufferable Gryffindorish ways locked up very tightly from now on.”

Harry giggled sleepily at the thought of his father having Gryffindorish ways. Amir made his way over not long afterward to read him a story, which he made come alive as he read. Ghostly images floated above the bed acting out the story as he read.

The last thing Harry remembered before his eyes closed was his jetey soft kiss on his forehead and
the overwhelming feeling of being loved.
Duties

Chapter Summary

There are just somethings we must face, whether we agree with the choices or prefer to avoid the outcome.

Chapter Notes

So.....Happy New Year!

I hope this New Year brings hope and peace to our fanfiction family. This chapter got changed a bit from what I originally planned to some upsetting news I received while in the midst of writing. It sucks, I know, I did pour most of my time into trying to make sure it made sense and to make sure it was fully edited.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Monday, July 15, 1991

Severus strolled down the street early, hoping to avoid the morning human congestion both on the muggle side of Charring Cross and in Diagon Alley. His mission, first head to Gringotts to have Master Bannot view and officially make copies of Harrison's memories.

Not that he discussed it with Harry, but this was a necessary decision he had to make as a father. Four copies should be enough, the original stored in Amir’s vault, a copy in his and Harrisons vault, a copy given to Gringotts for insurance, and a copy to present to his brother and possibly to their father when they find him.

He had a breakfast appointment with Lucius set for eight this morning, that left him two hours to finish his business with the goblins. Severus had made it a practice over the last ten years to only be in Lucius presence in a public arena. Presenting a dignified façade has always been the dogma of the pureblood society, there was no way the reserved Lord Malfoy was going to haul his wayward brother off in public to punish him.

Lamentably, today was the day it all ended, he was bearding the lion’s den, or in this case the snake's den. His family reunion was taking place at the Amba Hotel Terrace restaurant, but will surely end up in Lucius’ manor office.

Severus adjusted the black wool and cashmere topcoat Amir made him wear because the London morning was chilly even during summer. While a warming charm was just as efficient, he must admit the coat was pleasantly toasty and perfumed with Amir’s essence, smokey woods and light citrus
which brought to mind the hard warm body of his husband to be.

Severus made his way through the Leaky Cauldron, ignoring the early morning clientele eating breakfast, and crossed the thoroughfare towards Gringotts. In short order, Severus was seated before Master Bannot, setting the wooden case before him on the desk.

Keeping his explanation as concise as possible, he got to the meat of the issue quickly, requesting the use of a pensive to verify the memories. It took Bannot nearly an hour to scrutinize the memories before falling out in a bit of a daze.

Bannot gawked at Severus, trying hard to contemplate all he had just learned. Snapping out of his confoundment, Bannot summoned his staff auditors. Together, they documented the memories, made the official copies, and placed each in the requested account vaults, Gringotts copy was sent to Lord Dagda, leader of the Tuatha Dé Danann and King of the Goblins.

Bannot scrutinized the Potion Master carefully, there were so many ways to approach this situation.

“I assume you have already considered a course of action.” The Goblin Nation were neutral in the affairs of humans unless provoked. What further actions they took will depend on what path the Potion Master was set on.

“I honestly do not know at this point Master Bannot, I need to deliberate with Lord Malfoy. Lord Slytherin had been a good guardian for many years before his madness struck him down. I think we may decide to at least try to help him, but I would feel more comfortable having a contingency plan in place should it prove fruitless.”

Severus gently rubbed his temples, he was already forming a massive headache from this mess.

“Will there be an issue securing the item in Madame Lestrange vault?” Severus asked. Whether his brother and himself agree to try to redeem their father or end this madness before it can begin again, it would be foolhardy to not enact certain actions now while they had the upper hand.

“That will depend entirely on the path you choose to take Lord Prince. I would suggest once you and Lord Malfoy have decided on a plan of action, you request an audience with Lord Dagda as we the Goblin Nation may have an invested interest in the outcome.”

According to the memories, the bank would possibly be robbed twice and goblins killed in retribution by Voldemort for the last robbery, there were too many unknown variables at this point to know how best to prepare.

“Master Bannot, no matter what path we choose, know that I would never betray Harrison nor Gringotts. You both are the reasons I am even able to have a choice at all.”

Bannot nodded in acknowledgment of Lord Prince’s words, not only the British wizarding community but every magical creature continuing existence would rest on the decision this man made.

The goblin absentmindedly added Gringotts own anti-theft, anti-spying, and anti-copying ward runes to the wooden case holding the memories. Not that the Potion Master was known to be a careless man, but one should never take anything for granted especially in times of war.

“Bannot, I also have one other small request.” Severus’ cheeks turned a light pink, taking Bannot by surprise that there was something that could cause the austere man to blush. He waited patiently as the dark hair man gather the courage to make his request.
“Lord Shafiq El-Amin….well….Lord Shafiq and I have renewed our relationship. I know he has already spoken to you about arrangements made for me to see a healer. Master Bannot, instead of the normal courtship, we are opting for a Handfasting ceremony on the twenty-ninth of July. We feel…well, I feel it will provide added protection from the Headmaster’s meddling. I formally request Gringotts presence as an official witness to the ceremony.”

Bannot crooked an eyebrow and smiled, that was a really brilliant idea. Only the handfasted could dissolve the relationship and only after a year and a day. If Dumbledore found out about the guardianship before they were ready, it would provide added protection by circumventing his ability to control Lord Prince as an employee or a former Death Eater.

“Lord Shafiq El-Amin would retain Head of House rights?”

Severus nodded, “I will also be asking Lady Balanos permission to perform the ceremony beneath her oak tree in the Forbidden Forest.”

Bannot eyes widen in surprise. They were planning to invoke old magic, adding Gringott’s presence as a witness and it would be near impossible for the Headmaster to interfere without Lady Magic ripping him to pieces for his audacity.

“It will be a privilege for Gringotts to attend and witness your Handfasting, Lord Prince. Out of curiosity, how did Lord Shafiq El-Amin react to the memories?”

Severus had the grace to look a tiny bit sheepish, “He does not know about the events surrounding Harrison's memories as yet.”

“Lord Prince, I would highly suggest you inform him before the handfasting. Lord Shafiq El-Amin is a very powerful man in both the Wizarding and the Muggle world, he will be your strongest ally against Dumbledore, it would not do well to start off on the wrong foot with him Lord Prince.”

Bannot had no clue how true his words were, he was already on the wrong side of Amir, well the wrong side of him would be facing Amir at least once he was over Amir’s lap.

“I promise Lord Shafiq will be informed of everything before the Handfasting, Master Bannot. I need to make my appointment with Lord Malfoy so I shall be leaving now. I will update you soon on everything we discussed. May the gold of Gringotts forever flourish and fortune smile upon you Master Bannot.”

“May your endeavors be fruitful Lord Prince and Fate and Fortune smile upon you.” They would all need a good dose of fate and fortune in the months to come.

Severus sat in the Terrace dining room waiting for Lucius to arrive for their meeting. Like the rest of the hotel, the restaurant was a masterpiece of understated elegance. Severus gazed out the window at the morning cityscape, tall rows of red planters filled with beautiful Pelargonium, also known as Calliope Dark Red Geranium, lined the balcony which lent a wonderful contrast to the backdrop of stone buildings.

Severus evoked his high society training, while it was an informal breakfast meeting there was still a standard that needed to be maintained. He caught sight of Lucius being guided across the dining room toward their table.
His brother was immaculately dressed, as usual, in a handsome titanium Armani Collezioni plaid wool suit of Italian virgin wool with matching tie, a crisp white Eton dress shirt, his Saint Laurent Wyatt jodhpur boots were mirror polished. Lucius looked every inch of a powerful consummated Lord of the Muggle realm.

Abruptly, a different image came to mind, one of Lucius haggard unshaven face, eyes dark and sunken, his lustrous hair, dank and unwashed. Lucius gracefully seated himself across from Severus, the morning light highlighting the bloom of health and vitality that graced his brother.

Severus gave his brother a slight smile, tilting his head in greeting. Amir had already alerted the kitchen and planned out the breakfast. This will minimize interruption from the waiters, not that they plan to discuss anything important in such an unsecured area, but in the world of Slytherins, much can be said without actual words.

As the Terrace only stock the highest quality, their table was set with sterling fine bone china from the Wedgewood collection. A tea tray was soon served with a pot of lovely Taylors of Harrogate English Breakfast along with small crystal bowls of fresh fruit salad with pineapple mint syrup as a starter.

Lucius took a delicate bite of lychee as he considered his younger brother, the man had made it practically a religion to avoid him the last ten years. Not that it stopped him from being the best godfather to Draco, but Severus knew what was waiting for him if Lucius ever got his hands on him. So it was very interesting that Severus actually requested this meeting.

“I ran into Paul the other day, and he happened to mention a very interesting tidbit. I assume you have reacquainted yourself with Lord Shafiq, seeing as we are having breakfast here?”

Severus watched as Lucius perfectly groomed and shaped eyebrow arched. Oh, Lucius is pissed, if Severus was going to rejoin their world, Lucius really should have been the first one informed.

Severus thought very carefully how to phrase his answer to not further offend his brother's sensibility and to minimize just how much trouble he was going to be in once they take this meeting to a more private venue.

Severus deferred answering by pouring tea for both of them, fixing Lucius’ cup the way he preferred. Spearing a grape with his fork, he considered the best way to address the situation. Pasting a minute smile on his face, he savored the sweet fruit before answering carefully.

“I must confess that this weekend had some fortuitous development. Reuniting with Lord Shafiq was one such development.”

The emptied dishes were cleared away and replaced with bowls of warm thick porridge that smelled heavenly, scented with cinnamon and other spices, thick white cream pooled over the top. Idly stirring the cream into his porridge, Severus discretely cast muffliato, this should allow him to speak a bit more freely.

“I have been granted guardianship of a young ward, and this has caused me to reflected on past events and I have come to understand how my actions were not the best course to take. Lucius, I would like to share with you what I have come to understand from my reflection.”

Lucius sipped slowly from his perfectly brewed tea, weighing Severus’ words carefully. Something major happened this weekend which cause Severus to rethink his actions and apparently this mysterious boy was at the center of it.
“There are several matters in which I would need your advice upon, both as a counselor and as my older brother. I also understand that there are matters unresolved between us…”

Once again the dishes were cleared in preparation for the main course, Severus used this opportunity to prepare a fresh cup of tea for his brother and himself.

“I agree that there are matters unresolved between us, however, such matters are easily rectified. We are brothers, Severus… that is all that matter.”

Plates of broiled finnan haddie and baked potatoes with a salad of sliced tomatoes with a simple herbed dressing were placed before them. Both ate quietly, simply enjoying the delicious food. Severus knew that Lucius had not instantly forgiven him but planned to help him regardless.

Once their meal was finish, the table was clear and a fresh pot of tea brought along with decanted crystal pots of blackberry and raspberry jams, a decanted pot of Seville orange marmalade, a pot of The Famous Grouse whiskey butter and one of luxurious clotted cream, followed by a plate of fresh from the oven English scones.

This time Lucius was the one that poured the tea, fixing a cup for both himself and Severus. They filled the remaining time conversing about Draco’s excitement over going to Hogwarts and how well Lucius’ investments are performing.

Severus spooned dollops of whiskey butter, orange marmalade, and clotted cream onto his plate before selecting one of the Terrace’s delectable scones. He carefully broke a piece of scone off and lightly spread the butter, then the marmalade before finally adding clotted cream.

Lucius brow rose in humorous offended sensibility and promptly berated his younger brother on the proper way to eat scones, which amounted to placing the clotted cream before adding the jam.

Severus stepped out of the floo into Lucius’ beautiful office. It was his first time here and he took a moment to take in the details. The ceiling, floor, and walls were paneled in polished ebony wood. The ceiling had recessed squares to give a more three-dimensional feel, each square was inlaid with white Thassos marble.

The wall behind him boasted two narrow floor-to-ceiling windows covered with white wooden blinds. Centered between the windows was a majestic carved white Thassos marble mantelpiece fireplace from which he had exited.

Along the left wall, the ebony was broken up by a series of the same narrow windows leaving one central ebony wooden panel with two such blind-covered windows on each side overlooking the glorious garden landscape. The far wall was dedicated to a fully stocked wet bar, ebony cabinetry, white Thassos marble countertop including a stainless steel sink and faucet.

The lower half of the bar featured a stainless steel and glass cabinet that mimicked a wine cooler and a stainless steel cooling cabinet that mimicked a refrigerator. The upper half had a full wine rack and a glass and ebony liquor cabinet. Both upper and lower levels had extra storage cabinets for glasses and other bar accoutrements.

The wall to his right was mainly ebony and glass. Two cabinets were built flush with the wall on either end. Shelves filled with parchments could be seen behind the glass-paneled double doors. The
cabinet to the far end had double wooden doors while the nearer cabinet had rows of drawers on their lower halves. Centered between the cabinets, recessed into a nook was a built-in stationary desk that looked well used.

Severus turned his attention to the center of the room where a massive ebony desk with gold inlay took up residence. On one side a white leather office swivel chair sat between the behemoth and the writing desk. On the left were two white leather highback armchairs. There was a large white rug that covered the majority of the floor that looked thick and soft.

The only other elements were the black cast iron wall sconces with delicate white lampshades that were interspersed around the room. Severus gaze wandered back to Lucius, who had taken a seat on one of the highback chairs and was gesturing for him to take the other.

The room was bright and cheery even with the dark wood, the morning sunlight flooding the room and reflecting off the marble. A little too bright and cheery for the mood Severus was in. Fortunately, an elf popped in and began to lower the blinds to create a more tolerable atmosphere.

He had expected to be dragged from the floo and bent over the solid desk the minute he arrived, but such brashness would be a Gryffindor or even a Hufflepuff move. Lucius was a pure Slytherin when it comes to punishments, and his ability to out-wait even Severus was legendary.

Lucius sat beside his desk smiling as he watched his brother survey the room. The smile faded a bit as he closely examined his brother. Severus’ hair was held in a braid, which was a rare sight indeed. It allowed one to examine the man’s visage closely.

“Severus, when was the last time you saw a healer?”

The polite mask broke as Severus scowl at the question. Removing the topcoat, Severus adroitly sat in the nearest leather chair before answering in clear annoyance.

“Amir has scheduled an appointment with the Goblin Healer clan for Wednesday. Honestly, you would think that I am not able to take care of myself,” he huffed.

“Severus, self-medicating is not taking care of yourself.” Lucius sighed with equal annoyance. “Besides, if Amir had not made the appointment I would have.”

“I am eternally cursed to be surrounded by controlling busybodies.” Lucius’ gracious smile met head-on with Severus’ cauldron melting glare.

“As fun as all this has been,” Lucius paused to gather his thoughts before speaking further, “there is something I need to address before we discuss your predicament.”

Severus tilted his head in agreement for Lucius to continue, his interest piqued. He knew that what he needed to tell his brother would far out shadow what Lucius had to say, so it was a good idea to get this unknown matter out of the way.

Lucius smiles softly at his baby brother, no they were not related by blood, but sometimes the people we bring into our lives are more family that the family you were born into. He knew he was an egotistical bastard, he was a Malfoy. However, he would not be sitting here having this conversation if it was not for Severus.

“Severus, I have been waiting nine years to say thank you. Thank you for whatever you did that helped to keep me out of Azkaban and kept our family together. Yes Severus, our family…events of the past none withstanding, you will always be my baby brother, Draco’s godfather, and Narcissa’s beloved brother-in-law.”
Severus shook his head in denial, his realization that his past action did more damage than good.

“And yes, I know you had a hand in it. Sirius Black, Auror of the First Class, dedicated member of the Light Faction, Heir to the Black Legacy, one of the oldest and most prestigious families in the Wizarding world, was tossed into Azkaban without a trial and left to rot. I am not so arrogant to believe they really bought that story of being imperioed, it would have cost me my entire fortune to escape such a fate as Black.”

Lucius rose from his seat, heading to the bar to pour them both a drink of soda water with a twist of lime. His gaze centered back on Severus as he returned to his seat, handing Severus his glass.

“Instead, I am free…..I am freed while my baby brother enslaved himself to the Light Faction and to Dumbledore. In the beginning, I had expected you to disavow any relationship to me and mines. While you have kept a relationship with us, with Draco, you have taken pains to seclude yourself from everyone from our past. You have drifted away from us, little brother. Oh, you made it a point to visit but only in a public setting. You are always the polite and consummated Slytherin, but I miss my snarky little git of a brother.”

Lucius trailed his elegant fingers along the arms of the chair pondering his next words.

“Despite past events, Severus, I would and will never abandon you, therefore I have been watching you closely over the years and I have seen many things that have distressed me, Severus. You did not take up your Lordship when you reached your Majority, I had hoped to guide you in this aspect, instead, you allowed Dumbledore to control your seats, and your Wizengamot seats have been used to pass some calamitous regulations that have been ruinous towards anyone not considered Light.”

“Severus, whatever happened to your dreams of being a researcher? Traveling the world, canvassing for new and rare potion ingredients? Uncharacteristically, you have locked yourself away at Hogwarts teaching potions? Severus, you hate dealing with the public on general principle!”

“Now…you have taken up your Lordship…and have asked to meet with me in private. Do not worry, a finite number of people are aware of you receiving your Lordship, I can guarantee the Light Faction do not number among them. I can only assume that things have taken a vastly unexpected turn in the last few days.” Lucius looked fixedly at his younger brother, bringing to bear all his sincerity. “Severus… my brother…my friend… you have and will always have the full aegis of the Malfoy family.”

Severus exhaled dejectedly. Oh, he was happy Lucius still considered him family and that he was still under his protection, but mentally he was lashing himself for all the perceived ills his actions have fostered over the years… well, the potential years to come.

Gathering his thoughts together, Severus plunged in feet first into the retelling of his very unusual weekend. He held nothing back, well mostly nothing, he was not sure how well Lucius would accept his explanation of Harrison's apparent rebirth with memory mostly intact.

No, that explanation will have to come by viewing the memories via pensive. Severus presented copies of all the documentation he had received from Master Bannot, resting the folder on the desk for Lucius perusal later. Now, he had reached the point of his explanation where the pensive was needed.
“Please keep an open mind, Lucius. The things you are about to see….we both need to agree on a course of action after you have viewed these memories.”

Severus watched as Lucius fell into the pensive, he knew it would be a while before the man came back out, there was a considerable amount to take in. Getting comfortable, he sank back into the really comfortable overstuffed chair, letting his mind reflect on Lucius’ words.

Lucius still cared for him, he had never stopped being his big brother, watching over him from afar. Lucius was right in a way, he was partly responsible for his brother avoiding an all expense paid vacation to Azkaban. Dumbledore wanted a spy, it was easy to convince the old sod that a freed Lucius was the easiest way to gain access to the rest of the Dark Faction.

The more familial relationship was a closely guarded secret that very few individuals know about. Individuals with memberships in very, very exclusive Circles. Circles the Light Faction did not know existed. He had resented being apart of their society in the past, but he was so very thankful they still considered him their own.

He had a lot to make up for, especially to Lucius. He had assumed that his brother hated him, well perhaps not hate, but was at the point of wanting to do bodily harm. He was forever underestimating that Lucius was more than a pretty face. His brother’s actions were not a matter of disregard but ones of protection. Helping him to honor the deal he made to allow both himself and Lucius to escape prison.

Interestingly enough, he found himself to be both extremely tired, yet energized. In the space of two days, he had gained his son, his husband, his brother, his extremely unusual family of Frederick Basil Pennywhistle and Lady Alexa Euphemia Stratingfordshire-Moribund, even the Evil Fashionista Paul Smith had pulled him into their bosom tightly as if he never left.

Severus let his mind wander as he idly sipped his drink. Amir was babysitting Harrison, he wondered how well that was going. Tomorrow would be taken up with assessments for Harrison to gauge where his academic strengths and weakness lay. Lupin was also joining them tomorrow. Bloody hell, he would need to stock up on calming draughts.

‘Which reminds me, I need to explain to Harrison about the potions the healer will send tomorrow night in preparation for our visit Wednesday.’ Thursday the books ordered from Lady Alexa should arrive, as well as the evil diva with their clothes. ‘Hmm, I need to ask Amir if it would be ok to outfit Lupin with clothes, from Harry’s memories Lupin was not doing so very well financially.’

Severus sighed, there were so many things he needed to plan for. The Handfasting was the easiest, as it was a simple traditional ceremony involving Amir and himself, Master Bannot or whoever arrived to witness the ceremony and Lady Balanos. Harrison's birthday will take more planning.

Severus summoned a writing pad and a muggle pen from Lucius desk and began to make note of all the mundane things he would need to accomplish within the next few weeks. He would need to discuss lesson plans with the rabid mutt. Harrison would need to be properly introduced to the Malfoys, that would have to be arranged in a safe setting.

He would also need to get the brewing to stock the infirmary out of the way. Would Amir consider that personal brewing? He knew he would be tempted to brew more complex potions while brewing batches of Pepperup and Fever Reducer.

Speaking of which, a list of potions he would need to brew and the quantity made it onto the notepad. He needed to make another trip back to the Apothecary since he was grounded from harvesting his own ingredients, he would need to purchase greater quantities for the storeroom.
Severus smiled to himself, the upside of having Lupin around was the ability to brew the Wolfsbane potion while being grounded. It would not be wise to seem too happy at the thought of brewing the Wolfsbane for Lupin. Amir was not an idiot in the least. He would have to school himself to remain aloof when broaching the subject.

Severus glanced up at the hour mark, right as Lucius fell out of the pensive. Setting the notepad aside, he hurried to his brother, helping to guide him to the highback chair. Lucius was ghostly pale, his hands shaking. Severus rushed to the bar, finding a bottle of cognac and pouring out a generous amount into a snifter.

Placing a hand gently on his brother’s head, he helped Lucius drink, hoping the drink will bring him back from the edge of shock. Severus summoned one of the house elves, demanding a blanket immediately.

He transfigured a side table into an ottoman, elevating Lucius' feet, all the while talking calmly to his big brother, tucking the blanket that suddenly appeared around him and casting warming charms on it. He gave Lucius a sip of Draught of Peace, before settling back into his chair to keep watch over his brother.

Severus knew his brother was recovering when a bottle of Hennessy Timeless floated over from the bar into Lucius' hand. Lucius allowed him to check his vitals, once his baby brother was assured he would not keel over from shock, he was allowed a hefty swallow of the much-needed drink. Summoning a glass, he filled one for Severus, inviting him to tag along in forgetting all that he just witnessed.

“Godric’s backside, fucking Horcruxes! What the hell was dad thinking!” Lucius glared at Severus. “I want the full unvarnished story NOW!”

Severus unknowingly twitched at the command in Lucius' voice, a response drilled into him from school days when faced with his brother’s ire after some misdeed that Severus tried to hide. He was quick to furnish a more detailed explanation of the past weekend events, and the actions he had taken so far.

“Lucius, we are the only sons he had ever claimed. We are the only ones that need to make a choice on what is to be done with this knowledge. We can end this madness before it can come to past, gather the Horcruxes and destroy them….and….and Voldemort, while he is in his spirit form, or we can try and reason with him and help him regain his sanity.”

“Either way, Severus, we are gathering those blasted soul pieces before approaching him. I can not believe I had such darkness within my home.” Lucius took a deep swallow of the cognac, barely tasting it.

“He killed you for a bloody wand!” A glass shattered against the wood paneling. Severus gazed at his brother, who was standing, body heaving in anger and frustration, his gazed locked to where the cognac slid down the wall to pool on the floor.

That intense stare was suddenly turned on him, making Severus inched back slightly.

“Do not think I have forgotten about your part in this, little princeling.” Lucius pulled himself
together, which honestly scared Severus more than his brother losing his composure. Banishing the mess from the floor, he turned his full attention to Severus.

“We will try to reason with father, if he accepts our help, we can move forward with helping him regain his body. If he is too deep in his insanity, then there is no help for it, we will do what is necessary. You, my little priceling, will focus on your new family and do what is needed to keep that old bastard out of your hair.”

Severus flinched every time Lucius called him little priceling. It reminded him of back in their school days when he was in trouble. The name came about to remind him that his behavior reflected on Lucius who was the Slytherin Prince.

“I believe Amir had no clue of what is going on?”

Severus shook his head slightly. It was a wonder his self-preservation never failed him when dealing with Lucius or his Father. He sat presenting a very contrite and remorseful figure to his brother.

“You have picked up some very unhealthy habits living among the Light Faction these last few years. Tell him before he finds out another way, priceling. As for our father, I will deal with it, you have enough to handle as it is. I believe we can gather the majority of the Horcruxes today, the diadem, the ring, and I have the diary. I will take them to Gringotts and advise them of what we planned.”

“Lucius…” His brother held up his hand to stop any more words from him.

“I will set up a meeting with Lord Shafiq to discuss the details of the Handfasting and the Bonding Contract. I will also work with Master Bannot and Gringotts to secure the guardianship of Harrison. I will not mention any of this to Amir unless he first speaks of it.”

“Thank you, Lucius… I know…”

“Stop, just bloody hell shut up.” Lucius swiped his hand over his face, sighing deeply.

“I am not doing this for the fucking Light Faction or even the blasted Dark Faction. I am doing this because my family is in danger. Dad might be a fucking psychopathic lunatic, but Dumbledore is just as fucking dangerous. If I find out you have put yourself back into bed with him, I swear Severus, I will beat the living daylight out of your arse.”

Severus paled at the threat and nodded in quick agreement.

“We are going to go gather those blasted soul pieces, then return here were we will deal with your punishment. While you rest, I will take care of Gringotts. I will escort you back home before dinner.”

Severus felt like an errant child tagging after his brother as they apparated to Little Hangleton to retrieve the ring, and then onwards to Hogwarts to acquire the diadem. Lucius instructions were concise and he was clearly not in the mood to hear a dissenting argument.

They arrived back at the manor just after noon, Lucius leading the way to the office he had inherited from the former Lord Malfoy, a stuffy overly decorated room design to intimidate visitors. Lucius
opened a secret panel to reveal a hidden room.

Following behind him, Severus placed a wooden chest that was lined with copper sunstone on a table in the vault. The ring and diadem were already placed within. The chest was acquired centuries ago when Sunstones was used to negate dangerous magical objects. Hence, the entire inner vault walls were made from unpolished green sunstone.

Lucius placed the diary inside the chest, making sure it was locked and warded against curiosity. Their first task finished, he turned his steel grey eyes towards his brother. Resting a hand on Severus’ shoulder, he guided him out of the vault, which sealed itself behind them.

Severus dreaded what came next, he could have run, but what was the point. Amir would have escorted him right back into Lucius’ clutches and he would have been in even deeper trouble with his brother.

Severus felt like he was fifteen again, having to face his brother after the so call werewolf prank. Dumbledore had sworn him to secrecy, all that Lucius knew of the incident was that Severus was found outside after curfew, on a full moon night no less, in the presence of The Marauders. Fucking hell, Lucius now knows the full details of what happened thanks to Harrison’s memories.

The walk of doom ended before an open bedroom door. Inside, the room was beautifully decorated in calming blues and greys. That was all Severus was able to take in at the moment. Lucius had entered behind him, removed his coat and pushed up the sleeves of his shirt up his forearms in preparation for his brotherly duties.

Swallowing hard, Severus also disrobed, undressing down to his loose undershirt. He had just neatly laid his folded clothes on an armchair when he caught sight of Lucius pulling open a drawer to retrieve a black leather paddle with the words, ‘Little Princeling’ embossed in beautiful script along one side.

Before the footboard of the bed sat a wide and long padded leather bench, long enough that Severus could lay comfortably. Lucius placed a large firm cushion on top, gesturing at Severus to place himself on the bench.

He had ten years to rectify this situation, he knew there would be no pleading out of his predicament now. He laid himself on the bench, the cushion raising his pelvis, presenting Lucius with a pale unblemished target.

Lucius was kind enough to tuck a soft pillow beneath his face, something to cry into. That was all the comfort he would receive until his punishment was over. Lucius tilted his head gently upwards, “You have endangered yourself, that is unacceptable.”

The first slap of the leather paddle came hard and fast, forcing out a grunt of pain, which Severus buried in the pillow. He tried to remain stoic, but it was hard. Lucius covered his whole backside swiftly with stinging blows that had him shifting and whimpering.

He tried to pull his mind from what was happening, analyzing how he felt when faced with a punishment from Amir compared to one from Lucius. There was no shivers of arousal, no enticement to push a bit harder to get a reaction. There was no delicious fear that made him want to get hard, there was just the anguish of having disappointed his brother.

Lucius knew very well that Severus was escaping into his mind, he aimed his next swarm of blows to the tender curve of his wayward brother’s bottom. The curse that rent the air caused the next five swats to the area to be even harder.
“You know better than to wander off, little princeling. It also seems you have forgotten your precarious position, I would curb that wicked tongue of yours if I were you.”

Lucius was never going to stop spanking him. Severus was reduced to a whimpering crying mess, constantly shifting to avoid the leather paddle. Every time he tried to escape into his mind, his evil brother would target the tender curves of his bottom, causing him to howl in pain, forcing him to be present for his punishment.

Oh, he was going to be good…sooo good from now on. There was no way in hell he was letting himself get tangled with Dumbledore, twinkling eyes be damn. That man built up ten years of guilt inside of Severus. His brother was cleansing him of all that in one go. Yes, it hurt, but not on the same level as a cruciatus curse.

He had fucked up long ago, nearly thrown away the one true family he had. The damn broke inside of him as he cried his heart out. He felt himself being gathered and held gently. A warm hand rubbing calming circles on his back, another carding through his hair.

“Ohh Severus, what am I going to do with you? You're forever getting yourself into situations that will destroy you. No more, little brother, I will not lose you to the whims of madmen.” Lucius gently caressed his brother's face wiping away the tears.

“You are forgiven your past mischievous deeds, let it go, Severus, dwell on it no more. You have already paid a far greater price than you deserved.”

Severus glared at his past actions being called mischievous, but his throbbing backslide reminded him not to invite further consequences. They sat like that for a while. Severus laying with his head on Lucius lap, being comforted while he calmed himself. He was tired, he always was after getting his ass walloped. Lucius gazed down at him.

“How do you feel?”

Severus frown, he always hated being asked that question after being spanked. Really, how was he supposed to feel? He was physically tired from squirming to avoid the blows, yet trying to remain still. He was emotionally drained. His ass was on fire and a portion of his upper thighs from the feel of it.

He felt…..felt…..cleansed…..safe……loved. He knew if he stepped a toe out of line again, Lucius and Amir, hell…even Lady Alexa would not hesitate to remind him that his family cared for his well being. Gone was the fear of being sent to Azkaban because he did not wish to follow some foolhardy scheme. Gone were the nights wallowing in self-hate and loneliness.

“I feel like I do not have an ass to sit on anymore. You're going to be in so much trouble with Amir, he happens to like my ass very much you know.”

Lucius laughed softly, “Git! Come on let's get you into bed. You are in need of a nap, and I need to head to Gringotts.”

Severus was glad for the help getting into bed, he really was drained. He lay on his stomach as Lucius tucked the bedding around him. He had not realized his eyes were closed when he felt gentle fingers brushed strands of hair from his face.
“I will have lunch brought up in an hour. Try to rest, Cissy and Draco are out, so you should not be disturbed. I will be back as soon as I can. Do not leave the manor, Severus.”

Chapter End Notes

I sooooo want to rant but... just know that last year was very bad for me, ending with the death of my older brother right before Thanksgiving. I was actually writing this chapter when I heard the news.

I am sorry if this one seems a bit off, as still not really dealing with his death as well as other crap that seems to want to bury me under its weight.

BUT...We are in a New Year, we leave the shit and crap in the old year...right!

On that note, wanted this chapter longer, but kind of emotionally drained, so figure post it now and can start on the next right away. Fair warning it might be a bit shorter, the next two. They will be out sometime in the next week.
The Plans of Mice and Men or The Oh Shit! Chapter

Chapter Summary

This chapter did not go as expected, I blame Amir. Severus was right, he is a bloody control freak lol.

Help my side character has kidnapped my story!

Chapter Notes

Translations:

vere absolutum-absolute truth

“Fratri tuo subiicio misericordiae tuae omnia confessa expectare. Liceat mihi quaes veniam ad earn facultas.”- Brother, I submit myself to your mercy, I confess all my sins and await your judgment. Please allow me the chance to earn your forgiveness.

Mater Emissary Electus Unus-Mother Chosen Emissary

Teaghlach Falaichte- Hidden Family

See the end of the chapter for more notes

*throb*

*throb*

* soft groan*

“Merlin on a fucking pogo stick!” He cursed softly as his backside throbbed with each heartbeat. Suddenly, the image of a miniature Albus dressed in gaudy blue robes with silver moons and multicolored shooting stars bouncing up and down on his behind on said pogo stick, eyes twinkling madly, came to mind causing him to curse even more.
“I swear the next time I see that bloody bastard I am going to hex his shrunken balls off.” Severus sighed sinking deeper into the bed. A sweet, pungent zing filled his nostrils causing him to breathe in deeply. It was the sharp, fresh fragrance of ozone, followed by the sound and scent of falling rain, his most adored aroma, and beloved sound.

It was a bouquet that soothed his spirit, a balm to his soul, the scent of freshly fallen rain helped to ease him towards sleep. As the sound of gently falling rain filled the room, the bed gently rocked mimicking a gently swaying hammock.

He should be thinking deep, profound thoughts, analyzing his past and future actions, reflecting on his angst, become more introspective and pensive after his punishment. Really, he was just bloody tired.

‘To hell with it, my ass hurts, and I am sleepy, screw contemplating life!’ Severus curled around a cool pillow and snuggled down for a much-needed rest. He smiled at the sound of gently falling rain filled the room. His last thought before falling asleep was of creating a bedroom just like this for Harrison.

Lucius had a very productive afternoon. After leaving his baby brother to nap, he sent a note via house elf to Lord Shafiq letting him know that Severus was safe and will be escorted back before dinner. He left after leaving instructions with one of the house elves to prepare a light lunch for Severus, once he awoke.

At Gringotts, Lucius was escorted into Senior Account Manager Bannot’s office quickly. There an astonished Bannot gawked as Lord Malfoy pulled a chest from his robe and placed it on the vast desk. Lucius could not help the smirk that graced his face. Blindsiding a goblin was a hard feat to achieve, he knew the account manager did not expect such rapid acknowledgment of the situation from Wizards.

“Severus and I were able to collect the Gaunt Ring, the Ravenclaw Diadem, and the bloody diary. Hopefully, you can extract the Hufflepuff Chalice from Bella’s vault without having her involved. The Slytherin Locket is at the Black’s residence, it is auspicious that Sirius Black is faultless of the murder indictments, we stand a better chance of having him freed and gaining access to the locket. As I am highly skeptical that father has had a chance to make the snake Horcrux, that leaves my nephew Harrison.” Lucius ended his little palaver as the proof of their endeavor was sitting before the gobsmacked goblin.

“I must admit, Lord Malfoy, I did not expect such brisk response to the situation. May I ask what you and your brother have determined concerning Lord Voldemort?” Bannot drew the chest closer to him while tapping an embedded rune on his desk summoning one of his staff.

“If Lord Voldemort can be reasoned with, then we will do all we can to restore his mind and body. If he poses a danger to our family and to the world at large…then we will do what is necessary.”

Bannot was surprised, yet, gratified at the firm resolve the young Lord showed. Unlike the Ministry and Dumbledore, the brothers were taking the threat seriously and planning accordingly. A young trainee goblin soon made an appearance, he was tasked with procuring the Hufflepuff chalice from Madame Lestrange vault and securing it, along with the chest, inside one of Gringott’s high-security vaults.
A missive was also sent to the King’s office with an update on the situation, as well as, requesting a meeting between Lord Dagda and Lord Malfoy. While they waited for a reply to the missive, the men discussed how best to free Black from Azkaban without alerting Dumbledore.

“He is going to need a Mind Healer, not only for the time he spent in prison but for some of the behaviors he had exhibited during his time at Hogwarts. Actually, Lord Voldemort is going to need one as well.” Lucius swiped a hand over his face tiredly, “Harrison possibly needs to see one as well, after all the shit he has been through.”

“We can cross that bridge when we come to it Lord Malfoy, for now, let us deal with what is in front of us. Are you willing, as a peerage of the aristocracy, to request a proper trial for Sirius Back? I have the forms needed to start the proceedings here.”

A beautiful black swan quill appeared before Lucius along with a small stack of forms. Sighing deeply, he got to work filling out the paperwork that would lead to the release of his little princeling’s nemesis. Which reminded him of another matter—Wormtail!

“Bannot is it possible to free Lord Black without the little rat Wormtail? Currently, his is staying with the Weasely brood as a pet rat.”

“I believe the use of the *vere absolutum* serum at trial would be sufficient, along with the testing of his wand if it is still at hand.”

“A shame the trial cannot be held in Goblin Court.”

“The Wizengamot and the Ministry will never allow that to happen. On the other hand, if a certain ‘rat’ just so happen to cross the threshold of the bank, we are well within our rights to deal with the creature how we see fit before handing him over to the Aurors.”

Lucius’ eyes widen slightly at the very wicked smile that graced Master Bannot’s face after that statement. ‘Merlin’s stones. He would not want to be in that rat’s shoes when the Goblins got hold of him!’ Just as he had placed his last signature on the form, the office door opened and a young goblin entered bearing a parchment scroll which was handed to Bannot.

“Good news, Lord Dagda requested an audience with you and Lord Prince…..and also Lord Shafiq El-Amin, well maybe not such good news, Lord Prince informed me that Lord Shafiq is not aware of the situation as yet.”

Lucius sighed heavily, this was one cauldron of flobberworm shit waiting to explode. Taking the erumpent by the horn, Lucius made the decision that might just get both Severus’ and his own ass whipped.

“Would Lord Dagda be willing to meet with us late tonight, Master Bannot? This will give us time to bring Lord Shafiq up to date before the meeting.”

The Goblin quietly wrote on the missive from Lord Dagda, then sat back waiting. The parchment glowed briefly a few moments later. Reaching for the missive, Master Bannot quietly read, nodding his head as if in silent agreement.

“Lord Dagda has agreed to meet at the beginning of the witching hour tonight, this will give our Acquisition team enough time to track down Lord Slytherin and prepare the ritual room in case it is needed. Please be aware that the Seelie Summer Court is currently in session, while they are not as easy to offend as the Winter and Autumn Court, they can just as easily find a reason to kill you.”

Lucius was so going to wring his bloody Father’s neck when he sees him again!
Amir studied his soon-to-be son as his little boy quietly read his school books on the couch. Harrison had yet to ask to watch TV or just to go play. While Amir desired a respectful child, he wanted his boy to have a normal happy childhood, filled with mischievous boyhood adventures…well…within reason!

Amir considered what kind of activities he could engage Harrison in, the hotel was primarily oriented towards the business community, not really family oriented. Amir smiled and summon Tamarisk. There were two rooms on this floor that were perfect for what he was considering, one can be utilized now, the other would make a grand birthday surprise for Harrison.

Amir explained to Tamarisk that he wanted a squash court created in one of the empty rooms, a room the child could get too without leaving the safety of the security detail. Searching he found the specification plans for a squash court he had been considering adding as one of the amenities for the hotel at some point. These he handed over to his elf, along with a list of needed equipment.

It was now eleven am, knowing his enterprising friend, Tamarisk should have it complete by mid-afternoon. Enough time for his boy to finish the assignment Severus left for him, take a nap and enjoy a nice lunch.

Just then, Sesban appeared with a message addressed to him by Lord Malfoy, informing him that the Lord will be escorting his wayward love home before dinner. He smiled wondering just how that conversation went. ‘Poor Sev is probably sleeping off his spanking right now,’ he thought to himself.

Putting away his reports, he planned to spend the rest of the day with Harrison, getting to know the boy. Amir stretched as he got up, he was used to being on the go from the moment he got up, not being stationary for so long. Walking over to his boy, he pulled the charms book the child was currently reading out of his hands.

Harry gazed at him with worry and a slight bit of fear plastered all over his face. Amir gently ran his fingers through the boy's unruly hair, smiling softly down at Harrison before pulling the lithe boy off the sofa.

“Let's go for a walk, little rabbit. Staying cooped up in this room all day is not healthy for one so young. Who knows perhaps we might come across some ice cream on our walk.” Amir’s innocent gaze, as he spoke, caused Harry to giggle.

Harry was enjoying the morning walk with his jetey, no one had ever shown him this much attention other than, well other than his Da. His jetey held his hand the entire time, introducing him to various staff and pointing out interesting tidbits about the hotel.

The conversation between them centered around things Harry loved or might love, or was even the least bit interested in learning more about. Harry rambled on about his lunch trip to Wimpy’s and his Da’s promise of having a birthday dinner at The Rainforest Café!
Harry met Marlon and David, his assigned personal security detail, his dad informed him that the men will discretely watch over him when he was away from the hotel or school. His Da had his own assigned men as well.

“Why do I need guards, jetey?”

“Because the world is a dangerous place filled with dangerous people who look just as innocent and unassuming as a bunny rabbit.”

“You mean people like Voldemort and Death Eaters?”

Amir chuckled at Tomas and his crew being compared to bunny rabbits.

“No….they would be known threat, you can see them coming from a mile away really if you have been paying enough attention. Marlon and David will protect you from an unknown danger, such as kidnapping attempts, unstable stalkers, pretty much anyone who attempts to harm you or remove you from safety.”

They were finally back in the guest room when Harry finally worked up the courage to ask the question that had been eating away at his mind.

“Jetey, how did you and Da meet and why didn’t you go after Da when he left?”

Amir guided Harrison towards his bed with plans to get him ready for a nap. He thought about the question, he should have guessed that Sev was honest and filled the boy in on long ago event.

“I think what you really want to know is my role in everything that happened and what lead to how things are now?”

Harry shyly nodded as Amir popped his legs on to his lap to remove Harry’s shoes and socks. He really wanted to hear this and understand all that happened, wanted it enough that he didn’t dare whined about having to take a nap.

Amir tucked him under the sheets before settling at the head of the bed with Harry's head on his lap. His fingers gently carding through the wild tangle of hair as he got lost amongst the memories.

“I first met your adopted grandfather when he was fourteen years old, during the second evacuation effort that was started after the Germans had taken over most of France.”

It was the summer of 1940 and the second mass evacuation was on the way. After the confusion of the first Pide Piper evacuation, the Shafiq family decided to open as many of the country houses they own to shelter as many children as they could.

The staff was all squibs that were raised and educated by the family. They knew to alert the family to any magical children that were billeted in any of their homes. The family had a manor home outside of Sir Drefaldwyn, which was dedicated solely to magical evacuees.

The manor stood on twenty acres of forest, ponds, green pastures, orchards, and lush gardens. The beautiful red stone peeked out from boxed topiary trees and rose bushes elegantly spread across the façade. There were stables, greenhouses, paddocks, animal pens, and a barn. The ground was
peaceful and well hidden from the muggle world.

The main house contained wings for the family, servants, and guests. There was a modern kitchen equipped to feed an army, including an indoor root cellar, a freezer room for storing meat, a cold room for storing everything else both equipped with a preservation charm.

The guest wing was converted into dormitories for the children. The boys were situated on the first floor, the second floor dedicated to dorm mothers, while the girls reside on the third floor. This allowed the dorm mothers easy access to the children while maintaining propriety.

The property was self-sustaining, able to produce its own meat, eggs, and dairy. There were wheat and corn fields, large vegetable gardens. There were an onsite mill and abattoir, including in-house bakers and butchers.

Sindell Hall was staffed primarily by muggleborns and former residents of Knockturn Alley and ruled by two formidable heads of staff. Rhys Andrew was the steward that saw to the functioning of Sindell Hall and Tommasa da Molin, affectionally known to all as Nonna, who was the matriarch that ruled Sindell Hall.

Tomas Marvolo Riddle arrived with the newest batch of evacuees that were identified as magical and transferred to Sindell Hall on one of the rare sunny Welsh days. The fourteen-year-old had missed the first evacuation madness when he attended Hogwarts on September 1st.

Luck was on his side this time as the evacuation mandate came down during the summer, not long after the students were sent back home. Nathaniel Wool’s Orphanage auxiliary home in the countryside was overcrowded prompting a call for willing citizens to accept children billeted in private homes.

A Shafiq Manor house in the area was offered up to handle the overflow. The Orphanage staff made sure to add young Mr. Riddle to the list, washing their hands of him for the rest of the summer. Hence, his discovery and transfer to Sindell Hall.

“Tomas was charismatic, intelligent, and a royal pain in the ass! But there was something vulnerable about him at that age that drew both myself and Nonna. Nonna took him in hand, and Merlin’s Beard did that boy spent the majority of his summer with his entitled behind over her lap.”

Tomas spent the entire summer at Sindell Hall, camping out in the vast library, practicing magic and learning how to properly duel in the dueling hall. His desire to learn was greatly encouraged. It was fortunate he was the only Hogwarts student in their care, it freed him from the regular lessons the other children were subjected to every day, allowing him more freedom with his time.

“I enjoyed spending time with him, he became an adorable irascible little brother. I began setting about learning more about his circumstances and the possibility of his staying with us permanently.”

Amir took Tomas to Gringotts for a Lineage Test, where it was found that Tomas’ mother was Merope Gaunt and his father was Tom Riddle, Sr., a minor country Lord from the village Little Hangleton. Tracing backward, the test also showed that Tomas was the most viable Slytherin Heir.

“There was no possible way our family could legally adopt him. What confused us more was why Tomas was living at the Orphanage with living relatives on both sides of his family. Actually, I could understand why he was not living with Marvolo Gaunt, his grandfather, it was well known how mad and inbred that set was.”

There were other possible Gaunts that escape the inbred madness, who could have taken in the
young boy. With careful research, it was found that the Shafiq family line intersected with the Main Slytherin Line, Lord Salazar Slytherin’s Mother was a Shafiq. The lines crossed paths yet again when the sole daughter of the last known Slytherin son, who was married to the Mainline Shafiq daughter, married a Gaunt thus ending the Main Slytherin Family Branch.

“This discovery gave us some leeway in how much we could interact in Tomas’ life. A claim for magical guardianship was made and paperwork filed. Normally, Tomas would have had one more year stay at the orphanage. At fifteen he would have either joined the army or tried to find work to support himself. All we had to do was wait and Tomas would have been able to live with us legally.”

Tomas was moved into the family wing and his lessons became more formal. Nonna acquired a new wardrobe, new school supplies, and a new trunk. The Shafiq family took charge of all expense concerning Tomas.

Tomas spent two summers at Sindell Hall as the war kicked into high gear. In nineteen forty-two Tomas was sent straight to the Wool’s Orphanage in London. The bombings were getting heavier and heavier, it was a dangerous place for any child to be.

‘I personally went to the orphanage to find Tomas and bring him back to Sindell Hall, but he was nowhere to be found nor had the overworked staff seen him.’

A trip to Gringotts came next. The guardianship paperwork was ruthlessly pushed through. The confirmation came through once it was confirmed that young Riddle made it to school in good health.

‘His personality changed when he came back, but his passion had grown for securing the safety of magical children away from the Muggle world. He asked for lessons in law and politics which we freely gave.’

The year Tomas graduated the war was winding down. Now technically an adult, he set out to make his own stubborn way in the world. The family lost touch with him over the next few years until…

“Tomas searched me out and asked me to look after his two adopted sons. Mostly he wanted to arrange a marriage contract between Severus and myself as a way to protect your Dad.”

After spending so much time around Tomas and his sons, Amir knows something was definitely off with Tomas. He had become crueler over the years and that sense of entitlement had grown. Unfortunately, there was trouble brewing in other parts of the world that drew Amir’s attention as well.

“Harrison, I am an Emissary, my territory of control is the continent of Africa. The Shafiq Dynasty is a small portion of my responsibility. My father, your soon-to-be adopted grandfather, Lord Mortimer Allden Shafiq was bitten by the exploration crazy-bug and spent most of his time in Eygpt.”

That was where his father met his mother the High Priestess Gamila Tali El Amin. His mother was from a magical clan hidden in the mountins of Eygpt. Amir spent his childhood among the hills of Eygpt, learning the traditions and customs of his mother’s people. Lord Shafiq spent his time split between England and Eygpt providing discipline and support.

While they never married, his mother and father gave him many half brothers and sisters, creating the vast Shafiq dynasty.

“The Nazis were creating havoc in Africa, looking for powerful artifacts that were my responsibility
to protect. I had to leave but I also knew that a war was brewing in London and Tomas was at its epicenter.”

Amir went to Gringotts before he left and took control of the Slytherin Vaults. He hoped to cut off potential funding for the war Tomas was bent on waging. It took years to set things to right on the African continent.

“I met Lady Alexa during this time and encouraged her to move to London. She took Severus under her wings. I was happy as this took a great weight off my mind.”

When Amir learned what was happening, he made the trip back home as quickly as possible. Amir remembered Severus begging and pleading with Tomas to spare the Evans girl. When begging and pleading didn’t work, Severus reverted to cursing and threat which earned him curses being cast on him by his father.

There were constant conflict, famine, and droughts in Africa. There was a civil war raging in magical England, and riots in Muggle London. The other Emissaries had their hands filled with trouble in their own territories.

“You Da was very rebellious back then, I am sure between your Uncle Lucius, Lady Alexa and myself, your father spent most of his time over our lap crying his eyes out for that unruly mouth of his. Yet, he still took his studies seriously. He became the youngest Potion Master in the history of Britain, while also earning a dual Mastery. “

“The last time I saw Severus was the year you were declared the destroyer of Tomas in that thrice-cursed prophecy. The night your parents died, I was in Africa trying to hunt down one of the missing artifacts needed to restore balance back to the area. I rushed back to London, only to find Tomas missing and presumed dead, Lucius and Severus locked up awaiting trial in Azkaban. I put the full weight of the Shafiq family on the Ministry getting them freed. Not that they know that little fact.”

Lucius sought him out after his release, while Severus cloistered himself at Hogwarts. Amir was left to assume his betroth wanted nothing more to do with him. He would let Severus live his life and keep watch from afar.

“It was quite a surprise to have Severus and yourself standing before me in my establishment. To be honest little one, I am still waiting for the other shoe to drop. Who knows, once you head back to Surry, your Da may decide he likes his life the way it currently is.” Amir muttered the final words to himself softly.

A very sleepy voice rose softly as his little rabbit curled closer to his body.

“Da isn’t going anywhere Jetey….Da told me to trust you, that you would never hurt us…the worst to expect was a well-spanked bottom if we get into trouble…” Harry giggled sleepily, “and a being grounded till we’re a hundred.”

Brilliant green eyes peeked out from beneath half-closed eyelids, drooping with sleep. Tobby held tightly to his chest, even as Harrison tried to stifle yet another yawn.
“Da loves you, he always did and he always will. Da told me he made a mistake long ago and that
taking custody of me gave him a chance to remedy that mistake. Da wasn’t happy before, so I think
Da will be happy being back with you Jetey.”

Amir lent down kissing the crown of his son’s head tenderly.

“Thank you little one. Time for your nap now. We will have lunch when you wake up. For now
sweet dreams my precious boy.”

Severus woke to slender fingers gently brushing strands of hair away from his cheek. Narcissa’s
beautiful face gazed down at him, an amused smile lifting the corners of her lips. Severus leaned into
her touch.

“Hey sis, did you know you were married to an utter bastard for a husband?”

Narcissa gently laughter filled the room, she shook her head at her snarky little brother, she was
extremely happy to find him sleeping in bed when she came home.

“How about you get dress Sev and come join me and your godson for lunch? Draco will be just
thrilled to see you here.”

A muffled groan was his only reply and one she knew meant he will join them shortly. Severus
heaved himself out of the bed, heading toward the ensuite bathroom. Oh, he could just kiss his
darling sister! A hot bath filled with bubbles and, from the scent hanging heavy in the air, a mild
healing potion.

It was have been too much to expect a more powerful potion, his arse of a big brother expected him
to suffer until it was deemed sufficient that he had learned his lesson. Narcissa had always snuck a
mild one into his bath, which he totally loved his sister-in-law for.

A quick glance in the mirror told him just how upset Lucius was, he was a deep reddish color from
the top of his butt cheeks to mid-thigh where it was the thickest. Perhaps he can coerce Amir into
allowing him to drink pain potion before bed.

A soothing bath behind him, dressed in freshly cleaned clothes, he was ready to tackle lunch. The
only reason he was looking forward to lunch was Narcissa, whom he knew would have the softest
pillow and numerous cushioning charm cast on the dining room chair waiting for him.

Harrison spent an incredible afternoon with his Jetey…’No, not Jetey…’ which Harrison learned
meant Father in Egyptian, he spent an amazing afternoon with his baba or daddy in Egyptian. After
his nap, Amir showed him how to play Squash on the newly created squash court.

They shared a lunch of grilled chicken sandwiches, chopped salad, and warm chocolate chip cookies
for dessert. After lunch, Amir helped him with his studying, Harry was shocked at how much he did
not know about magic.
The first spell Hogwarts students learned was Lumos. The first spell Amir taught him was the theory on how to summon water wandlessly. Amir began with explaining the basic principle of water, two-part hydrogen one-part water. They read different science books together as he helped Harry learn all he could about the different properties of water.

“The difference between summoning water with the Aguamenti spell and creating el maa (water) is that with summoning water you pull water from the nearest source, which may not always be the cleanest safest source. Another reason that spell is not feasible is if you live in the desert where there may not be water for hundreds of miles around.”

Amir cupped his hands together, suddenly Harry felt a slight movement in the air around them as a miniature whirlwind spun in the man’s hand soon followed by crystal clear water appearing within the whirlwind to fill Amir’s cupped hands.

“Knowledge, intent, and focus. If you do not have intimate knowledge of the subject it will only make it that much harder to focus your magic to produce results.”

“That is so cool! But baba, isn’t science a muggle thing? Will there be books I need for research at Hogwarts? I didn’t see any science books at the bookstore.”

“Hm, you have a valid point little rabbit, I will have to expand the library in your study before you head off to school. So, your first project will be learning about the properties of water and light. I would like you to research and write a paper on each element. Once that is done we will work on the wandless aspect.”

Amir looked at his watch, they could fit in a quick trip to Foyles to get the books Harrison would need to get started. He would also need to pick up an order form to order the rest of the books his son will need for his library.

Harry spent the rest of the afternoon snuggled with anpu and Amir on the couch watching some of his baba’s favorite animes, a large bowl of hot buttery popcorn sat on Amir’s lap. The trip to Foyles was fun, made even more awesome by the side trip to the toy store.

Harry ended up with a Bart vs The Space Mutants handheld game, Visible Engine Model: a puzzle that allowed you to put together a 3D model of a Muggle engine, High Voltage Highway race car and track set, IQ Computer and IQ Printer, Computer Warriors Computer Play Set, Nintendo Game Boy, and K-Line Santa Fe Workhorse Train set!

His baba kind of went overboard at the toy store, but his excuse for doing so was being stuck in a hotel room was not conducive for a young boy’s imagination. Amir had the electronic items adjusted for use around magic, which spawn another discussion on how the rest of the magical world lived versus how British magical citizens lived.

MOST EPIC DAY EVER!!!!
Amir gently tucked the comforter around the sleeping boy, the child’s face soft with innocence and happiness. The day's activities had taken a toll on his son, Amir watched his son starting to droop as they both played with the train set on the floor after an early dinner.

Amir was delighted with the boy, although there were times he was confused by Harrison. Harrison was a mixture of pure innocence and childlike curiosity, yet there were times when a very mature aura would appear. There was a war waging inside his little boy, one that Amir hope to soon understand and hopefully, be able to help his son overcome.

Jasmine and Sesban went about tidying the room quietly. As the toys and books were put away, Amir finally went through the reports he had set aside earlier in the day. One report was the result of the ongoing investigation into the events of a meeting he had missed when Severus stepped foot into his showroom.

His representatives had been viciously attacked. They, fortunately, survived although in critical condition. His meeting with the Teaghlach Falaichte pack should not have been public knowledge, obviously, there was a leak.

Alpha Hayden heads a small pack filled with pups and cubs he had rescued from Fenrir’s clutches. He was hoping to trade information for safety for his pack members. Amir would have offered sanctuary regardless of what information Hayden offered.

The security team was able to get the pack to safety, incurring heavy damage to themselves. Mr. Wavern did not take attacks against his teams very well. Amir was now reading a comprehensive report of the incident including the names of personnel, type of injury, length of recovery and possible interim staffing needed.

The number of assailants captured was also reported, including the method of questioning. From what he read, Wavern was a tad piqued over the situation. Enough to handle the questioning himself, the fact that Alden broke out his rarely seen *Pope’s Pear* was enough to send shivers crawling across Amir’s skin.

There were very few reasons for Alden Wavern to lose his unflappable composure: attacking the Shafiq family, attacking children, and attacking the defenseless. Once Wavern was finished with his captive volunteer, the tattered remains of the detainees were only too happy to explain the full details of their mission and who ordered the attack.

Ministry of Magic Undersecretary Delores Umbridge made a grave mistake of sending her mercenaries to that meeting. Amir now knew were the missing Teaghlach Falaichte members disappeared too, tortured for information about the pack then put down like rabid animals.

Amir moved onto the next report knowing that Alden had already taken care of the disposal or interment of the captives. There were two notices in the stack, one alerting him to an item being stored in his personal vault, another requesting a meeting with Lord Dagda as soon as possible.

Amir glanced at his watch, Lucius and his Sev should be home soon. He called the front desk to request an in-house babysitter for Harrison. While he trusted Sesban and Jasmine with his life, human presence would be more comforting if Harrison woke up in between the time he left and his Da and uncle arrived.

After sending Tamarisk off with a missive about the change of plans, Amir headed off to Gringotts. That is after Alden had also assigned a security detail to stand watch over the guest suite, and stubbornly attached himself to personally guard Amir’s back along with a security sweep of the area in advance between the hotel and the bank.
It was overkill really, but after reading the report on the previous attack, he bowed to Alden’s need to keep him safe. It was nearly dinner time, the streets were empty, workers already home getting ready to tuck into their dinners.

The group made it to the bank unmolested, the streets and shops empty and dark. Fortunately, the bank was also empty, their passage would not be remarked upon in gossip. Bannot apparently had been waiting for him to arrive. Greetings were exchanged in the Goblins native Fae’gaelic (a mixture of Scottish Gaelic and Fae) before Bannot led them to his office before meeting Lord Dagda.

It took over an hour for Bannot to bring Lord Shafiq up to speed on everything that was known. The memories of his son, the decision the wayward brothers made, and the fact that the Goblins now had a shade possessed Quirrell in custody. Amir now knew why Lord Dagda requested his presence.

To say that Amir was piqued was putting it mildly, he knew two little boys who would not be sitting anything this century. However, he had time to deal with his little miscreants. First was dealing with his long-lost brother, Tomas.

Amir was lead to a cell carved out of sunstone which trapped the shade of Tomas within. A gently tap to Quirrell’s forehead put the man to sleep allowing Tomas to fully possess the body temporarily.

Cautious eyes gazed warily at his older brother, he had spent years hoping to be found by anyone else but this man. It was not that he was afraid of Hazim, he was just very realistic that whatever confrontation happened between the two, he would always come out on the losing side, a strategic retreat was always the smartest option.

“Hazim….”

Tomas could feel his brother’s anger simmering in the air ready to boil over.

“Horcrux, Tomas?”

The man before him froze at hearing the words of disdain drip from his lips. This was bad …..really bad if Hazim knew about his Horcruxes. Fondness for him or not, regardless of familial ties, he knew Hazim was ready to strike him down, destroy him for good. It was that familial bond that was waring with his Emissary duties that stayed his hand.

There was no chance to lie or manipulate his way out of this situation. If it was one thing he had learned about his older brother, Do…Not…Lie to him! He was faced with two choices only, face his punishment or die at the hands of Mater Emissary Electus Unus!

Tomas knelt before Lord Shafiq, Mother Magic’s embodiment of her will, breathing out slowly he let go of his anger, his arrogance, his entitlement. He knew he had cross a forbidden line, and now he was faced with the very tradition he blamed the magical world of ignoring.

“Fratri tuo subiicio misericordiae tuae omnia confessa expectare. Liceat mihi quaeso veniam ad earn facultas.”

A pensive was brought into the cell, Tomas knew what had to happen next. He dropped all his mental shield, removing all blocks and safeguards. At a soft gentle touch to his forehead, all his memories, thoughts, feelings came rushing to the surface.
Everything was gathered and placed into the pensive to be studied. Tomas was not sure if he feared punishment more from Lord Shafiq the Emissary or Hazim, his older brother and now Head of House.

With each passing minute, Hazim spent in the pensive the thrumming anger in the air grew, and a small part deep within Tomas bloomed with shame. There was no possible excuse he could ever give his brother to justify the acts he committed or were committed in his name.

Upon Hazim’s return, Tomas dared not look at him, keeping his gaze focus upon the stone floor.

“Your sins are many Tomas. I do not know if you are truly repentant or trying to save your hide. Do you even realize how much of a mess you made of the natural magic in the British Isles?”

How does one answer questions like that honestly? There was no legitimate excuse he could ever give Hazim, yes, he may have had honest, noble goals in the beginning but he let his ego and arrogance go to his head.

“Lord Emissary, I have no excuse for my action. I have let my ego, my arrogance, my sense of entitlement, and my own fear rule my actions. I blame no one but myself for my own actions. Yet I beg Mother Magic for a chance to redeem myself in her and your eyes. A chance under your guidance to rectify all the damage I have caused.”

The room glowed with the rising level of magic. A quiet presence wrapped itself around Amir’s entwining with the magic flowing from him still the storm and made itself known within Amir’s mind, stilling the torrents of emotion raging inside him. A quiet voice guiding him to a decision.

“Peace, be still. Show him mercy. In the great blueprint of life, he is but a lost child. Give him love and a family. Guide him, teach him, heal him, yet spare not the rod. If he strays from the path again, he will be judged accordingly.”

Amir bowed to the Great Creator’s presence, it was rare that the Holy Being interfered in the affairs of men. With a cleansing breath, Amir turned his attention once again unto his brother.

“A body is currently being cloned from your DNA until it has finished growing you and your various soul pieces will be put into a healing stasis. We will attempt to heal your soul during the rites of Ostara.”

“Yes my Lord, thank you for your mercy.” Tomas’ body sagged in relief, he was still in a cauldron of hot water but at least he was given a chance to prove himself to Hazim.

“Hear me, and hear well Tomas Marvolo Riddle…. Severus will become my husband next summer. On that day, we both will blood adopt Harry Potter. He will be your grandson, and if you so much as think about hurting Harrison, Severus, Lucius, or the rest of our family not even the Great Creator will be able to save you from my wrath.”

The insane part of his mind wanted to protest, still wanted his revenge for what happened to him so long ago. Taking a deep breath, he let that go along with all the other negative emotions.

“Hazim, I understand about Harry Potter, but why would I want to hurt Severus and Lucius?”

“There is something you need to see before you can go into healing, Tomas. While the ritual room is being prepared, I want you to watch a memory in the pensive.”

Tomas obediently entered the pensive once the memory was changed to the one Hazim wanted him to see. One hour later he came out screaming, his madness nearly overwhelming him again. Amir
wrapped his arms around the screaming crying man, rocking him gently as he crooned softly, letting his magic wrap around the shade soothing him into calmness.

“Sleep little one, once you have healed we will sort everything out.”

Lucius had to practically drag Severus into Gringotts, said idiot was cursing up a storm and digging in his heels, adamant that Amir was going to turn them into dragon fodder once he got his hands on them.

Lucius swallowed his own wish to curse. They had arrived at the hotel suite to find that Amir had been summoned to the bank. Gone was their opportunity to fill the man in on what was going on. Instead, they were now walking in on an unknown situation.

His day just kept getting worse and worse. Rather than a midnight meeting, they were heading to the bank now, with a Severus in full-blown brat mode. Fortunately, it was after nine pm, not many were around to witness their antics.

One of the guards stationed outside the bank slipped inside to warn the Head Teller Clerk of the situation, unbeknownst to the two arguing men. Rangor, in turn, sent a junior clerk off to give Bannot a heads up. By the time Lucius was able to drag a kicking, cursing Severus into the foyer of the bank both Account Manager Bannot and a very displeased Lord Shafiq were waiting for them.

One glance at Amir’s face was enough to cause Severus to want to run…run very far away and hide….in the deepest, darkest hole he could find. Not that it would do any blasted good.

He could see Amir now knew about Harry’s memories and both his and Lucius sneaking around trying to get things accomplished. Bannot had warned him to tell Amir, now it was too late.

Lucius was having very similar thoughts as his little brother, standing before an clearly displeased Lord Shafiq made him feel less of an adult at the moment. Their behavior just moments before surely did not aid them in that aspect.

As Bannot turned to head back to his office, Amir beckon to the two little brats to proceed before him down the hall. Severus groaned in pure misery, shuffling quickly past Amir keeping his backside out of target range. He had made a mess of things again it seems, Amir would consider this another lie, a lie of omission mayhaps, but a lie nonetheless.

Lucius swallowed hard as he mirrored Severus’ actions. It never failed to amaze him how a man of his standing and stature, a decedent of the proud Malfoys, leader of the Wizengamot’s Dark Faction, Second in command of the Death Eaters could turn into a five-year-old misbehaving boy when facing Amir.

Unlike Severus, Lucius had always looked up to Amir as another father. Voldemort was the kind of father you follow into hell, Amir was the kind you made sure as hell you never let find out you were contemplating even peeking into hell. In the scheme of things, Amir held more weight that his father Tomas, even Lucius knew that his dad answered for his actions to Amir at the end of the day.

Lucius remembered when he was released from Azkaban, the first thing he did was go to Amir. Anyone would have thought that was a strange move to make, surely his wife and young babe
would be his first concern. His noble father had everything in hand already.

Narcissa and Draco were in a safe place inaccessible to anyone but family. He was placed in the care of a healer and a mind healer. Once he was deemed healthy and released from their care, Lucius got his arse blistered six way to Sunday.

His ass clenched hard as he broke out in a thin sheen of sweat just thinking of that walloping. As harsh as that punishment was and how disappointed Amir was in his action in helping his father go after a child, Amir still helped him to regain his place in society and within the Wizengamot. Merlin forbid Amir ever found out how deep his involvement ran.

Lucius glanced over at his younger compatriot, Severus, on the other hand, did not view Amir with paternal feelings. One of the biggest reason why he ran. From the moment he first met Amir, Severus was in love, and for a young man who had never had a submissive bone in his body before to suddenly want to bend to this man’s ever wish was too much for Severus mind.

Hence the rebellious, mouthy, little brat who lived to push every one of Amir’s button. The little brat that wasn’t so mouthy all of a sudden now that they both faced Amir in the Account Manager’s office. Lucius saw two pensive sitting on the desk, his eyes flew to Amir’s hard demeanor, no….. not Amir.

He was not his father's right-hand man for nothing, he knew all the old traditions and customs that many today ignored. No…the one whom they face was a Higher Authority than even the ICW. Lord Amir Hazim Shafiq El-Amin, Magics Chosen Emissary to Africa, Magic’s Judge, Jury, and Executioner.

They were so fucked!

Chapter End Notes

I wanted to thank everyone that left support over the last few months. On Mothers Day we held a Memorial since his birthday was the 5th of May. She was finally able to have closure, as for me one less thing to stress about.

Now, in the original concept of this story, Severus was never supposed to be engaged. Amir never existed, it was a just as much a surprise to me s you when he popped into existence.

Even as I wrote that chapter, Amir was supposed to be more of a well-respected mentor to Severus. He totally just took over my STORY!!!!!!
Anyway, its changed how the story is heading a bit as I was having trouble trying to fit some of the concepts I had before into this plot line. So, rather than fight it, just going to have fun with it and see where we all end up.

I know I missed some mistakes somewhere, I always catch them when I reading but never when I try editing. I think this chapter sucks lol but I always think they suck. Let me know if this all makes a lick of sense.

Hope it was worth the wait.
Redemption part 1

Chapter Summary

Oh, my poor boys, you know you deserved it!

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The occupants of the room stared silently at each other, Lucius and Severus to one side facing Amir and Bannot. Bannot calmly walked around his desk leaving the two miscreants to face off with Lord Shafiq. On the desk sat two simple yet elegant pensive, something that Lord Malfoy dreaded to see.

Severus’ fear and irritation got the better of him as he once again began to utter the foulest of language while turning to leave the room. Amir, who had taken a deep breath trying to center himself was not pleased with the events unfolding. NOT…ONE…BLASTED…BIT! His head flew up as Severus geared up to either start ranting again or to run.

He had had enough. Marching over to his brat, he swiftly turned the Potion Master and delivered two hard swats to his backside that lifted the brat onto his tiptoes. Leaning in closely, he whispered into Severus’ ear, his visage set in stone.

“You have shamed me, your brother, and mostly yourself with your behavior tonight, beloved. You have gotten your wish, once we are home we shall take care of all your misdeeds. Upon waking you will find yourself in the nearest corner kneeling, contemplating your behavior. After I have deemed you have spent enough time reflecting and you have broken your fast, you will spend the remainder of your day over my lap learning how to make better choices,” Amir stated softly.

Severus paled even further and was about to speak before Amir turned him once again delivering two more swats, even harder than before, causing Severus to howl silently nearly levitating off the floor.

“The only acceptable answer is…Yes, Amir…am I understood?” Amir growled darkly into Severus’ ear.

The brat had fled leaving a submissive Severus, an aspect of himself that he rarely ever showed to anyone. He faced a disappointed Amir, his beloved and future husband and Head of House, and he was shamed to his core at his behavior. He shivered, not in arousal but in fear knowing he had not just crossed but merrily hopped, skipped, and trampled over the line of acceptable behavior and will now face steep consequences.

Severus’ bottom throbbed deeply in time with his heartbeat, reminders that will not fade away anytime soon. His only choice now was to behave and hoped for the best.
“Yes, Amir.” He bowed his head in acquiescing of the order.

“I will be reviewing the entirety of both your memories of your involvement in past affairs, so please prepare yourself. Once I have obtained your memories I expect you both to find yourself planted in the nearest corner.”

Twin answers of solemn acceptance echoed in the air from both men. Amir rested his right hand gently against Severus’ forehead and his left on Lucius’, both expected to feel pain as their memories were extracted. Instead, a feeling of gentle warmth filled them even after Amir took his hands away from them.

In Amir’s cupped hands were two swirling glowing balls of bright bluish lights. Each ball was deposited into its own pensive. Twin yelps filled the air along with the sounds of hurried footfalls scrambling across the office floor. Apparently, both men had forgotten where they were supposed to be, but a strong stinging hex had quickly reminded them.

Amir braced himself, now was not the time to consider them family, he needed to view these memories objectively and render a verdict and punishment in accordance with Magic’s wishes. He started with Lucius’ memories, taking his time to view each in detail, making note of circumstances, intent, and actions. Lucius’ memories were damning, one angered him greatly, the action and the circumstances which allowed it to take place.

A young Lucius had found himself in the company of Antonin Dolohov, Corban Yaxley, and Thorfinn Rowle. They were standing in what looked like a ransacked suburban home surrounding a terrified young girl not much younger than the young men she faced.

Lucius as the Prince of Slytherin and Lord Voldemort soon to be named Right Hand Man, second in command now faced a difficult position. He had foolishly allowed himself to be led into a situation where he had to show his commitment to the cause by raping the young girl before them. These three were not idiots, they knew the position they had Lucius in. If he refused... he could damage his standing in the order, if he participated... he was showing he was just as depraved as they were.

Amir watched the following event passively, even as his anger reached new levels bottled inside him. As the rest of Lucius’ memories flow before him, he opened himself to Gaia, Mother from which all magic flows, allowing a just judgment to come forth. He knew in his heart how he would like to punish Lucius, but it was not his place to deny a rightful judgment because he considered the man family, these actions were too heinous in nature to ignore.

Fortunately, Lady Magic, the sentient embodiment of Gaia’s magical energy agreed with the punishment he held in his mind. With that decided Amir entered the pensive containing his Severus’ memories. His were divided into two categories, before and after the fall of Voldemort.

Severus actions were just as heinous before Tomas’ fall. Potions that should have never come into existence numbered highly among his crimes. The same could be said after the fall while in the Headmaster’s employment. Mostly, what needed to be addressed after the fall of Tomas can be done under his Head of House rights.

Again, Lady Magic agreed with his assessment and rendered a judicial punishment for both men. A writ will be written up and documented, the physical punishment carried out as soon as possible. This way even if their crimes did come to light, an official punishment can also be shown as having been carried out.

Currently, his Judicial court for the British Isle sat at the Isle of Men. He summoned a Writ of Judicial Punishment and began filling out the necessary details. Before ordering both his brats before
him, he quietly asked Bannot to summon four warrior guards and two healers.

Lucius and Severus soon found themselves nervously awaiting Amir’s decisions in dread. It became even more apparent just how grievous their situation was when the armed guards and two healers entered the room. It was a very sobering experience for Severus.

“I, Lord Amir Hazim Shafiq El-Amin, Mater Emissary Electus Unus, have considered the evidence and have rendered a judgment. In the case of Lucius Abraxas Malfoy, you have been found guilty in the eyes of Lady Magic. You have been sentenced to the judicial corporal punishment of forty lashes. Implement to be used: birch whip, containing no less than six hazel branches, on the bare bottom and thighs.

You are also sentenced to five years of monitored probation. Three of those years, you will be assigned to community service, in which you will work and help victims of sexual assault, torture, and abuse. You will be trained in ways to aid and empathize with these individuals. At the end of your probation period, you will be evaluated to see if you have truly learned from your experience and punishment.

If you have failed in meeting this requirement, your punishment will be much more severe.”

Lucius was deathly paled, this was worse than the last time he had faced Amir in this setting. Taking a deep breath, he calmed himself. It could have been so much worst, he knew that he was being shown mercy, once he was healed enough he would fall on his knees in thanks to Lady Magic for the mercies she had shown today.

“In the case of Severus Tobias Prince, you have been found guilty in the eyes of Lady magic. You have been sentenced to the judicial corporal punishment of twenty-five lashes. Implement to be used: birch whip, containing no less than six hazel branches, on the bare bottom and thighs.

You are also sentenced to five years of monitored probation. Within that time frame, you are banned from creating any new potions, banned from brewing any known dangerous potions, and will be monitored and limited in what you can brew. After three years, with compliance, you may be allowed more leeway with monitoring.

Both of you will be escorted to the Isle of Men, where the Emissary Judicial seat resides for the physical portion of your punishment to be carried out. It will be executed by an officiating court staff, and witness by one of your guard and one healer. You will be given three weeks to heal from your punishment before the rest of your sentence commences.”

Amir stared stonily at both men, later once he was no longer in this role, he planned to give both an earful.

“Do you both accept and are willing to comply to the sentenced given?”

Severus and Lucius both bowed their head and answered firmly, “Yes, Lord Shafiq. We thank you for the mercies shown to us today and will comply fully with the conditions given.”

Blessed Merlin be, of course, they would comply! It would be stupid to go against the Emissary’s ruling, considering the alternative which most likely would be death. Lucius knew once that Writ was filed, he and his brother could not be brought to trial again by Cornelius or Dumbledore.

Severus, on the other hand, wanted to throw the worlds biggest tantrum. To not be allowed to brew hurt deeper than he could ever expect. For once though he behaved, not giving in to his inner brat. He was already in deep flobberworm shite, he still had a lovely day of squirming over Amir’s lap to
look forward to tomorrow.

Amir signed and stamped the Writ with his official seal, filing one copy with Gringotts and handing another copy to the healers escorting his two boys to their doom.

“I shall await your return. You should be healed enough to attend the meeting with Lord Dagda and the Summer court. Behave and do not give your escorts any trouble or I will triple your punishment, am I understood?”

On the Isle of Man, hidden in the mountains, stood the Center for Administrative and Judicial Procedures for the Magical Community of The British Isle, also known as Magic’s Emissary Office. It wasn’t a city or even a village by muggle or magical standards. In all actuality, it was a set of modern stone buildings set in a three-sided square that encompassed a beautiful courtyard. The entire campus was fortified at the back by the sheer wall of the mountainside.

The center building was the largest by far, and impressive in its design housed the Judicial Office. The stones used to construct the building were ancient and steeped in magic, Lord Shafiq had paid the Stone Smith Guild very well to carefully re-cut the ancient stones, thereby rebuilding the ancient buildings with a more updated look and feel.

The smaller building on the right housed the Magical Creatures Administrative Department and dealt with all issues related to Magical Creatures. While the building on the left housed the Non-Human Magical Beings Administrative Department and likewise dealt with all issues related to Magical Beings who were not Homo Sapiens.

All three building encased a beautiful courtyard that was well maintained. A manicured, lush green lawn, well-trimmed trees, and bushes that were native to the island. Simple paved stone walkways lead from each building to a center path the worked its way around a small elegant rectangular water fountain. The buildings were situated in such a way that it allowed only one way into the courtyard, and thus, into each building.

On the right side, behind the Magical Creatures Administrative Department, were two neat rows of shops, eight in total, which supplied the needs of the staff who lived year-round at the campus. On the left side behind the Non-Human Magical Beings Administrative Department were two neat rows of houses. The houses faced each other creating a lovely lane between the two rows. A small park was built at the center of every for houses. From the outside, each house was modern and compact, each had its own small garden courtyard.

At the very back, between the Judicial Office and the mountain face, an elaborate park was created as an entertainment area for the staff. The whole campus was surrounded by a waist-high stone wall that was hidden by hedges on both sides. The only gate was found at the front of the campus and was guarded day and night.

It was at this gate that Severus and Lucius appeared with their escort guards and healers in tow. It seemed they were expected as along with the gate guards stood a man dressing in black administrative robes.

“My name is Wilbur Willoughby, I will be expediting the Writ. First, please follow me to my office
so we can make sure all the i’s are dotted and t’s crossed. Afterward, the offenders will be taken to the preparation room to change their outfits. Once appropriately attired, they will then be escorted to separate punishment rooms. One guard and a Healer are allowed to be in attendance.”

Wilbur spoke quietly while leading them across the courtyard to the larger of the three buildings. The courtyard was well lighted, allowing no shadows to hide in. As they walked to their doom, both men could feel the power emanating from the stone building, which was confusing to them. It felt old and ancient, but the building looked as if it was recently built. At each corner bracketing the large building stood one birch tree on the left, and a hazelnut tree on the right. Underneath the Hazelnut tree stood two men in military-style uniform carefully selecting branches from the tree.

Lucius was already familiar with one of the men, he was not happy to become reacquainted with his punisher from last time. With a deep sigh, Lucius followed after Severus up the steps to a beautifully carved door showing the various Beings of Justice that were worshiped by various sects.

Once inside Willoughby’s office, various forms were filled out and the brothers were given a quick health scan to make sure that they would be able to endure the birching. The healers would monitor the whole session and be on hand in case of emergencies.

They were then taken to the preparation room, which was a chamber with locked cubbyholes for their clothing and other items. Here they were given a long white shift and jockstraps to wear. The shift went on over their heads, with a weird split from the waist at the back.

Lucius and Severus had not uttered one word during this entire event, resigned to their fate as it were. They both had endured numerous Cruciatus curses among others, they can bear this with dignity. From here they would be separated until their punishment was over, they silently wished each other the best.

“Group A, if you would please follow Edmund, Group B, please follow Roland.” Willoughby pointed out each man as he directed the group to follow that person. He headed back to his office to make sure any potions and medicine needed were on hand.

Severus was lead to a small room down a corridor, that was about as much as he had noticed about the place. Roland had opened a simple wooden door, allowing them to enter before entering himself, locking the door behind him.

The room was fairly large, about the size of a muggle dining room. There were chairs along one side of the room. The room appeared to be soundproof as all movements and noise were muffled. The temperature was regulated, unlike the dungeon, he was used too. Severus tried to take in the details of this room all in order to avoid what he didn’t really want to look at.

Centered in the room was a weirdly shaped bench. Weird in that it was built in such a way that a person could lean on the padded surface for support, bent at an angle, yet still remain upright. There were two handholds he could grab onto if needed, while leather straps dangle from various points along the structure.

The man, Roland, face him and begun to read the charges and the listed punishment. Once that was done, the guard that came with Severus lead him to the bench structure and asked him if he needed to be strapped in.

Severus shook his head, he would suffer this with the dignity of a Lord, the son of the Dark Lord, and the betrothed of Lord Shafiq. The guard produced a clean length of tightly rolled leather, encouraging Severus to take it and bite down on it during the punishment.
As Severus laid against the upright bench, he realized the function of the split at the back of the shift. The material fell away in such a way that it left his arse and legs clear while maintaining his dignity. No one jeered or made unnecessary comments about his person, each person maintained a high level of professionalism that Severus could only appreciate at this moment.

Roland announced the commencement of the punishment, giving Severus time to brace himself. At least, Severus thought he was bracing himself. The first blow made his knees weak, causing him to tighten his grip on the handles. His ass was on fire, that one blow was like getting hit with a cane six times but all at the same time.

Severus quickly dove behind his shields, there was no way he could be stoic throughout the punishment, not without occulmancy. This was not like being punished by his brother or Amir where he was required to be present and show his true emotions. Here he could hide and hide he damn well did.

Unfortunately, Lucius was not faring any better than his younger brother. Lucius had a longer punishment to undergo and the hazel birch whip was hell reincarnated. Lucius instead dwelled on ways to make things right with Amir, and sadly on just how loudly Amir was going to yell at him once he got back.

The time past painfully, each trying not to cry out as a blow crossed previous welts. It felt like the very flesh was being peeled away from their bodies. But they maintained, they didn’t cry out nor did they shed tears, no… that can be done alone, while in the comfort of their home with their loved ones. They will not succumb, and when the last lash fell, it was a moment of joy that they had persevered.

Each man was allowed to lay on the bench recovering for a short while once their respective punishment was over. Each lay dazed… breathing hard, even with their shields it was still a hard punishment to experience. The healers gave them cool water to drink and gently check for any open wounds that require healing.

Each was taken back to the preparation room, where they were allowed to shower before the Healers applied ointment and dittany to their welts to prevent scarring. Once dressed they were escorted back to Willoughby’s office where they were given a mild pain potion and the last information was documented and signed.

“You both will be escorted back to The Lord Emissary, once you are turned over to his care you are free to go. The Writ and documentation will be filled accordingly. A copy will appear in each of your vaults. Have a good evening Gentlemen, hopefully, we can meet under better circumstances next time.”

The fact that both Severus and Lucius stumbled slightly upon apparating back into Bannot’s office was not commented on. Both men stood sheepishly before Amir, while the escort guards and healers gave their reports and handed over the documents.

As it was now nearly midnight, their meeting with Lord Dagda and the Summer Court was at hand. Bannot led the group through the maze that was the inner halls of Gringotts Bank. Lower and lower they traveled until they reached a heavy bronzed door.
Bannot produced a matching heavy bronzed key from his coat pocket and proceeded to unlock and open the door. The hall was soon filled with the fresh scent of a summer breeze, and golden sunlight filled the hall. From the doorway, the brothers were amazed to see a world that should not exist with the halls of Gringotts.

Before them, was a green meadow filled with flowers and butterflies. Upon closer look, they could also discern flower and insect-shaped fairies fluttering about from flower to flower, dancing in carefree flight. The meadow was surrounded by woods, and there was a glen that led to a lake that sparkled in the sunlight.

The sky was a clear gorgeous blue with a faint wisp of clouds airbrushed across the sky. And there, surrounded by all this natural beauty was a white citadel. They followed a well-marked path towards the citadel. Unfortunately for Lucius, the fairies loved his looks! They fluttered around him, playing with his long silver hair, and planting kisses on his face before flutter away giggling.

Amir smiled in amusement at Lucius discomfort, while Severus barely held in a snicker, Lucius just accepted it all with as much grace and dignity one could under the circumstances. Once they had reached the gates of the citadel, the fairies left the poor man alone, fluttering off to fulfill other fancies.

Once inside, it felt more like sitting under an open-sided tent amongst a lush garden. The Seelies where spread throughout the area, some lounging on divans, others sitting on plush cushions playing musical instruments softly. Some were in small groups talking or debating amongst themselves.

There were tables of food scattered throughout the area, and piles of cushions and other seating. It was a very relaxed setting they had walked into. A tall man wearing a simple brown tunic, unadorned leather pants, boots, and a lightly hooded cape approached them.

The strange man pulled Amir into a rough hug and clapped him heartily upon his back.

“Nephew it is good to see you. I hope you have been told all?” The man gazed deeply at Amir with concern present on his face.

“Yes, Uncle Dagda. I have been finally made aware of everything hopefully. There is much that needs to be discussed, I have brought my two brats with me. Lord Dagda my I introduce to you my beloved Severus Tobias Snape, Lord Prince brat number one, and my soon to be brother-in-law and brat number two Lucius Abraxas Malfoy, Lord Malfoy. My beloved brats, this is my Uncle the Great Lord Dagda, Ruler of the Tuatha de Danaan.”

Both men bowed gracefully when introduced, but remained silent. It was Amir’s place to lead the discussion, they will only inject their comments and opinions if it was truly needed.

“We have watched the memories of your young Harrison, Andraste has deduced that his soul was sent back in time to a point where a single decision had split reality into two dimensions. The events that happened before can or may happen again, or a new reality may emerge. Ceridwen has been brewing the potion that will allow Andraste to see the past, the present and the future. While we cannot give exact details, we may be able to warn you if a major upheaval is approaching.”

While speaking Dagda had led them to a sitting area filled with mounds of cushions and low divans. A table filled with ripe fruits, warm bread, and rich cheese sat in the center. A bowl filled with golden honey sat next to a pitcher filled with ruby red wine. Silver plates and goblets appeared as each sat down.

“While we wait for Andraste, I should update you on what is happening currently. Tomas, also
known as Voldemort has been taken into custody. I plan to put his soul back together, he will be under my jurisdiction so the matter of a Dark Lord running amok is taken care of. The ministry has been issuing some very alarming laws regarding Non-Human Magical beings and creatures, I fear a disgusting woman name Umbridge is behind it all.”

“UMBRIDGE! That blasted woman is known to us. She has repeatedly tried to interfere with our Goblin clans in England, your cousin Ragnok would dearly love to run her through with his very dull sword.”

“Yes, I can imagine that indeed. My people had a nasty run-in with agents of hers, I was to be at that same meeting, *glancing at Severus his voice soften* but I was drawn away by other matters. Alden was not very pleased, to put it mildly.”

Lord Dagda, unfortunately, had his goblet to his lip and had taken a swallow on the sweet and tart wine when his blasted nephew made that statement. He got through the choking and coughing fit, to the accompaniment of pounding on the broad back by his smirking nephew. He eyed the smug man evilly.

“The day Wavern takes a threat to you or your family as merrily being unpleased is the day your grandfather stops dipping his wick in everything that breathes. I am surprised we have not heard about the carnage after such an event? Or has Wavern gotten better at hiding his ..displeasure?” Dagda chuckled darkly.

Amir sighed deeply, “Unfortunately, the woman and most of her minions still live, I fear Alden has sunk into deep plotting, I am concern about what exactly he is planning as there were young cubs involved in the attack as well and our men who were hurt trying to ensure their escape. You know how Wyvern gets.”

“And your Betrothed?” Eyes turning toward Severus, who blushed a brilliant shade of pink.

Amir smiled.

“I have him firmly within my grasp and I do not intend for him to get away this time. We will be hand fasted on the twenty-eighth of July this year, in place of a courtship. After a year and a day, we will bond, as well as blood adopt young Harrison as our son.”

Amir stared into his cup worried.

“For having lived for eighteen years prior, he is woefully undereducated, Uncle. He is still not equipped to start Hogwarts, at least not equipped to my standard. I have been doing some investigating and the educational standard has fallen greatly at the school. I would prefer to send him to Magical Eton, but he lacks the very fundamentals in muggle education. I am at a lost of whether to deage him and let him grow up again properly or relay on live-in-tutors to get him up to speed. I doubt the Headmaster will allow extra tutors for one student though.”

Dagda smiled as he casually plucked a fat grape from the huge bunch flowing over the edge of a platter.

“Sometimes I think you spend too much time outside our dimension. We are faes, nephew. Time runs differently here than in the mundane world. Gwynn Ap Nudd can safely transfer a small portion of our dimension to a place of your choosing. Two weeks in mundane time can be ten in ours if we so choose, although the reverse is more normal. Those who enter will return no older than when they left. In this way, you can teach your son all he needs to know in a safe environment without anyone knowing or interfering.”
Severus was closely following the conversation even though he remained silent. It was at this point when he chose to speak, greatly interested in the ability to create a place with manipulated time.

“I have just inherited an Island from the Prince side of my family, would that work as a place to create such a pocket dimension?” he asked quietly.

“Yes….yes indeed that would work perfectly, it won’t be attached to anything that would cause issues. It can also be a permanent fixture if you so desired, nephew.”

“We would need to make sure the structures are sound and that it's well-staffed and able to be self-sustaining if those who visit will be there for ten years,” Lucius added, already calculating what would be needed. He planned for his entire family to join them when they go, there were things his own son would need to relearn as well. Lucius was sure he would get an earful about the things he inadvertently taught his son from Amir.

As they were quietly talking through the details of what needed to be done and what would be needed to teach Harrison, Andraste approached, his face deathly pale. He bowed towards Lord Dagda, reaching out a hand to steady himself against the back on one of the divans.

“My Lord Dagda, I have sup from Ceridwen’s Potion, I have seen the machinations of the past, I have seen an old threat neutralized and a new one looms in its place…”

Andraste took a shaky breath, his features playing even more.

“I…I…have seen a future that threatens all Magical beings and creatures across the world. Only those who have hidden themselves away in dimensions like us would be spared a horrible fate.”

“AMIR, YOU MUST…..”

“NO….no Uncle, I can not. Gaia entrusted me with the care of her creatures, I cannot abandon them to hide in Death’s Dimension.”

“Amir, you have your family to think of now! Your beloved, your son? What of them?” His Uncle asked.

“Can other dimension be created to hide them all?” Lucius asked.

“No, Lucius. If it was safe to do so, I would but in doing that Magical beings and creatures would be cut off from Gaia, the flow of magic needs to be ever moving between both to be healthy. To take them away would be blocking Gaia's ability to release natural magic into the world, and creatures and beings will sicken and die from being cut off.” Amir explained.

“Then a hidden sanctuary! If we knew roughly how long we have before whatever happens, we can create heavily warded and protected sanctuaries around the world where they can be safe.” Severus long thought that that would be a great alternative to the long drawn out war his father fought. Take those who belong to the dark and live separately, this way they could practice their traditions and policed their own selves in the use of the Dark Arts.

“Yes! That could work depending on how much time we have to do so, I would only need to concentrate on the British Isle and Africa, the other Emissaries can work within their own territories. We can help each other to finish complete the sanctuaries if any fall behind.”

Amir looked towards Andraste. “Can you give us a rough time estimate of when this even can possibly happen?”
“It will reach the British shores within thirty-one years, but other events will proceed it within other countries. It may happen sooner or later depending on how present-day events occur. I cannot tell you more as it will change the very fabric of time, but I can suggest you find and speak to Gellert Grindelwald, he may be of some help.”

Lord Dagda turned to Bannot who had been quietly sitting throughout the entire meeting.

“Bannot, I authorized Gringotts to refurbish Lord Prince’s Island, take the funds from my family vault. Get input from Amir and his family and make sure it is impenetrable and self-sustaining. I want this started immediately.”

“Amir, I will get one of the Tuatha de Danaan to create special portkeys to get you to the island and back safely. Get together all you would like to have access to the island so they can be keyed into the wards. If needed it can be a safe harbor, the time will be reverted back to the normal fae time.”

Turning back to Bannot,

“Tell Ragnok I want the warriors fully trained at all time, once the sanctuary is established we shall be moving operations. We will leave a satellite office staffed by humans in its stead.”

And so the remaining time continued, with plans being made. Soon it was time to leave, while it was perpetual summer in this dimension, it was early in the morning when they finally reached their beds. Another long day in the making.

Chapter End Notes

I over think things waaaaaay too much! But as promised its posted before Midnight, at least before my midnight lol
Redemption part 2

Chapter Summary

Amir is already tired and it not even Lunchtime yet.

Chapter Notes

Ok, I did a lick and promise as far as editing goes, Spell check only goes so far. I will take the next week to go back over and correct any mistakes I find. I just wanted to get this bloody chapter out!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The waning moon shone down on the darken Galloway Forest, amongst its lush and beautiful setting sat a simple stone hovel with a thatched roof surrounded by a small but neat garden. Inside, Remus John Lupin woke for the fifth time, getting up to check once more that everything was prepared for his job interview in the morning.

A job offer that came out of the blue the previous day, but one he took seriously as it came with a package containing a dark charcoal grey suit of good sturdy quality that will last him for many years with good care. The package also contained three selection of dressed shirts; mint green, dark purple, and crisp white, all three also of excellent sturdy quality. Packages of long-sleeved thermal undershirts in black, grey and white, along with long-legged boxer briefs in matching colors.

A pair of well-polished oxfords in his size, a selection of dressed socks and two styles of ties rounded out the package. The letter stated everything was his to keep even if he decided not to accept the job offer. The letter offered the opportunity to become a private lived in tutor. The letter had stated he should clear his whole day to facilitate the interview process and that breakfast and lunch would be provided.

This was a dream come true, and one he knew would slip through his fingers like grains of sands. Once they found out about his little furry problem all bets would be off. That is…if the family trying to hire him was Magical. A muggle family would not be tolerant of his falling sick on a monthly basis. Still, free clothing that fit well and a day of good food was not a bad trade-off.

Remus made his way out the kitchen door to the small herb garden he grew. He grew all the herbs and vegetables he needed for cooking. Work was not always available for him, so money was a treasured commodity that he learned to spend wisely on things he truly needed. Remus survived by living off the land, hunting in the forest for game, picking fruits, berries, and nuts when they were in season, and growing several varieties of mints and herbs for his homemade teas.
The night air was clean and crisp, the stars blazing a path across the sky, an astronomer’s wet dream. He made his way towards a chamomile bush and clipped a few sprigs, along with some peppermint, and lemon balm.

The hovel sat on one hundred acres of deep natural forest his dad was able to purchase with the promise that the land would never be developed. His home seemed simple, even rundown from the outside, and truthfully, it was only by the grace of magic that he was able to maintain a roof over his head.

The act of making a fresh pot of tea was soothing to his nerves. Washing and adding the fresh cut herbs to a pot of cold water, adding in a few dried passionflower blossoms and letting it all come to a slow simmer. Straining the fragrant mix into his favorite chipped mug and adding a good dollop of wild honey he collected during the early Scottish spring.

He sat in a worn-out battered armchair, sipping his tea while quietly looking out the window at the clear night sky. The sounds of the forest were muted, a permanent muffle charm placed long ago on the hovel due to his extraordinary hearing, so the sounds of creaking branches, rustling leaves, the occasional owls hooting, and chirping of crickets didn’t overwhelm him. Soon, the poor man was relaxed enough to crawl back into his bed, hoping to be as rested as possible for the new day.

A freshly washed, and well-groomed Remus walked into the lobby of the Amba Hotel. Before he had time to let his gaze wonder he was greeted by a stunning man. He was shorter than Remus, who stood at six feet two inches. The gentleman was short and firmly built, even with the tailored suit he wore, Remus could see the hints of definition of strong, well-defined muscles.

Shimmering blond hair was combed back into a long French plait that traveled down the man’s back, the tail end casually brushing the top of a pair of beautifully curved muscle ass cheeks. Remus’ eyes slowly traveled back up to meet deep set amused ice blue ones. Remus’ eyes traveled along the strong face, from the broad forehead, down to the narrow elegant nose, to the very, very kissable thin lips that peeked out from a well-trimmed dark blond beard.

Lips that lifted in amusement as Remus blushed lightly at being caught looking, his eyes rose again to meet those amazing blue eyes, where one elegantly shaped narrow brow was raised. Moony was already baying at the moon, salivating and pawing at the ground ready to jump the poor man. Remus had never been hit with an attraction so strong, but he was a man… not an animal, and he will not embarrass himself today, of all days.

Remus’ Adonis introduced himself as Alden Jeremiah Wavern, Head of Security for the Shafiq Family.

“Mr. Lupin, I want to welcome you once again to the Amba Hotel. First, I will take you on a tour of the Hotel, then I would like to go over some information with you in my office before leaving you in the dining room to enjoy breakfast. Lord Shafiq El-Amin will begin your interview once he has completed his previous engagements. If you are accepted and you have accepted the position, the rest of the day will be taken up with paperwork, as well as, working out what arrangements will be needed. There will be a lunch break, or if you choose the not accept the offer, lunch will be provided in the dining room before you depart.”

Mr. Wavern guided Remus through the lobby, giving a brief overview of the history of the hotel,
Remus found him to be very handsy, Mr. Wavern did not hesitate to rest his hand at the small of Remus’ back to guide him where he wanted him to go. Not that Remus or Moony was complaining in the least. His shoulders relaxed from the touch, which was firm and controlled, the warmth radiating from it sank deep into his bones. Remus’ mind was partially focused on the guided tour, the rest was occupied imagining what else those hands were capable of.

The tour was short, just a quick pointing out of various areas of interest or that may be of use to Remus during his duties. They ended up in Wavern’s office, which was spacious and well appointed. Wavern guided Remus to a comfortable leather and polished wooden chair that sat before the desk. After taking his own seat, Wavern pulled out a file, setting it before him, and began asking questions about Remus’ background and education.

It was the question on how Remus had previously handled his monthly transformation that caught Remus so unaware, how nonchalantly it was put forward, that Remus was halfway through answering before he realized what he was answering. The blood drained from Remus’ face, his brain trying to work out the end game of this situation.

“Mr. Lupin…..Remus, please take a breath, come on now breath for me. Everything is alright I promise you…. that’s it…..breath for me…” Wavern dusky voice spoke calmly, gently guiding him. Remus was shocked to find Wavern beside him, gently rubbing his back and telling him to breathe. It finally dawned on him he was having a panic attack.

Wavern’s warm hands cupped his face as the man locked eyes with Remus, slowly guiding the poor man into matching him breath for breath until Remus was calmer.

“Mr. Lupin, we know about your Lycanthropy and it has no bearing on your consideration for the position, not with our organization. I promise you; you will be safe here. We will provide comfortable accommodation if needed for your transformation, training, and guidance if it is deemed necessary for you to be more comfortable with your wolf and yourself.” Wavern explained as he returned to his seat.

“How……how long…how could you have known……does it truly not matter? You would still hire me, knowing the monster I am?” Remus whispered softly.

“No, my friend, it truly does not matter that you are a werewolf, here you will find that you are a man first and foremost. Whether you accept or reject the offer, you being a werewolf has no bearing on that. The position is lived in, you will be provided with room and board, which includes your attire, all medical needs, and entertainment. You will be provided a monthly stipend for your own personal use.”

Remus stared at him in disbelief, a magical family that knew about his lycanthropy and was still willing to hire him with what seems to be very generous terms of employment. Remus was pretty sure that the room and board would be substandard, although the clothing he has already received showed that any outfits he received would be of sturdy and good quality. Still, the chance to live amongst civilization once again was tempting, and a monthly stipend might mean a chance to splurge on chocolate occasionally.

Remus vow to take the interview seriously, this was a once in a lifetime opportunity he could not let slip through his fingers. He answered all questions truthfully and to the best of his knowledge. The questions revolved around his Muggle and Magical education background, his health issues or when he last saw a healer.

Remus watched as the man quickly made notations in the folder, quietly muttering about arranging appointment times. Wavern then presented Remus with a document to read and sign, a non-discloser
agreement that was binding in Muggle and Magical courts. Remus would have to agree to not disclose to anyone Muggle or Magical, without prior oral permission from Lord Shafiq, any knowledge he gained during the interview if he chose to reject the position.

“Mr. Lupin, I’ll take you to the dining room where I have taken the liberty of pre-ordering your breakfast for you. Please take your time and enjoy, Lord Shafiq will meet with you once he has concluded his previous engagement.” Wavern stated as he walked around the desk to stand beside Remus as he stood from his seat. Wavern continued as he guided Remus out the door, his hand placed gently at the small of Remus’ back once again.

“Once Lord Shafiq is ready, I will take you to his office. If you accept the position, I am afraid it will be a rather busy afternoon for you filling out paperwork and attending a few appointments.”

“What will happen if I refuse the position?”

“Well, while I do hope you will accept as I think you would be a perfect fit and a refreshing person to have joined our little family here, I have been authorized to book a room for you to stay for a few days if you would wish at our expense as there is someone that would like to meet and possibly spend time with you if you are willing.”

Wavern walked quietly beside him down a hallway before directing him into the dining room. Remus was led to a table before the picturesque window overlooking the buildings surrounding the street outside framed by boxes of beautiful red flowers. Being a gentleman, Wavern pulled out the chair for Remus, who blushed, waiting for him to sit before helping him get situated.

“Your breakfast should be ready soon; I do hope I have chosen well.” Remus found himself tongue-tied and blushing even deeper as Wavern leaned down to whisper softly in his ear.

“Position none withstanding, I look forward to getting to know you on a deeper, more personal level Remus.” Wavern’s warm breath danced across his skin, raising goosebumps all over Remus’ body. Moony didn’t help one bit, filling Remus mind with images of naked bodies rutting on the forest floor under the full moon. The fact that it was moony, therefore him, being pinned to the floor moaning in ecstasy did not help Remus’s blushing face one bit.

By the time Remus has the courage to look up, his blond tormentor had already left, and a waiter was approaching with a loaded cart. A basket of warm bread was placed on the table along with small pots of butter, jams, and jellies. Two small chilled bowls followed, one filled with fruit salad and one with sliced tomatoes and cucumbers, shredded carrots and diced avocado on a bed of mixed greens.

The last plate was set directly in front of him. The tantalizing smell had his mouth watering already. A thick cut, juicy ribeye steak accompanied by a mound of golden fluffy scrambled eggs. A carafe of chilled juice was also set on the table for his enjoyment.

“Sir, my name is Jackson and I will be taking care of you today, I do hope you will enjoy your breakfast. Mr. Wavern has also ordered a selection of pastry and hot chocolate for you to enjoy at your leisure once you are done eating. Let me know if you need anything else.”

“Thank you, Jackson. Everything looks delicious, I am sure it will taste just as wonderful.”

Remus cut into the steak first, it was just the way he loved it, warm and bloody. As he ate his fill, he wondered if every job seeker was given such royal treatment or if it was just him, but then he wasn’t actively seeking work, they had sought him out and, he rationalized, they were doing their best to make accepting the position a tantalizing reality.
Remus sat back after pouring himself a glass of juice, which turned out to be pineapple, a luxury he had never afforded before. Unless the Shafiq family were hidden Death Eaters, there really was no reason for him to turn the job down. Then again, even if they were Death Eaters, he guesses he could always use the position to spy for the order if need be.

Not all Death Eaters were evil sadistic bastards, it was something he never let himself think about, the fact that it was not the Dark side that passed laws that made it impossible for him to survive in the magical world. He was a werewolf caught between the fire and the frying pan, bound to get burn by either but having to choose which would hurt him less.

If nothing more, he could possibly save enough to finally leave the British Isles and find somewhere safe to live out the rest of his life. Nodding to himself, yes, that is what he will do, enjoy his time, save as much as he can and plan a way out of this country, who knows… maybe Wavern might join him.

It was quite late when Severus and Amir got back to the hotel. Severus headed into the bathroom to change and prepare for bed while Amir spoke to the babysitter before dismissing her. Severus watched from the bathroom door as Amir gently caressed their son’s hair away from his face then tucked the sheets securely around Harrison.

It was three am, and Severus had a long day ahead of him tomorrow. He still carried the pain from his earlier punishment, only the levitating spell he and Lucius had devised as young teen saved them from embarrassing themselves before the Fae Summer Court tonight. There was absolutely no way they could have sat for that meeting. Their robes hid the fact that both men were hovering barely an inch above the seat of the chair.

Severus sighed deeply, not that Amir will have pity on him tomorrow either. Moving quietly to his own bed, Severus resigned himself to sleeping on his stomach for the foreseeable future. To be honest, the pain was not as horrible as before, from the quick look he chanced in the bathroom while changing, he was still red from the top of his ass to just above the back on his knees.

The stripes and welts were still there throbbing dully. The healers had tended and healed any open wounds and dulled the pain enough to let them function. It was worth it, as far as Severus was concerned, going through that punishment provided a safety net for him and his brother.

A full confession, their every sin was laid out before the Emissary, they cannot be tried or punished for their past crime, and they would be damn foolhardy to commit new ones under Amir’s watch. Deep in thought, Severus was slightly started as strong arms wrapped around him from behind pulling him against a solid chest.

“You are a brat that sorely loves to test my patience, Habibi.”

Severus hung his head, taking comfort in Amir’s arms wrapped around him.

“I want you kneeling in the corner once you have woken up, you need to reflect on your behavior tonight Severus. I will not tolerate such actions again. If being with me, is truly a hardship for you, I will let you go. I do not want you staying because you fear your future will turn out like it previously had, Severus. You know what I demand from the person who would be my life mate. I will still be in Harrison and your life if you chose to step back, but I need you to seriously think about this.”
No...no......no.... noooo this could not be happening! Severus was shaking his head vehemently, but could not utter a word, his throat clenched shut suddenly. Amir’s arms tighten around him holding him still.

“Know that if you do decide that this is the life you do want, we will be discussing your behavior and future behavior in dept tomorrow, Habibi.”

Amir walked him towards the bed before waving his hand, the covers quietly slide back. Sitting him down on the bed, Amir gently grasped his chin, tilting his head up to look at him.

“I love you with my entire being, but if you decide you do not want this, I will understand. I would still like to be in Harrison’s life, and I ask you to consider sharing custody with me. I will make sure you and Harrison will be taken care of, but I will not press my suit further.”

Tucking the sheet around him gently, Severus felt Amir gently caress his cheek before pressing a light kiss to his forehead.

“Ahlam sa’ida,” was softly whispered before Amir turned to leave the room.

Looking at the digital clock on the bedside table, he realized just how long of a night they all had. Four thirty glared back at him in red numbers. He was tired but sleep was far away from him, his mind would not let him rest. He was too busy kicking himself for ruining another good thing in his life.

Before he could spiral down into self-hatred and depression, the part of him that revealed itself earlier at Gringotts made itself known in his mind. Taking a deep breath, he got out of bed and headed to the corner where he found a plush cushion waiting for him. Kneeling, he rested his hands on his thighs palms up, his back straight and shoulders down and relaxed. He closed his eyes and concentrated on breathing slow and evenly.

Amir asked him if he wanted to stay or go, he already knew the answer to that, he was staying. The question became why. Was he really staying because he feared a repeat of the future Harrison had already gone through?

No, that was not the reason, he knew the moment Amir walked out the door to the shops backroom that this was where he was meant to be. He knew before he even found out about his possible future. So no, he was not staying because of what the future may turn out to be, but because he knew in his heart that he belonged with Amir, that together he and Harrison would have a real family with the insufferable Lord.

That question safely out of the way, Severus focused on his day and his behavior throughout. He took a Slytherin approached and looked at it from outside. Putting Harrison in his place, how did his behavior look to others, he was ashamed to admit, that if Harrison had behaved as he did, he would gladly blister his son’s backside.

He had withheld information that would have affected not just himself and Harrison but also Amir, a lie of omission, something he knew Amir hated. His behavior in Diagon Alley, regardless that the streets were empty, was atrocious. He was a Lord and the betrothed of Lord Shafiq, he was a Potion Master and a teacher, he was a thirty-one-year-old man behaving like a spoiled three-year-old throwing a temper tantrum.

To top it all off, he never once apologized for his unbecoming behavior. Amir was going to kill him, he was never going to sit again, he should literally kiss his ass goodbye right now, there will not be anything left after Amir was finished with him.
His submissive persona slapped the back of his overly dramatic bratty persona’s head. Currently, Severus did not find it strange to see himself and his two other entity in his mindscape so clearly. The brat was rubbing the back of his head while pouting, and his submissive side stood calm and confident.

'We must apologize to Amir for our behavior first and foremost. We must also take stock of how our behavior will reflect on both Amir and our son. We are no longer teenagers, nor are we unattached."

'So, you're just gonna get rid of me then.’ The brat pouted, the way he held himself, Severus knew he was moments from breaking down. His gaze turned to the Sub in question.

'No, we are not getting rid of you, you have your place here with us, but we cannot allow you to be the main voice when things get stressful. We are now a parent and for lack of a better word, a wife and we need to start behaving appropriately. We are going to apologize to Amir and take our punishment, then we are going to do the same with our big brother.”

'So, you are expecting me to be nice and submissive to everyone, I rather think not!’

'No, Severus, I expect you to be your snarky, charming self, as usual, I, or rather both I and Brat will only answer to Amir. He loves Brat... that is... when Brat is fun and teasing, not so much when he is wild and out of control. While myself, I doubt he has met me yet, although He did get a glimpse tonight. If we want to make this work, we need to work together. Are we in agreement?"

The Brat had cheered up when he was told that Amir loved him, and while Severus had his own doubts, he knew this may be the only way to make changes yet still be himself and make his future marriage work. He tucked away the thought that he was going mental, seriously talking to spilt personalities in his head, for another time to fret about.

He came out of his trance-like state at the touch on his shoulder. Glancing around he realized that morning had already dawned, and the hand that touched him belonged to Amir. A very upset Amir. One of the house elves must have reported him leaving the bed not soon after Amir had left the room. He knew he should wait until Amir gave him leave to rise from the cushion, but he had to do this now before Amir started smacking away at his bottom for disobedience.

Rising, he stood before his husband to be, hands folded behind his back and head tilted in submission yet keeping eye contact.

“My Lord husband, please allow me to apologize for my behavior yesterday. It was truly unbecoming, and I now realized that I did cross a line in the way I acted and in how I spoke. I did not show the proper respect for you and to you, to Lucius or myself in my behavior. I am truly sorry and accept my punishment.”

Severus stood trembling; this was harder than he thought. He still had more to apologize for, he now realized why he let his brat out in such situation, it was easier to brat about that own up to his mistakes it seems. He swallowed hard and continued.

“I also apologize for lying to you by not telling you sooner about Harrison’s memories. Instead, I snuck behind your back trying to deal with it on my own. As my husband to be, I should have put my trust and faith in you foremost. I disrespected you as my future Head of Family and as my future husband, it was a mistake I will not repeat again Amir….. I am truly sorry for my actions.”

Amir’s face softened slightly if granite could soften. He was deeply upset with Severus’ behavior of late, but having him standing before him, shaking with fright as he willingly and without prompt
recite and apologize for his behavior dulled his anger and his fears.

Amir half expected to be told that Severus wanted out of the relationship, or worst having to deal with a ranging brat this morning. Considering that Severus was out of bed not minutes after Amir had left the room, Amir thought that pushing boundaries was on the agenda and was more than ready to deal with his recalcitrant husband.

“I also apologize for leaving my bed last night, I was not aiming to be disobedient, but my thoughts would not let me sleep. I was scared that I had ruined everything once again. It helped, kneeling in the corner that is…..it helped me to think about my behaviors over the years. When you are ready to hear my answers to the questions you ask earlier, I am ready to tell you my answers, but for now, here is where I want to be, where I was meant to be. At your side or over your lap, it matters not, I am your's Amir because I want to be yours.”

Amir drew Severus closer, wrapping his arms around the shaking man. He did not think having to face a punishment caused this much of a distraught in Severus, not when Severus had faced many such punishments before. Usually much louder and with more vitriol than this. No, this quiet, shaking, apologizing Severus was a new element for him.

Amir felt tears soak his shirt when Severus had laid his head against his chest. His poor little love, such a complex man.

“I accept and appreciate your apologies, Habibi. I am glad to see that the time you used to reflect did some good, although I am unhappy about you not resting and leaving your bed after I had left the room. Here is what going to happen today, husband dear. I will be treating each incident separately which means you are getting three separate punishments. You will be getting a spanking first thing this morning for your atrocious behavior last night, you will then have breakfast with our little bunny and I before I send you back to bed. You will again receive another spanking before lunch for lying to me. I will be meeting with Lupin about the live-in tutoring position, if he accepts, he will most likely be joining us for dinner. I will be having lunch with you and bunny before you are sent back to bed. Your punishment for not going to sleep last night will be an early night, argue with me about it and I will add a bedtime spanking.”

In his head, Severus knew it was not fair for his submissive side to take the brunt of the punishment when it was the brat and his own behavior that caused the mess. He came forward taking the trembling hand of the Sub. He suddenly knew that it was not fear but a massive sense of disappoint was being felt at earning Amir’s disapproval and earning a true punishment. He was further shocked when the Brat stepped up and took the other hand.

“We are all in this together right, we have to work together to make this family work, so we have to be there for the good and the bad, we made this mess, it’s not fair for you to be the only one punished.’

When the Brat was right, he was right.

Severus soon found himself in Amir’s quarters, he headed to the bathroom to change into a pair of jock straps. Amir was always such a stickler about propriety, he had no issues spanking his bare bottom, but because they were not married, he will not have Severus in what he considered a compromising position. In other words, no naked dangling bits within range of sight or touch.

The dreaded hairbrush was resting on the bathroom counter, he was expected to bring it with him and present it to Amir before having his ass handed to him by the blusted thing. He was tempted to
incendio that damn thing and flush the ashes down the toilet, unfortunately, if he did that, he had
better find a way to follow the ashes, as Amir will surely triple his punishment.

Picking up the wooden death paddle, he slowly made his way back into the living room where Amir
waited, sitting on a couch long enough for Severus to be able to stretch out full while on his
husband’s lap.

Holding his hands out palms up with the brush resting on top, Severus presented the instrument of
his doom.

“I am ready for my punishment Amir.”

“Thank you, Severus, now please tell me why you are being punished this morning.”

It was the back and forth that Severus dreaded, but Amir insisted on. A standard protocol of being
punished, having to answer set questions before, during, and after having you hide tanned.

“I am being spanked because my behavior last night did not reflect my upbringing nor the standards
that are expected of me from myself nor you. I was unruly and belligerent in a public setting and
behaved like a child, therefore I am being punished as a child would.” Severus blushed deeply
having to recite an answer he knew nearly by rote. The fact that this was not the first time, he was
being punished for such behavior did not help him in the least, fortunately, it had been years since the
last incident.

Amir drew him across his lap, settling him on the couch before drawing up the back of his
nightgown. Amir and Lucius shared one thing in common, they never gave a number, so you were
left wondering if your punishment was ever going to end. It was done when they felt the lesson had
sunk in, whatever that meant, the bloody wankers.

The first smacked forced a loud yelp out of Severus, his bottom was already on fire as Amir was not
holding back lighting up his ass with each stroke. Severus wiggled and squirming already begging
for forgiveness and mercy, promising to be on his best behavior from now on.

Amir watched as Severus alternated between trying to be stoic and suffer through the punishment
and wailing and squirming, begging for the spanking to stop and promising to be good. Soundproof
warding was up, so he allowed Severus free reign to holler and wail to his heart content. He planned
for this punishment to stick, while he loved Severus bratty nature, he will not tolerate such behaviors
in public.

Severus’ bottom was soon a bright red from the top to the back on his knees. Amir had long ago
pinned his arms to the small of his back to keep him from trying to cover his poor bottom. That
maneuver earned him several sharp smacks to the crease between his bottom and thighs. To make
matter worse, Amir lectured him the entire bloody time, asking him questions that he had to answer
or earned, even more, swats to his sensitive sit spot.

After an eternity, the spanking stopped. Severus laid there sobbing; all the fight drained out of him.
He wasn’t sure how he was going to survive another spanking in the same day, but he would not
worry about it, he trusted Amir, if he truly could not take another spanking, Amir will either delaying
it or cancel it or find an alternative punishment.

Amir gently rubbed his back, which felt so soothing after such a punishment, his sobs died down to
sniffles and the odd hiccup. Soon, he was wrapped in strong arms and cuddled before being lifted
and carried, the scent of warm moist air and potion laced water soon had him opening his eyes and
groggily gazing about to find he had been carried into the bathroom where a large tub filled with
bubbles and healing potion waited for him.

He was gently set down. He gazed shyly up at Amir only to receive a tender kiss on the tip of his nose.

“You are so beautiful when you are repentant, my little brat. I want you to soak in the tub until I come to get you for breakfast, I do not want a repeat of this morning, you WILL stay where I put you understand, Habibi?” Amir locked his stern eyes on Severus until the poor man nodded in agreement.

“Yes, Amir. I understand.”

Harry woke up to a beautiful morning. The sun was shining, Jasmine was setting out one of his new outfits for him to change into once he was finished preparing for the day. His da wasn’t in the room but the bed was rumpled, so he knew his Da came back at some point last night.

After his morning toiletries and a nice hot shower, Harry walked out of the bathroom just as his Baba entered their suite.

“Morning baba,” Harry greet Amir shyly, the word still a bit exotic on his tongue.

“Morning my little bunny, did you sleep well last night?”

“Yes sir, it was the best sleep I had in a long time. Did Da come home late last night? Where is he now, baba?

“Severus is currently having a long soak in my tub before breakfast, I joined your father and uncle at Gringotts after you fell asleep, so yes we did arrive back quite late, little one. There are some things your father and I must work out today, and I also must interview your tutor as well. I also want your father resting quietly in bed today, so you will be on your own for most of the day until late this afternoon. Do you think you will be alright by yourself?”

“That’s alright baba, I’m used to being by myself. Can I explore the hotel?”

“May you, little bunny,” his baba corrected “and yes, you may explore the hotel and some of the grounds outside within the boundaries of the hotel fence. When you are ready you can have your lunch and your tea in the dining room. Please do not enter the bar. There are a few quiet lounge areas where you can read, so I suggest taking some of your books with you and a game or two just in case.”

“Ok baba, that sounds like a good idea.”

What sounded like a good idea to Harry was using this opportunity to sneak out and possibly retrieve the Slytherin locket from 12 Grimmauld Place. He wasn’t sure how, but he still retained the memory of where it was located. There should only be Kreacher there and the mad painting of Walburga Black. He still had some Muggle money left over from yesterday’s shopping spree.

He would feed Anpu first, then head to the roof after breakfast to visit Horus. He would explore the hotel for a little bit before heading outside when things got the busiest. He would sneak away with a crowd and head to the underground and travel to the closest station to the Black residence.
It would have been easier to sneak out with the invisibility cloak, that was currently in the Headmaster’s possession. His da will be stuck in bed resting and his baba in the interview, with luck he could be there and back before lunch, with no one none the wiser about his little side trip.

While the elves were setting the table for breakfast, Amir headed back to his room to fetch Severus. Harry packed his old backpack with his new Gameboy, a Grimm’s Fairy tales storybook, and the Muggle science book about water and all its properties.

Jasmine informed him that Horus was already fed along with the other birds of prey that were housed on the rooftop, but she was sure that the little birdy would love a visit from Harry. Great, he would head there first before exploring the hotel a bit then making his escape.

Harry glanced up from his bag as Amir escorted his Da into the room. Severus pale complexion was even paler, and Harry noticed how tired the man looked. The boy was kind of shocked to see his Da in a white robe like gown, it wasn’t the gown that shocked him but the color!

Before sitting down, Severus drew him near and kissed his forehead wishing him good morning. Harry blushed a little, his being filled with warmth as Severus gently caressed his hair. It was something so small, yet, something he will always cherish, these small gestures of endearment or acceptance that many took for granted.

The morning air was filled with idle chatter as Harry filled his Da in on yesterdays adventure; learning a new form of magic, the shopping spree, and all the new toys and gadgets he was bought. Severus was more interested in the IQ computer and the various modules that came with it, poor Harry ended up with a math assignment added to his day’s activities.

Excited to get his plans underway, Harry finished eating quickly, kissed his Da and Baba goodbye and headed out the door to explore leaving his fathers smiling in the wake of his departure. First stop was to the rooftop and Horus.

His plan was simple really, it should be nothing to sneak out of the hotel, he has don’t it for years sneaking around the castle. Granted it would have been easier with the invisibility cloak, Harry shrugged to himself, not much can be done about that now.

Taking the elevator to the top floor, he found the service exit that led to a short flight of stairs that opened onto the flat rooftop. The view was spectacular from this height, he took time to walk along the perimeter just gazing out and the city before him.

The worthless freak, the waste of space, the attention seeker, the weapon was now just a little boy in a big city finally getting to see the world he had died for. That thought froze him for a minute, now he couldn’t be a little boy just yet, he still had things to do, only …yes only after he had gotten rid of the Horcruxes can he be a child, can he be Severus and Amir’s proper child.

Harry girded himself and began to put his plan into action. Horus was happy to see him, gently cooing at him but looking at him sternly as if he knew that his boy was planning some mischief. Harry watched Horus fly around for a bit before putting him back into the aviary, with a promise of coming back later in the day to visit.

The next part of the plan was making it look to anyone who paid attention that he was just innocently exploring the hotel. The hotel itself was just coming alive, with guest coming out of their rooms to head to breakfast or accepting room service.

Harry found a quiet alcove where he could keep watch of any large group that may potentially leave the hotel. It would be easier to sneak out by tagging along with such a group. He was allowed
outside but within the Hotel grounds. The staff would think he was just getting some fresh air.

It took a while and he was able to get some reading done on the properties of water when a group serving his needs left the dining room. They were a mix of adults and kids his age. Perfect! Quickly packing up, Harry casually wandered about the atrium where the front desk and entrance was located before slipping out with the noisy group.

Taking a deep breath, he quickly crossed the street and headed into the McDonalds. It should look like he only snuck out to get a treat. He waited and joined another group of holiday kids leaving, he headed straight to Charring Cross underground and took the tube to Holborn, from there it was a short walk to 12 Grimmauld Place.

Harry’s plan kind of got muddle from this point on. In true Gryffindor style, he never thought through how he was going to get past the wards, or Kreacher, or bloody hell what if someone lives in the house!? He wasn’t sure if there was another Fidelius Charm on the place.

Okay, he was reasonably sure that there was not another charms place, or because he already knew the secret, he still retained the memory of where the house was, because standing before Number 11 and 13 and stating the address the house was now appearing for him.

So far so good, he rushed up the steps to the door, laying his hands against the wards and pouring out his intent, letting the family magic examined him fully. The fact he got this far without being cursed stupid or blown to bits was a good sign. Professor McGonagall always did say he was filled with sheer dumb luck.

He was really surprised when there came a soft click and the front door opened. He laid his hands upon the outside walls of the house and gave a deeply heartfelt and grateful thank you to the magic and protected this place.

It was dark, dank and dusty as ever, Kreacher was nowhere in sight which he was grateful for. The dreaded portrait of Walburga was covered…another blessing. ‘Think Harry, think…where was the first place, I saw that blasted pendant? Yes, that cabinet with all the cursed stuff!’

Moving as quietly as he possibly could he made his way to the drawing room where the large display cabinet stood. Harry stared at it. There it was for all to see; how could they have missed it before. Albus bloody Dumbledore or even Mad-Eye Moody and his all-seeing eye. How did no one realize that one of the vilest of creations was laying innocently on display, even handled by children that were tasked with cleaning this room?

Harry groan, he really didn’t think this plan through did he, how was he supposed to contain the Horcrux, seriously! Well, he knew from experience that it would affect him the least of everyone, hell him being a Horcrux himself was probably the reason for that.

Nothing to it then, he opened the case and grabbed the bloody nuisance. He quickly made his way out of the house, still surprised at not being stopped. He was patting himself on the back, admittedly gloating just a tad bit and he walked out into the sunlight and right into a solid figure.

A solid figure? Harry slowly gazed up into the very pissed off stern face of his Jetey!

“Oh, Fuck!”
For Amir. This day was already shaping up to be long and strenuous. He had not planned on dealing with Severus so early in the day, really, after the long night they all had, he expected the man to at least sleep until noon.

With his beloved soaking in the bathtub and his son forewarned about being on his own for most of the day, that gave him a few minutes to meet with his head of security.

“Mr. Lupin has arrived, Sir.”

“Thank you for alerting me, Alden. I know it is not in your job description my friend, but can I trouble you to keep him entertained while I sort out a few issues this morning?”

The smile that greeted Amir made his own brows shot up in question.

“It will certainly be my pleasure to……entertain Mr. Lupin, Sir”

“Alden?”

Said man simply walked away whistling a merry tune casing Amir to chuckle softly while shaking his head. Far be it for him to meddle in his friend and employee’s love life when he had his own to sort out.

Speaking of which, Amir headed back to his suite. Calling for Tamarisk he asked the elf to please help his beloved out of the tub, while he gathered some clothing for him. Sesban popped in with a bow asking if he could assist his Master.

“Thank you Sesban, you are always so generous with your help,” Amir smiled at the elf, “your Master Severus will mostly be on bed rest so something soft and gently on his sore bottom will be appreciated. A galabeya would do, see if you can find one in the softest material available please, and I think a pair of Chinese slippers would be ideal for when he leaves the bed.”

With a nod, Sesban quietly popped out leaving Amir to go over his notes on one Remus John Lupin. Alden’s file was surprisingly thorough even down to what size clothing the man wore and what his diet usually consists of. Amir would not be so foolish as to inquire just how Alden had gotten his hands and such information.

Tamarisk peeped out the bathroom letting know that Severus was decent. With a chuckle, he sent his work back to his office with a wave of his hand and went to retrieve his beloved brat. He paused in the doorway to catch his breath as he caught sight of his Severus.

Sesban had chosen a galabeya that was made from vicuna fabric in soft cream color. The collar was high and gently wrapped about Severus' throat with small gold buttons that march down to just below his collar bone.

The long full sleeves were banded at the wrist accented with two gold buttons otherwise the galabeya was free-flowing and ended just above the floor with Severus shoe covered feet peeking out. For his feet, it seems Sesban was able to find a rare cream-colored Kung Fu slipper to match the galabeya.

Tamarisk had brushed Severus’ raven locks until it shone and laid in soft waves down to his
shoulders. His beloved still looked pale, tired and slightly haunted, something a good meal and additional rest will surely help with.

Breakfast was an enjoyable experience for Amir, it made him miss his own father and siblings, while he loved and missed his mother at times, it was his father that filled the primary parental role in his life. He thought on that as Harry filled his Dad in on his prior day’s adventures. It was the most he ever heard out of the boy, but the way his eyes light up as he spoke of learning new magic and getting to go shopping in London made Amir’s heart swell with joy.

But as with all things enjoyable, breakfast soon ended. Harrison had dashed off to enjoy his day of freedom exploring, and Severus was soon tucked into bed in a cooled, darken room filled with the quiet, gentle classical music.

In his office, Amir sat behind his desk reading the file of Lupin, he had already gone over the more pertinent information, Alden always made sure he presented the more important facts first. What he was now going over were the personal details, quirks and habits, of the man.

The image he now had of the man coupled with what he saw in his son’s memories, was one of deep loyalty and intelligence with a touch of self-contempt and cowardness. Amir was not sure if it was the man’s innate traits or something beaten and drummed into him.

The man was incredibly intelligent and well read, surprisingly so, considering he never furthered his education past Hogwarts, his knowledge of magic reflects beyond what Hogwarts taught even in Lupin’s days of attending. Lupin was also a very loyal man, he still mourns the loss of his first pack to this day, never trying to seek another one. He was a very loyal man, or he was a coward.

As Amir read, he wondered just how stuck to Dumbledore’s backside were Lupin’s lips. The man spent his life denying his wolf, he abandoned Harrison mostly likely on the say-so of the Headmaster, this he extrapolated from the file and Harrison’s memories, all the times he should have been there for the boy yet left because of orders.

With a sigh Amir sat back in the chair to think, a long elegant finger gently tapping on the edge of the file. Lupin was not an alpha he was sure of that, which would make this plan the best option to go with. He will bind to wolf to his family as tightly as he can leaving no room to wiggle out back to Dumbledore, and in the process, he might just save the old wolf’s life and (here he had to laugh softly to himself) the man might just find something he least expected.

The interview was going well so far, and Amir had to admit he really did like Lupin. Remus spoke of gaining his GCSE in English, Math, History, and Earth Science by enrolling in a further education college in Wales, there was a small teachers college near his home where he gained a certificate that helped him find employment from time to time as a tutor and substitute teacher.

Lupin was a voracious reader and kept up on his studies in other subjects such as various sciences such as chemistry, physic, biology, and geography, as well as social studies. He spoke Welsh and
Gaelic, plus French and extraordinarily Portuguese. There were some glaring gaps in Lupin's education that Amir would have no issues filling over time.

There were now at the part of the interview where Amir explained what was expected and required of Lupin. Before he spoke, he sat back in his chair to study the man across the desk from him. At thirty-one years of age, Lupin should not have looked so tired and worn out.

Like his beloved upstairs, Amir wanted to feed the young boy before him and tuck him safely into bed and protect him from all the pain and worries in the world. Lupin looked back at him with such hope in being accepted for the job, yet, Amir can already see resignation that he would not be accepted.

“I would like to explain to you what it means to accept this position you are being offered, Mr. Lupin.” Amir started slowly.

“This is not merely a job, you would, in fact, be a member of my family, my pack in essence, and I, in turn, would be your Alpha. I would expect you to put your loyalty to me and our pack before any other including Albus Dumbledore.” He continued as he watched Lupin's reactions to his words.

“You will live with us full time. For the first year, you will accompany my son and my Betrothed to Hogwarts where you will help tutor him to make sure he does not fall behind in his studies. After this first year, you will be studying yourself during the school year and tutoring during the holidays.”

“Studying, Sir?” Remus whispered.

“Yes, you have an excellent mind and it’s a shame that it is going to waste. I would like to give you the opportunity to gain a formal education. It will benefit not only you but my son as well as you will be able to teach him things he would not learn at Hogwarts.”

“I…I...” Amir ignored whatever Lupin was trying to say to continue.

“You will be provided with room and board, your medical needs will be fully taken care off, any trips we take as a family you will be expected to join. You will be given a monthly stipend for your own personal use. You will be subject to my discipline if there is a need for it. What you learn about our family and its inner workings are never to be shared with anyone.”

Out of that entire little speech, one-word caught Remus’ attention.

“Discipline, Sir?”

Suddenly magic flooded the room, it was overwhelming, causing Remus to whimper and Moony to roll over before such power.

“Make no mistake little wolf if you misbehave, I will not have a problem dragging your mangy hide over my lap, baring your bottom and tanning you from now till Kingdom come,” Amir continues calmly as if he had not threatened to whip a grown man’s bottom like a spoiled child, “Now, because I am a fair man, I will let you know that my betrothed is Severus Snape. I know you both have a history, but I expect you both to move past that and be civil with each other at the least.”

A job with room and board plus a monthly stipend and full medical care and trips with the family and a formal education fully paid for versus playing nice with Severus Snape and getting his bottom smacked if his behavior displeased his Alpha. Damn what a choice to make. But was it really that hard of a choice? No, no it wasn’t, even if Snape turned out to be an utter bastard, he did not think Lord Shafiq would let Snape mistreat him.
The magic that filled the room was still overwhelming, but Remus realized it held warmth and caring and hints of sternness and had a bit of paternal feel to it. Almost but not quite like Albus’ magic, really it was better than Albus’, Lord Shafiq’s magic felt genuine in its offer of care and acceptance, Moony was practically rolling around in it.

“I understand, Alpha. I will do my best not to cause issues with Severus. What you are offering is more than I would ever expect from anyone. I accept the position, I accept that I will be subject to your discipline, I understand that when I take the vow, I cannot divulge any information to anyone without your permission and I accept that. I will do my best to keep the peace between Severus and I.”

Amir smiled. Remus was awed by that smile as it, it made him feel like a child that did something exceptional and his father was showing how proud he was. Remus ducked his head feeling suddenly bashful.

“Thank you for putting your trust and care into my hands, Remus. I promise you will not regret that decision. Now, I have something here for you. It is one of a kind, something that was gifted to my father long ago.”

An elf dressed in an actually livery uniform consisting of black breeches and a dark grey coat with tails with a cream vest peeking out surprised the living hell out of Remus. The elf presented a cedar cask covered in what looked like hieroglyphics and runes.

Amir thanked the elf, who Remus found out was named Tamarisk, before setting the box on his desk and opening the cask. Inside resting on a bed of dark blue linen was a gold armband designed as a cuff to be worn around the upper arm. It was covered in glyphs and runes.

“This is the Cuff of Ophios, it was created by the Egyptian God Wepwawet and gifted to my father many, many…. many years ago,” Amir stated with a smile, “whoever wears this cuff has complete control of their wolf's transformation.”

“Alpha, you can't mean…”

“Yes, Remus. By wearing this cuff, you will have control of when and where you transform, you will no longer be held hostage by the moon. When I place this cuff on your arm, I and only I will be able to remove it. No more locking your self away during the full moon. However, Remus, you will learn to integrate with your wolf, he is apart of you and always will be. As your Alpha, it is my duty to make sure you are healthy in all ways, part of that will be sending you to mentor with an old friend of mine that will help you come to terms with your wolf.”

It amused Amir greatly to see the man before him actually pouted at hearing the news about being mentored. He gestured to Remus to remove his jacket and shirt so the cuff could be placed. Gently wrapping the cuff around the thin arm, Amir infused his magic into the cuff sealing it against removal.

Both Remus and Moony took the opportunity to lean in breathing in the scent of their Alpha. Hot dessert sand, smoky sandalwood and the bright scent of oranges and lemons seared the images of their Alpha deep into their mind.

Amir gently scruffed the back on Remus’s neck pulling him into a hug and a gentle caress to his head before releasing him to redress. All that remained was leading Remus through the vow that would finally make him part of the family and safe from interfering old busybodies.
Remus was now not only well employed but a member of the Shafiq family and personal staff. He was currently strolling behind to Lord Shafiq and Alden, amused at the two men arguing over what needed to be done first. His Alpha wanted him to have a meal and to rest for the remainder of the day followed by a full health assessment and some clothes shopping. Alden wanted to get a jump start on moving any and everything belongs to Remus.

They were both arguing about where the family was going to live after this week. It seems that his Alpha’s son was to stay elsewhere for the rest of the summer and Remus would be staying with him, but this was only a short-term situation.

It simply amused Remus to hear both men arguing back and forth because it was not an Employer arguing with an employee but two longtime friends sniping at each other about whose idea was better. As with all Dominants, it seems neither bothered to ask his opinion on what he would like first to happen.

He nearly ran into the back of Alden when both men froze in the Atrium. A young man quickly walked over to them whispering softly. Lord Shafiq was gazing at the entrance slightly shell-shocked. Remus looked about trying to figure out what had caused his Alphas reaction, but all he saw was a mixed group of adults and kids leaving out the door.

Alden quietly asked for the car to be brought around and gave the order to tracked whoever had caused the reaction. Remus turned to his boss wondering what was going on. Alden nodded to him to remain silent and just follow their lead.

Amir didn’t hire fools, and Harrison’s detail made sure to keep pace with his every move. Amir, Alden, and Remus followed the directions from Marlon who was in disguised and close by to Harrison while David kept an eye out from afar.

Soon the car, which really was a limo, parked in front of a set of row houses. Outside two men waited for their boss to exit the car.

“We followed him here Sir, we switched places and disguises a few times so he would not see the same person around him, but honestly the kid didn’t really pay that much attention to his surroundings,” Marlon reported.

“He disappeared into the building, we really couldn’t see which one, so we think it might have a Fidelius Charm on it,” David added.

“Either way we are going to wait here until he returns. Thank you both for keeping him safe.”

David and Marlon nodded accepting the thanks and headed over to Alden to report in and accept new orders while they waited. In the meanwhile, Alden filled in Remus on what exactly was happening and what was likely to happen.
“Remus, it more than likely your going to see Amir’s son getting his backside smacked in the car. Regardless of what your feelings are on this matter, please do not interfere.” Alden stated while resting a reassuring hand on Remus’ shoulder.

The wait wasn’t long, only fifteen minutes, even if it felt like an eternity, before a raven hair boy appeared out of thin air, a slight smirk on his face only to collide with his boss. Alden felt sorry for the kid.

His brat thought that he was being sneaky. Dear Lord in Heaven save him from willful brats, but Amir was more upset that amused, well he would be amused much later.... that is when his heart stop trying to leap out of his chest when he thought back to how he watched Harrison try to nonchalantly leave with the group and head towards McDonald's only to leave with another group. The boy was going to be grounded until he old and grey

Harry felt the locket being summon from his hand and himself being picked up by the back of his shirt as he was hauled off to a waiting limo. Before he has a chance to explain or plead his case, he felt himself dragged over his baba’s lap and his pants and underwear unceremoniously yanked down and hard stinging smacks raining down on his poor unprotected bottom.

A squirming pleading Harry found himself on the wrong side of his strict Jetey and he didn’t like it one bit. His baba could scold something fierce, and he wasn’t letting up with the stinging smacks to his bottom and thighs either.

He soon found himself laying limp very this baba’s lap all the fight fled out of him, crying his heart out, fortunately, the car ride wasn’t very long as he was spanked the entire time. He barely noticed to two men sitting across from them watching the entire scene.

As the car rolled to a stop in front of the hotel, Amir gently pulled his son's clothes back into place, and hauled Harrison into his arms, carrying him from the car and through the hotel lobby with his son's arms and legs wrapped around him and his head buried against Amir’s neck still weeping and sniffing softly.

Amidst all this, Amir noticed how much alike Harrison was to Severus, both his brats got sleepy after being spanked, although he still wanted to scold Harrison some more and washed his mouth of that foul word, he tucked his little boy into bed with his Da.

Severus had awakened when Amir had entered the room but did not feel the need to open his eyes. It was only when he felt a small timorous body being tucked in next to him did Severus open his eyes to a sleepily crying Harry. Gazing up at Amir, who quietly filled him in on their son’s morning shenanigans, did Severus, in turn, gave poor Harry another set of stinging slaps to an already sore bottom before snuggling him close.

Chapter End Notes

I was trying to get through one who day in a chapter but didn't even male it to lunch lol
Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!