**Hiding in Plain Sight**

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**Hiding in Plain Sight**

by [elvirakitties](http://archiveofourown.org/users/elvirakitties)

**Summary**

A different Harry raised by two snakes, with the help of Sev.
Brit looked at the letter the crazy owl dropped into his lap. The letter felt weird. He used the skills he learned from his two snakes to checked the letter out. He usually did so anyway but this one really felt weird. He got rid of all the little charms on the letter, crossed out the name Harry Potter. He wrote Britannicus Peverell above Harry Potter. Just like he had been instructed to do. He had another letter sitting on the desk but this was the one he had been warned about. He turned the letter over and saw the seal.

~It arrived?~

~Yes, Tom, it did. Nagini was looking for you.~

~I saw her. Did it say Harry Potter?~

~Yes, already fixed it and removed the charms. I was about to open it.~ Brit opened the letter as Tom slithered up his leg and settled around his neck to read the letter.

HOGWARTS SCHOOL of WITCHCRAFT and WIZARDRY

Headmaster: Albus Dumbledore
(Order of Merlin, First Class, Grand Sorc., Chf. Warlock, Supreme Mugwump, International Confed. of Wizards)

Dear Mr. Potter,

We are pleased to inform you that you have been accepted at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Please find enclosed a list of all necessary books and equipment.

Term begins on 1 September. We await your owl by no later than 31 July.

Yours sincerely,

Minerva McGonagall
Deputy Headmistress

Brit turned to the second page:

HOGWARTS SCHOOL of WITCHCRAFT and WIZARDRY

UNIFORM:

First-year students will require:

1. Three sets of plain work robes (black)
2. One plain pointed hat (black) for day wear
3. One pair of protective gloves (dragon hide or similar)
4. One winter cloak (black, with silver fastenings)

Please note that all pupil's clothes should carry name tags.
COURSE BOOKS:

All students should have a copy of each of the following:

The Standard Book of Spells (Grade 1)  
by Miranda Goshawk

A History of Magic  
by Bathilda Bagshot

Magical Theory  
by Adalbert Waffling

A Beginner's Guide to Transfiguration  
by Emeric Switch

One Thousand Magical Herbs and Fungi  
by Phyllida Spore

Magical Drafts and Potions  
by Arsenius Jigger

Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them  
by Newt Scamander

The Dark Forces: A Guide to Self-Protection  
by Quentin Trimble

OTHER EQUIPMENT:

1 wand

1 cauldron (pewter, standard size 2)

1 set glass or crystal phials

1 telescope

1 set brass scales

Students may also bring, if they desire, an owl OR a cat OR a toad.

PARENTS ARE REMINDED THAT FIRST YEARS ARE NOT ALLOWED THEIR OWN BROOMSTICK

Yours sincerely,

Lucinda Thomsonicle-Pocus  
Chief Attendant of Witchcraft Provisions

~Interesting they removed snakes. Lousy book list too.~ Tom hissed. ~You read all those two or three years ago.~

~Wonder how it got addressed to Harry Potter?~

~He might have had it handwritten out. It shouldn't have.~
They heard the floo sound. A few minutes later, Severus stepped into the room. He bowed. "My Prince, I see you got the letter."

"Yes, it was even addressed to Harry Potter." Brit handed the letter to Severus. "Tom, go and smack him for me.~

~You know why he does it.~

~I know, so formal.~

"Dumbledore has been sitting in Minerva's office for days. Since no one can see the addresses of the envelopes and the elves deliver them, he has been waiting for an answer from Potter. When none came, he actually sent a few directly to your former relatives' house. When that didn't work he just sent a generic address one." Severus ignored the hissing. He knew Brit most likely told his Lord to smack him for his formality. He hid his enjoyment of seeing his friend's son annoyance.

"That explained the envelope. It was covered in spells. I removed them as I was taught."

"Good. Did you eat your lunch?"

"Yes. Severus, do you think he will know?"

Severus knew Brit had been worried about Dumbledore getting his hands on him. It had taken a few years to get the boy enough confidence in himself. Tom and Nagini had found Harry Potter at the Dursley home so beaten that if Tom hadn't been able to summon Severus the boy would have died.

"No, you don't look like Potter. The scar is gone. Dumbledore won't suspect a thing. You have been in Diagon Alley and no one recognized you."

"True. I just don't trust him." Brit sighed. It was going to be a long seven years unless he could test out early but that would only knock off two years.

"I don't either." Severus knew that Tom and Nagini would protect Brit. "Go and get your assignments, I want to review them." Tom slithered over to Severus. "My Lord, I do believe it's time to get you a body." Tom nodded yes. "I will speak to Lucius. He invited Brit to stay at Malfoy Manor overnight on the 31st so that he could take the boys to the station."
Brit and Draco were sitting in their compartment waiting for the train to pull out of the station. Severus, Lucius, and Narcissa had settled the boys in the compartment before leaving. Lucius had already made sure that Tom and Nagini were safely at his home. They were researching how to get the Dark Lord his body back. The platform was settling down, reflecting that the Hogwarts Express was leaving soon. They chatted with a variety of friends, laughing and joking. Brit and Draco were sitting quietly in between the influx of visitors when their door was slammed open. "Oops, sorry." A red-haired boy was standing there, his face slightly red.

"No damage was done." Brit knew the boy was a Weasley. He had been warned by Severus about the family. Dumbledore's followers, more like rabid fanatics.

"Can I sit here? I am trying to avoid my twin brothers."

Draco was about to respond when Ron sat down next to him. He was a bit surprised. He never experienced someone with no manners. "Draco Malfoy." He introduced himself.

"Britannicus Peverell." He looked at Draco who was as confused as he was. Why was a Weasley sitting with a Malfoy?

"Ron Weasley. Sorry, I was a bit nervous about my brothers seeing me. They love to prank."

They started chatting as Ron was holding his rat. "This is Scabbers by the way. Pathetic isn't he?"

Draco made a face as the rat was eating food on Ron's lap. "He is eating out of the container. Can't you do something?"

"Fred gave me a spell to turn him yellow. He is one of my twin brothers. Want to see?"

"Anything to stop it from eating." Draco looked at the mangy thing.

"Ahem... Sunshine..." Ron was in the middle of showing them this new spell his brothers taught him when their compartment door was opened again. There stood a girl with messy brown hair, in her uniform already.

"Has anyone seen a toad? A boy named Neville's has lost one." She looked around the compartment.

"No." The three of them dutiful replied.

Brit frowned a bit. "You do realize opening the doors gives the toad more places to hide?"

The girl ignored him as she noticed Ron's wand was out and pointed at the rat in his lap. "Oh, are you doing magic? Let's see it then." The three boys bristled at the commanding tone but Ron moved Scabbers into a better position.

"Ahem. Sunshine Daisies Butter Mellow, turn this stupid fat rat yellow." Nothing happened. Ron shrugged his shoulders. Brit and Draco realized the twins had tried another prank on Ron.

"Are you sure that's a real spell? Well, it's not very good, is it? Of course, I've only tried a few simple ones myself but they've all worked for me. For example." The bossy girl pulled out her own wand, aimed it at Ron. "Tergeo. That's better, isn't it?"

Ron started screaming.
"What did you do?" Draco quickly pulled the prefect cord for help. Brit pulled out his handkerchief and placed it on the now bleeding face of Ron Weasley.

"It was a simple cleaning spell. He had dirt on his nose."

"You do realize using magic outside of Hogwarts for minors is illegal." Draco couldn't believe the girl.

"No, according to Hogwarts: A History, we are allowed to practice our spells." Hermione defended herself.

Brit shook his head as two prefects arrived. "What happened?" Prefect Terence Higgs and Percy Weasley arrived.

"She-" Draco pointed to Hermione "-decided she is allowed to use magic whenever she feels like it and cast a Tergeo on Ron's face."

Percy stepped into the compartment. "Ron, I need you to let me see."

"Percy, it hurts."

"I know. It's not to be used on flesh. It's for household cleaning." Percy explained while Higgs summoned some clean bandages. "Higgs, can you let Madam Pomfrey know?"

"Will do. You take him back to the Prefect area. Gemma might know some healing spells."

Percy guided a crying Ron out of the compartment. Brit was glaring at Hermione. "I need you to start at the beginning so I can inform the Professors before we arrive." Higgs was going to visit the conductor after he got the information. The conductor would be able to send the information and alert Madam Pomfrey.

Draco and Brit told what happened while Hermione was trying to justify herself. "It says in Hogwarts: A History that we are allowed to practice our spells. As long as we don't do it in front of muggles. My parents are muggles but they're aware of magic. So I didn't do anything illegal."

"You realize that Hogwarts: A History doesn't mention our laws, our traditions, or our customs. It's called Hogwarts: A History because it's a history book about Hogwarts, not the magical world."

Higgs stopped Brit from continuing. "Miss Granger, if you listened to the professor who informed you of our world, I know, they instructed that you can't do magic outside of school. I know they also instructed that you can't do magic in front of any muggles. I know they also instructed that you are forbidden from using your wand until you arrive at Hogwarts."

Hermione shifted a bit. "Yes, but it says we can practice."

"Yes, movements. Yes, how to say the spells. You know you were forbidden from casting."

"Well said, Mr. Higgs." Severus Snape was standing in the doorway. "Mr. Weasley has been healed. He is now sleeping. He wanted me to inform you Mr. Peverell, Mr. Malfoy that he will speak to you later. Miss Granger, do come with me."

"Thank you, Professor Snape." All the boys replied. Brit and Draco resumed their seats after Higgs left with Severus and Hermione. Brit knew Severus had been close by. He was willing to bet his allowance that no one had realized the potion master was on the train.
"That was a bit interesting." Brit looked out the window. "Why would a Gryffindor willingly seeks solace in Slytherin territory?"

"I was wondering that myself. Granger is going to be an issue." The Malfoy and Weasley family had a long history of bitterness between them. It stemmed from the Weasleys breaking a few magical contracts with the Malfoys. Draco knew Ronald Weasley had to know he was a Malfoy even before he entered the compartment.

"I do agree. She is careless and a know-it-all. Severus hates people like that. It should be interesting if she is in our class with him." Brit knew the girl was a Ravenclaw. He also saw a bit of the Gryffindor bravado and self-righteous in the girl.

"Weasley?" Draco really wanted nothing to do with a Weasley. However, but if used right, it might be worth it.

"I'm not sure. He kept looking at my forehead. I believe he was looking for Harry Potter." Brit didn't have the scar any longer. He hadn't had it for years.

"I had wondered why you were nice to him."

"He will be a Gryffindor and start on how Slytherins are evil. I am wondering if we might be able to use him."

Draco smirked. The Dark Lord taught his son well. Dumbledore wasn't going to know what hit him.
Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

Flashback to how Tom and Nagini found Harry. How Severus got involved.

~Tom, why are we here?~ Tom was hiding under a bush next to Nagini. Their heads were peaking out.

~I'm not sure. Can't you feel it?~

~I do. We are also near potential food. Look at the size of that one.~ They had been watching the huge boy playing something that made beeping noises. He would feed them for a week or so.

~I smell blood.~ Tom inched forward a bit. ~It's coming from inside.~

~A lot of blood.~ Nagini raised her head. ~Window over there.~

The snakes slithered closer to the house. They could hear yelling. "Lazy, good for nothing freak. I will teach you to do better than Dudley in school." They heard a scream of pain. It was a boy as they heard "please, uncle."

~Tom, we have to do something.~ Nagini wanted to kill the muggles who were hitting the boy.

Tom was trying to reign in his magic. As a snake, he couldn't transform. He had tried it a few times since the conflict with the Potters and it always failed. He had tried resting and not using magic, thinking he needed to build his reserves. He had tried even using a wand but nothing worked. ~The boy is a wizard.~

~Tom, over here, an opened window.~ Nagini was already working the screen off by sinking her fangs into the mesh and pulling. Once in, Nagini wrapped herself around the huge male muggle who started screaming. "Snake!!!!" ~He's bright.~ Nagini hissed as Tom was circling the boy who was barely conscious.

~I need Severus here. Nagini knock him out and assist me in the summoning.~

They all heard a loud smack as Nagini used tail and hit the muggle over the head. She released her coils and the muggle crashed to the floor. ~The other fat one?~

~We will deal with him if need be. Come closer. Touch the boy and me, I will use him as the summoning point.~ Once Nagini was in place Tom started to focus his magic. He used the power of the dark mark to summon Severus to him. It wasn't the normal type of summoning. Tom put everything into bringing Severus to him.

Severus landed with a thud. He recognized Nagini and saw a lot of blood. He glanced at the huge male on the floor. He needed answers but they could wait as he started to heal bloody child protected by Nagini and another snake. Once he got the boy stable. He pulled his wand. He started to do a minor scan for any wards that would go off if he used magic. He found nothing but warning spells and alerts. He wasn't sure if he triggered one or not. "He's stabilized. I don't know what happened but I do know we need to leave. I will deal with the muggle."
Nagini tugged on Severus and led him to the opened window they had used. Severus peeked out and saw a fat boy and a broken screen. "I'll start with the boy and screen. If the muggle wakes while I'm doing this make sure he remains awake."

Nagini went back to where Tom was as Severus fixed the screen. He checked that the boy hadn't heard a thing based on the noise coming from the toy he was holding and the music he could hear from whatever was on his head. When he went back inside he saw the two snakes were curled protectively around the boy. He revived the muggle. "Freaks, I don't want any more freaks in my house. Get out and take the boy with you. You tell that old man no more."

"Legilimens." Severus entered the muggle's mind. He searched for what happened. Not really surprised as it wasn't the first time muggles had abused a magical child. He started to search for what he meant by the old man. He saw the letter, a visit by Dumbledore detailing how he wanted Harry to be raised after someone voiced concern about the child. He froze a bit when he realized who the child was. "Obliviate."

The two snakes were still curled around the boy. "I need to pick him up when I do, I need to you to wrap yourselves around my legs. I apparate us to Prince Manor causing the wards will crash and Dumbledore will arrive." Severus removed any tracking charms from the boy. He did a quick check the boot cupboard for anything special. He found an old baby blanket. He picked up Harry, once the snakes were wrapped around his legs, he apparated.

Harry woke up a bit confused. He was in a big bed in a huge room. He sat up but didn't feel any pain.

~He's awake. We need to get Severus here to speak to him. Let him know we won't hurt him.~ Tom picked his head up from the blankets.

Nagini slithered closer to Harry. ~Hatchling doesn't smell of fear.~

~I know, snakes never have hurt me.~ Harry missed the startled looks on the snakes as he was looking at his new surroundings. He jumped a bit when he heard a knock and the door opened. A tall man in a black dress entered.

"Mr. Potter, glad to see you are awake."

~Where am I?~ He was looking at the snakes.

Severus was a bit surprised at the boy speaking in the snake language. "English, please. I'm afraid I don't speak the elegant language of snakes." Severus summoned a chair.

Harry's eyes went big. "You're a freak too." He was staring at the chair. "You moved it. I got into trouble for turning my teacher's hair blue."

"No, I'm a wizard, and so are you. That would be called accidental magic." Seeing the confused look on the boy's face, Severus knew he had more to explain. He had believed the muggles told Harry he was a wizard. "I have a bit of explaining to do. Also, I will need you to translate what the snakes tell you."

"Where are my relatives?" Harry really didn't care if he ever saw them again.

"You will not be returning to them. It will be one of the issues we will be discussing." Severus began to explain everything he knew. Once in a while, the snakes would start hissing and Harry would
translate and ask their questions.
Chapter 4

Weasley arrived in the Great Hall in time for the sorting. "How are you?" Brit wondered why the boy was standing next to them.

"Better. I can't believe that -" 

"Witch?" Draco suggested.

"Yeah. I have to go back and spend the night in the infirmary as Madam Pomfrey wants to monitor me." Weasley leaned against the wall. "What happened to her?"

"We don't know. Professor Snape is handling it."

Draco and Brit saw the gleam in Weasley's eyes. Brit gave a slight nod to Draco, perhaps there was another Weasley that wasn't a Gryffindor. Two years ago, the Weasley twins had created chaos by being sorted into Slytherin. Their mother had sent howlers every day for two weeks demanding for them to be resorted. She kept telling them what a disgrace they were. It only ended when the parents of the other students wrote and complained to the Board. The Weasley twins petitioned the Ministry for a new guardian. They were now the Greengrass twins.

The sorting went exactly as was expected with a few exceptions. Those who were aware of the train situation were a bit surprised to see Granger walking to the Sorting Hat. They were shocked when the girl went into Gryffindor. She wasn't a lion, most believed her to be an idiot. Brit and Draco went to Slytherin. The hat didn't even sit on their hats before shouting out Slytherin. The biggest surprise to most was when Ron Weasley sat down and the hat didn't get to touch his head before it shouted "Slytherin." Everyone knew what was coming as the Greengrass twins and Daphne started to clap.

Severus was in a bit of shock, another Weasley in his house. He could see that Dumbledore wasn't happy about it despite the man's smile. Normally, Dumbledore liked to spend ten minutes greeting the new students. Instead, he said three words that made no sense. Severus glanced down at his snakes and saw Weasley was sitting opposite Draco, his back to the Gryffindors. Percy Weasley looked furious while the previously known duo of Weasley Twins was making their brother feel welcomed into the snake pit.

Severus could see Minerva and Dumbledore were having a very heated discussion. He knew Minerva wanted to suspend Granger. Dumbledore kept insisting she needed to remain at Hogwarts. He kept referencing how Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger would be great friends for Harry Potter once they discovered where the boy was. Severus had already assigned the girl detention for the year. He wanted her expelled and pushed for it. Dumbledore had been bragging about the girl since he did her home visit. Severus looked at Brit, glanced at Granger. Granger seemed to be looking for someone. So Dumbledore didn't know Brit was Harry.

The Dark Lord was curled around Severus' wrist but the snake was awake and listening. Nagini, he knew, was under the table, listening to Dumbledore and Minerva speaking. Dumbledore never realized that silencing spells should be an area effect spell instead of just putting a small open-ended bubble up around who he was speaking too. It allowed Severus to learn a lot of information that way but using a vast number of snakes.

Dumbledore had tried to stop Severus having snakes in Hogwarts. Poppy had shown how many
different potions needed ingredients from different types of snakes leaving Dumbledore no choice but to stop objecting. Severus and the Dark Lord had a spying army of snakes with Brit acting as the translator. Dumbledore never suspected because the only known speaker was the Dark Lord.

He watched Granger lecture her fellow lions about Hogwarts and rules. She was trying to explain she didn't do anything wrong. He would have felt bad for the lions but they were used to Percy Weasley. Granger and Weasley were going to drive the lions nuts.

"Ron, what happened?" The Twins sat on either side of their brother. Bill, Charlie, and Ron were the only ones who still talked to them. Bill and Charlie a bit more often since they didn't live at home. Ron had to sneak out any letters he wrote.

"Granger used some spell to clean my face. Percy said it was used for cleaning a house, not a person. The girl even tried to argue about using magic outside of school." Ron had heard Dumbledore push for the girl to get off. "Dumbledore stopped Snape from expelling her. Snape gave her detention for the school year. Dumbledore didn't want to punish her at all."

"Figures." A few Slytherins muttered. They had already told their fellow snakes what happened.

"He kept saying I wouldn't want a fellow lion to be expelled. He didn't even ask me. I certainly wasn't going to be a lion after listening to that girl rant about being one while we had to wait for Dumbledore to arrive." Severus used a port-key to get bring Granger and Ron to Hogwarts. Weasley had spent a few hours before the students arrived in the Infirmary listening to Granger. "She thinks Dumbledore is the next Merlin."

"Bonkers is what she is." Fred glanced over his shoulder.

"I agree, Forge." They were going to be using Granger for testing their products out.

Brit had been watching Dumbledore and Granger. "I think she is his little pawn for Harry Potter." The older Slytherins already figured out and were a bit surprised a first year would have. "I do believe she is going to be a problem."

"Going to be? She is." Ron Weasley looked at Percy. "So, Daphne, how do you feel about having another brother?"

"I already planned on writing to my parents. I'm sure Fred and George already have their letter written."

The Dark Lord slithered into Brit's dorm and up onto the bed. The only boy who didn't scream was Draco. "Marvolo is Brit's pet. He won't hurt anyone unless you try to hurt Brit."

"I thought he was staying with Severus." Brit picked up Marvolo. ~Does Severus want to talk to me?~

Everyone froze but Brit and Draco. Draco started laughing. "You should see your faces." Blaise, Theo, and Ron relaxed.

"It's dark." Ron whispered.

"Actually it's only considered dark because of Dumbledore. In India and China, it's considered a
great blessing by Lady Magic. In South America, India, and China it's used in healing. Some of the best healing spells are in parselmagic." Brit put Marvolo down after Marvolo hissed no. Brit opened his trunk, sorted through his books. "Here are some history books on the different skills we in the magical world can be gifted with. They also have animal speak and other similar abilities that Dumbledore has stopped from being developed in Hogwarts. Did you know at one time basic warding classes were taught? Dance? Foreign languages? Dumbledore has banned them all."

Ron took one of the books while Blaise and Theo picked up another one. The next hour and most of the weekend was spent talking about the magic that Hogwarts didn't teach. Ron did get a few howlers. No one took them seriously except for Dumbledore and Percy Weasley. Ron had arrived back in the snake pit Saturday afternoon looked a bit haggard. "Don't worry my future brother, it won't be much longer." Daphne sat down next to Ron. "Father is already on the situation."

Brit decided it was now time to speak to Severus. As the former Weasleys decided on a pickup game of Quidditch for the snakes.

Severus was in his private lab when he felt the wards alert him to Brit's arrival. He didn't look up. "Cut up the spleens for me, my Prince."

Brit hissed at Nagini who smacked Severus' gently on the leg. Brit started cutting and Marvolo and Nagini curled up by his feet. "It has been an interesting weekend so far. Marvolo heard Dumbledore telling McGonagall that Weasley needed to be in Gryffindor for Harry Potter."

"He seems determined to have Weasley and Granger linked to Harry Potter. It's why the girl wasn't expelled. Despite all four heads agreeing she needed to be at least suspended." Severus dropped some mustard seeds into the cauldron he was currently working on. "Molly and Ron had a screaming match this morning in Dumbledore's office. We had a separate meeting after the Weasleys departed. He believes that the Dark Lord is here or will be here to confront Harry Potter. He isn't sure how the Dark Lord will react once he realizes Harry Potter isn't here. For some reason, he also believes that Harry Potter needs to be friends with Granger to guide his studies while Weasley can help Harry relax."

"That doesn't make any sense."

"I agree. He is working on a separate agenda with Granger and Weasley. He wants Potter, Granger, and Weasley to be seen as a trio. I know he is counting on Molly to mother Potter. She has been making a jersey for him. She mentioned baked goods to Minerva and Dumbledore before she departed Hogwarts." Severus put his cauldron on simmer. "He is still expecting to find Potter and turn him into an icon. However, I believe an icon he plans on having killed." The two snakes started hissing.

"Why?" Brit wondered what Dumbledore's goals were.

"Just the way he has said a few things. I will confirm my theory with Lucius later. Now, in regards to returning Marvolo to his human form, we have found a few different rituals. Lucius is researching some more." They had decided to use the name Marvolo for fear that if Dumbledore heard of a snake called Tom he might connect the two. While Marvolo was Tom's middle name, it was a pureblood name and not unheard of.

"Daphne mentioned her father is going to try to gain custody of Ron Weasley. The twins also wrote to him."
"That will make an interesting article in the paper. Dumbledore will try to block it from being printed. I'm sure Lucius and Rita will make sure it makes the paper."

"Granger?"

"Watch her. While I believe she isn't aware of what Dumbledore is doing, she trusts too much in authority figures and books. She honestly believes that Dumbledore is up there with Merlin. We might be able to show her the light with the right books. I'm not sure if she will ever believe anything bad about Dumbledore."

Brit looked into the cauldron. "More mint."

"Yes, just a leaf." Severus watched Brit add the mint.

"Time will tell with her. She seems determined to always be right. She really didn't like everyone telling her she was wrong on the train. The rumors have been saying she hasn't let it go either. She feels her punishment was unfair. There is a rumor she wrote to her parents and the Board."

"I will inform Lucius."
Chapter 5

It had been a rough month. Severus couldn't even count the number of meetings they had regarding the now officially declared missing Harry Potter. Fine, he could count, 53 meetings regarding Potter. 14 staff meetings, all about Hermoine Granger. For the record, Severus was now currently at 1,286 ways to alter Dumbledore's lemon drops.

Severus was now listening to Minerva complain about Granger causing problems in the girls' dorm, the common room, and in the halls. "Albus, she doesn't listen. She believes she is correct and hits others when they tell her she is wrong."

Severus had warned them. They didn't want to listen. "If you suspended her, she might have learned a lesson. She still insists that she did nothing wrong when I have her in detention. She actually informed me that she was going to speak to you, Albus, about getting the rest of her detention removed." He heard the Dark Lord hissing his own agreement to Severus' statement as several of the staff members agreed.

"Her hand raising and yelling out the answers if not called isn't helpful, either. Students don't even bother coming to class prepared any longer. They look at Granger as soon as I ask a question." Filius usually never complained about anyone.

Dumbledore sighed. "We also have a protest from her parents. Apparently, she wrote home and they wrote to the Board. There will be a meeting regarding the incident on the train."

Severus and Lucius had already discussed the issue. They knew the girl wasn't going to give up. She had been harassing Ron Weasley about how she was in the right but she didn't mean to hurt him and he needed to forgive her. Weasley response was always simple, he told her when she apologized he would.

His snakes had made sure to let the girl know how they felt about her especially the Greengrass twins. Dumbledore still called them the Weasley twins. "She has been to see me three times since yesterday. Albus, you need to rein the girl in. She's not doing herself any favors with her running her mouth about how she is the brightest witch of her generation nor her lack of realizing she doesn't know everything."

"Yes, she actually told one of the prefects she was wrong when she removed points from Granger for her uniform not being correct. She quoted Hogwarts: A History, telling her that there is nothing in there that prohibits her from wearing muggle trousers with her uniform shirt and cloak." Pomona sighed. "She stormed into my class and gave me that excuse."

Severus watched Dumbledore. The man was at a loss as to what to do. One potential pet went to Slytherin. The other was making herself seen in a very unflattering light and already had a Board inquiry. "I will speak to her. The inquiry is on Friday, so Mr. Weasley, Mr. Peverell, Mr. Malfoy will need to attend also. Severus, if you could inform their parents. I will arrange a port-key for all of us."

"I will inform them." Severus knew Lucius had already gathered memories, statements, and had Minerva send him the detention reports on Granger. The biggest factor was the memories of the girl not being sorry for what she had done. Severus and Ron Weasley had submitted their memory of Dumbledore denial of the girl being suspended. Lucius had pulled all of the expulsion records, Dumbledore was going to be in for a surprise.
"Here she comes." Ron warned. They were currently in library researching for their potion assignment.

"She is getting annoying. She has been gloating about something. Earlier today she kept staring at Ron with a smug look on her face." Draco handed one of the books to Brit.

Brit didn't say anything. He knew what was going on. After all, he acted as the translator between the Dark Lord, Severus, and Lucius.

"We will find out who is right on Friday." Granger held out a letter. "We have an appointment in front of the Board."

Draco laughed. "You're really going to earn the title brightest witch of our generation." Sarcasm lacing his voice.

Brit looked at the letter. "Granger, you do realize what will happen if this goes to the Board and you are found at fault?"

"I'm not. Yes, I didn't mean to hurt Ron. However, I didn't do anything wrong with practicing my spells before school started." Granger pulled out her copy of Hogwarts: A History.

"Your funeral." Ron ignored Granger has she shoved the book at him.

"Granger, you do realize you are telling three people who grew up in this world our laws? We have been taught from birth that you don't do magic outside of school unless you are being taught by someone who is of age, like your parents or tutor." Brit resisted the urge to roll his eyes.

"It's because you're pure-bloods. You think you have the right to do whatever you want and if a muggle-born does it, it's against the law."

"Granger, you were informed not to do magic outside of school. It has nothing to with class. If we went into the muggle world, which I know Draco and I have, we are expected to obey those laws. Why do you feel you can break the Ministry's laws?"

"Very good point, Mr. Peverell. Granger before you start gloating, you should remember that you haven't won yet." Severus appeared next to Brit. "Mr. Peverell, it's time."

Brit wasn't sure what was going on but figured Severus needed him for something. Draco and Ron realized that it wasn't anything bad. It was just a way to keep Granger out of any Slytherins' business. "Draco, I need that book after you so if you check it out let me know."

"Will do." Draco knew Brit would tell him what Severus needed to speak to Brit about if it was important. Dumbledore was used to hearing about Brit and Draco from Severus, so Dumbledore wouldn't think anything was strange if Granger went running to Dumbledore.

Severus and Brit didn't speak until they got to Severus' quarters and he put up the privacy wards. "I heard her tell you."

"Yes, how did it even get this far?" Brit was a bit surprised.

"Dumbledore tried to keep it from happening. Mr. and Mrs. Granger believe their daughter and feel that she can't do anything wrong. They were informed about the train incident but I guess the biggest issue is they agree with her, based on their daughter's word."

"So they don't care that she broke the law? Lucius must be ready to bury them and Dumbledore."
"He better. Dumbledore should have suspended her as Severus wanted." The Dark Lord hissed. Brit translated what the Dark Lord hissed.

"I believe he is regretting it." Severus filled them on what happened in the staff meeting. The Dark Lord had been staying with Brit since Granger liked to hit people, and he didn't trust Dumbledore.

"Why do we need to be there? We gave the memories." Brit really didn't want to deal Granger if he didn't have to.

"I am aware. It's Dumbledore who requested everyone to be present. Lucius tried to prevent it. Dumbledore pulled in a few favors after Lucius suggested they could press charges. I think he is planning on trying to say no harm no foul." Both ignored the hissing from the Dark Lord as Brit didn't translate. Severus knew meant the Dark Lord was thinking of the different ways to kill Dumbledore.

"Is he sane?" Brit asked with all the seriousness an eleven-year-old could muster. "This move makes no sense."

"I believe he is hoping to have Granger presented as a confused, misguided muggle. He isn't aware that Lucius has pulled her detention report, nor will present the memories."

Brit smirked. "Gryffindors."

"Exactly."
Brit was sitting between Draco and Severus facing the members of the Board. Ron was sitting next to Draco. They were on one side of the aisle and on the other side was Dumbledore with the Grangers. Poppy was sitting behind Severus with Minerva next to her. Severus wasn't very happy to be attending the meeting and neither was the Dark Lord. The Dark Lord was hanging around Harry’s neck but hidden.

Hermione had taken great pleasure in introducing her parents to everyone as the Board members were arriving. Dumbledore had made the rounds speaking to everyone he deemed important before he finally sat down and speaking to the Grangers. Dumbledore was smiling as he spoke softly in reassurance that everything would turn out just fine.

Lucius was sitting in the middle seat of the chair that lined the long conference table. Lucius was talking quietly with Lady Longbottom. She was sitting on his right. When everyone was in their seats Lucius called the Board meeting to order. "This is a special session regarding the misuse of magic by Hermione Granger. The event I am referencing is where Miss Granger injured Mr. Ronald Weasley on the first of September of this year on the Hogwarts train. Miss Granger feels she has been unjustly punished for her using magic outside of Hogwarts."

"I thought this issue was resolved?" Ted Tonks looked at the report. "I see a copy of the incident and the punishment issued."

"It was resolved. However, Miss Granger believes that she was unfairly punished as she believes as a muggle-born she was entitled to use magic outside of school. She does understand that she hurt Mr. Weasley. She has never apologized for hurting him as she doesn't believe she did anything wrong." Lucius glanced at Granger. "Do I have it correct, Miss Granger?"

"Yes, but part of the issue is it says in Hogwarts: A History that I'm allowed to practice my magic. I got fined for doing so. I don't think it's fair that pure-bloods can use magic outside of Hogwarts. I only did magic in front of my parents."

Lady Longbottom laid her hands on the table. "Miss Granger, no child is allowed to use magic outside of Hogwarts unless they are studying with a tutor. All children display accidental magic. All children need guidance and to learn control. Practicing outside of Hogwarts without any guidance could have killed you and your parents. Did you have protection wards up? Did your parents have spell protection gear on? St. Mungos has a unit for miscast spells and accidental magic that has caused damage. Perhaps some time volunteering at such a unit would show what could have happened. As it was, Mr. Weasley paid the price. I see you have never even apologized for hurting him. You have been to focus on showing you are correct to realize what you did was wrong."

"Excuse me, can you expand on your explanation. My wife and I were informed she wasn't allowed to use magic outside of Hogwarts. However, my daughter showed in Hogwarts: A History that she could practice her spells." Mr. Granger had the same unruly curly hair that his daughter had. He was a tall, thin man with glasses and slightly darker skin tone than his daughter.

"Hogwarts: A History is correct, you are allowed to practice. Practice doesn't mean casting a spell. She could practice her wand movements, how the words are spoken, she can even hire a tutor. No one is allowed to cast a spell if they are underage unless they have a tutor or at Hogwarts." Lady Longbottom calmly explained. "My grandson has never been allowed to use magic without supervision."
The Board stated their agreement. "See, Father, I told you they would stick together. All the pureblood do."

"Miss Granger, I am a muggle-born. As well as Lady Rosewood." Ted Tonks had been writing on some parchment.

"I and Lord March are half-bloods." Agnes Taylor was surprised at the girl's attitude. "I am not sure why you have brought this to the Board. You should be thankful you weren't expelled from Hogwarts and your wand snapped. Mr. Weasley could have been permanently disfigured. It was only because Professor Snape was in attendance that he wasn't. Mr. and Mrs. Granger, why have you allowed this to proceed?"

Mrs. Granger rose. She was a petite thing. She had dirty blond hair that was done in a pixie cut. She wore a navy blue business suit with matching shoes. Her face was perfectly done. Her white teeth gleamed against her dull red lipstick. "I believe this was a slight misunderstanding on the part of our daughter. We were informed she couldn't practice magic outside of Hogwarts or in front of muggles. However, we believed due to Hogwarts: A History that she could practice in our home. We weren't aware of the dangers. We also believed that she was being discriminated against since she wrote to us about the incident. In her letter, she stated that she was being punished for only doing what purebloods were allowed to do. We see the error and we will be speaking to our daughter about this before she returns to Hogwarts. Please forgive us for creating more of an issue." Mrs. Granger gave her daughter a very stern look.

"Mrs. Granger, your daughter was aware of the fact that if she filed the complaint with the Board and lost her grievance she would face the punishment that was originally going to be assigned." Lucius looked at Dumbledore. "It was only because of Headmaster Dumbledore that she wasn't expelled or her wand snap. That wasn't the original punishment. The Heads of Houses wanted her to be suspended. They understand the eagerness she was displaying and want to keep her eager to learn magic. So, therefore, she will be suspended for two weeks." Lucius took the parchment that Ted Tonks just handed him. He quickly read it. He nodded his agreement. "We can't force this but we are requesting that for the next two years, during her summer holidays, that Miss Granger volunteer at St. Mungos. I believe Lady Longbottom's suggestion was an excellent one."

All the Board members voiced their agreement as Mr. and Mrs. Granger had a quick softly spoken talk. Mr. Granger faced the Board members. "My wife and I agree. We would also like to offer our services as doctors to aid you. I'm aware your medicine in some ways is more advanced but I'm sure a mutual exchange of cures and treatments would aid both of our worlds."

"We can speak after the meeting." Head Healer Mallard spoke before anyone could comment. "Headmaster Dumbledore, while I agree with your idea of keeping her eager to learn magic. I do object to the blatant and careless regard in which you dismissed your staff's concerns about Miss Granger using magic outside of Hogwarts. You are very aware of the damage that miscast spells and potion mishaps can cause."

"I believed it was a slight misunderstanding and didn't want to see a talented witch have her wand snapped."

The Board members looked down at the parchments in front of them. "None of the notes here even suggested that was even mentioned. I do see that they did request her to be suspended. I believe the members of the Board agree with me that is a suitable punishment." Lucius glanced up and down the table. All the members agreed. "I would also request a formal apology by Miss Granger. It must be completed by the time she returns to Hogwarts. If it's not completed she will be able to return to Hogwarts but all privileges will be suspended, including the library, until one is issued."
"We will make sure one is issued. I'm sure Headmaster Dumbledore can provide us with what needs to be done." Mrs. Granger gave her daughter a light smack on her shoulder. "You should have apologized before now."

Granger opened her mouth but seemed to think better of what she was going to say and closed her mouth. Her parents gave her a stern look. "We will make sure she complies," Mr. Granger looked very disappointed in his daughter. "We will be speaking about all of this at home. May I request a copy of the information?"

"Certainly. Mr. Tonks will be able to provide you with a copy of the reports, the minutes of the meetings, and a copy of the law regarding underage usage of magic." Lucius saw Ted Tonks start to copy everything.

Dumbledore looked pleased as he had expected Lucius to push for Granger to be expelled but the Dark Lord wanted to have Granger close. The Dark Lord explained that Granger was going to get magical training one way or another by Dumbledore. This way they knew what she was learning.
Chapter 7

The next few months passed slowly. Granger did apologize but it was grudgingly. She made sure to inform anyone who would listen that her parents made her do it. Dumbledore had tried to speak to the girl but his talks only lasted for a few days before she was back to her normal self. Halloween came and went. Severus was summoned to another staff (really an Order meeting) meeting after nothing happened. The Dark Lord was wrapped around Severus' wrist and was able to attend. Dumbledore was trying to figure out where the Dark Lord was as well as trying to find any way to locate Harry Potter.

The Auror Corp was having no luck in locating Harry. They even enlisted a few Unspeakables from the DoM to aide in their search. The Unspeakables handed in their conclusions to Undersecretary to the Minister. The concluded that Harry Potter was deceased. Rita had a field day with the article which was in the morning paper. Bold headlines.

HARRY POTTER DECEASED

By Rita Skeeter

Yesterday afternoon a surprising conclusion arrived on the Minister's desk. The Department of Mysteries had been working with the Aurors to discover the location of Harry Potter. They have spent the last two weeks, since Halloween, looking for Harry Potter. The head of the DoM submitted their finds. They concluded that Harry Potter was deceased.

Many are now demanding answers as to why Albus Dumbledore wasn't keeping a closer eye on our Savior. Headmaster Dumbledore has been the only one with the knowledge of the location since that dreadful night. We were given reassurances that Mr. Potter was fine and being trained in our ways. I ask you, my readers, how much of that was the truth?

Headmaster Dumbledore has been looking for Mr. Potter since the 31st of July. Why didn't the man know where the boy was? Why did he wait so long to involve the Aurors? Why didn't he alert the Ministry as soon as it was discovered? What is he hoping to hide? Fear not, my readers, I will work as diligently as ever to discover the answers and report them to you.

Brit folded the paper. He looked up at the Head Table and saw Severus was discreetly watching Dumbledore.

"Brit?"

"Hmm?" Brit forced his attention back to Ron and Draco. "Sorry, I was thinking."

"Do you think it's true?" Ron looked a bit pale.

"It's Rita. So who knows. She must have read the report but I am wondering if perhaps he is in another country." Draco laid the paper down on the table. The three boys followed the rest of the Slytherin and watched the other houses and staff.

The Dark Lord slithered into Brit's room and onto the bed. *So?* Brit picked up the Dark Lord and started petting his head.

*I am wondering what Dumbledore will do. He won't like the idea of you being dead.* The Dark
Lord could see the other boys were ignoring their conversation. They were used to Parseltongue.

*Do you think it will create problems later?* Brit wasn't sure about the legal issues of having his alter-self declared deceased. He wasn't even sure if he was officially declared deceased.

*No, as everything has been in place for years. Lucius already handled the vaults. Nagini and I want to talk to Severus and Lucius. I need you to set up a day and time for Lucius to be here.*

*I will. I'll talk to Severus after dinner.*

Brit carried the Dark Lord to Severus' quarters. The portrait opened the door automatically. Brit wasn't surprised to find Severus was sitting in his favorite chair with tea ready for the two of them. Severus served tea and enjoyed the silence. Severus watched the Dark Lord eat a biscuit as he knocked one onto the floor for Nagini. Nagini was a big snake and could have gotten her own but she liked to sneak them. So the Dark Lord would just knock them off of the table for her. Severus appreciated it as he didn't like having to buy new dishware. Severus wasn't sure if biscuits were healthy for snakes but he wasn't going to object. "I'm assuming we are discussing your recent demise?"

"Yes. Will it affect me? I mean my inheritance."

"No, it won't. You official had a change of name. The goblins have a record of it and they won't release the information. Lucius also did the blood adoption using the Dark Lord's blood. So, therefore, you ceased being Harry Potter years ago. It's why the Unspeakables weren't able to locate you. They were using the wrong name. Though I do believe that Dumbledore believes your full name is Harry James Potter."

*So even if you wanted to use your real birth name, it wouldn't matter. They searched using the wrong name.*

Brit automatically translated what was said. "He wants to meet with you and Lucius too."

"I'll arrange it. Lucius has selected a few rituals that we might be able to use over Yule to return the Dark Lord to his body, my Lord."

*Excellent. We have about six weeks to prepare and get everything ready.*

Brit automatically translated. "I will review the lunar cycle, my Lord." Severus always had a few Wolfbanes Potions on hand. The potion took a month to make and he always started a fresh batch on the first of the month.

*I want Lucius to have a new identity ready for me. The goblins have the required paperwork on file. I had it filed with them over a decade ago. The information will need to be updated and perhaps a new name." The Dark Lord looked at Brit. *Link it the Peverell line.*

"I will, my Lord."

Nagini smacked Severus, lightly. Brit smirked. "You know it was coming."

"I'm aware. Now, regarding you. How has it been going? I noticed Granger seems determined to be your friend and Mr. Weasley's."

"Yes, she does. She keeps hitting us. She got weepy and spent the rest of the day in the girls' room,
according to the rumors. She got a detention for not being at the Halloween Feast and missing curfew."

"Interesting."

*Dumbledore has had Granger up in his office. He wants her to try harder. He believed on Halloween something was going to happen and that the real Savior or whoever was Harry Potter would save her from whatever dangerous thing that was to happen.* Nagini laid her head on Severus’ lap. *The man is confusing. He wants something to happen, puts students in danger in hopes of finding Harry Potter yet claims Hogwarts is safe.* She flicked her tongue into the cool tea that Severus had set aside for tea.

*You are so spoiled.* The Dark Lord hissed at Nagini. *Next you are going to tell him to add more sugar.*

*It does need more sugar.*

Brit translated and the two humans were trying not to laugh as the two snakes argued about how tea should be brewed.

Brit yawned as he sat on the couch. Lucius was sitting opposite him with the Dark Lord draped over his shoulder. *Tom, give the man a break. Let him at least lay the books down on the table.*

The Dark Lord lifted his head. *I can't turn the pages by myself.*

*I will do it.* Brit picked up the snake and put him on the table. "Lay the book down, Lucius. I will turn the pages for him. These three are the best ones?"

"Yes, I reviewed a few others but they all required a willing death or something equally uncalled for. The ones I have selected are a bit more complex but they're stronger and stabler spells."

"It won't take me long to make the required potions, either. Most of the stuff is fairly common and won't sound alarms when I buy it." Severus was creating his own shopping list. "I have some of the items in stock here and at Malfoy Manor. Dumbledore won't even question me ordering more of the ingredients."

Brit turned the page when the Dark Lord hissed. The Dark Lord read the ritual three times. Brit watched the snake as he thought about the ritual. *That one?*

*Not sure. It's complex but easy enough to get the right ingredients. Also, doesn't have many side effects. Give me the other book.*

Brit turned the pages as Lucius and Severus created their lists they would need for whatever ritual the Dark Lord preferred to use. The three rituals had a few elements in common which made it easier. Brit started to fall asleep as the Dark Lord was deciding which one to use. The snake kept looking at the different books. *Brit!*

Brit woke up. *Tom?*

*I want to use the Ritual of Renewal. It's stronger and I should get my own body back.*

Brit translated what the Dark Lord said and handed Lucius the correct book. *Tell him, no lunar cycle is required so we can do it over the Yule holiday.* Brit translated.
"Very good, my Lord. I will gather what is needed." Lucius rose. "I need to get back to the Manor in time for breakfast. Narcissa invited the Parkinson over last night and they remained for the night. We are filing paper for the adoption of Ronald Weasley on Monday." Lucius was a barrister and most of the Dark Lord's followers used his as their barrister. The Parkinson's wanted Ron and the Greengrass family didn't mind as they were related by marriage and saw each other a lot.

"Rita, I'm sure, will be present to present the facts." Severus was actually looking forward to watching Dumbledore's reaction to losing another Weasley. Dumbledore really only had Molly and Arthur willing to follow him. The oldest two had left the country as soon as they were old enough.

"I'm sure she will." Lucius bowed and left via the floo system.

"My Prince, breakfast isn't for another hour, perhaps a nap on the couch?" Severus wasn't even sure why he was asking. Brit was already stretched out and half asleep. He got a yawn in response. Nagini curled up on the hearth while the Dark Lord settled on the blanket that Brit pulled over him. Severus went to his desk and began to review the potions he would need for the ritual.
The Dark Lord stretched. It felt so good to be a human, again. He rolled his shoulders, flexed his arms and legs. *See if you can speak like a human* Nagini was curled up by the fireplace.

The Dark Lord looked at Nagini. *I will certainly be able to speak like a human.*

*Prove it.* Nagini could see the rest of the humans were still in the sitting room. She stayed with the Dark Lord after the ritual was finished. The magic finally settled about ten minutes ago.

The Dark Lord glanced at his smug snake as she laid her head down. *Where is Brit?*

*Doing the smart thing. He's sleeping like any normal mammal would be doing.*

The Dark Lord had expected Brit to refuse to sleep and had a feeling the boy had aiding in being asleep. He walked to the closet. He had ordered a lot of clothes for his return. *We will need to find a replacement snake so that Dumbledore won't wonder why Severus is missing a snake.* He began to pull out clothes.

*Already handled.* Nagini lifted her head up.

The Dark Lord looked over his shoulder to the open door. Lucius, Narcissa, and Severus were waiting for him. Normally, he wouldn't have cared but ten years as a snake and having them around changed his views. He glanced at the clothes he was holding and the ritual robe. He put the clothes down and went into the sitting room. *Thank you for your assistance.*

Nagini started laughing. "My Lord?" Lucius' voice held a bit of fear.

*Nagini, this isn't funny.* The Dark Lord ignored his snake as she kept laughing.

"I believe we need Brit." Narcissa stood up. "It's late and I slipped him some Dreamless Sleep into his pudding. May this wait to morning?" Nagini was still laughing as the Dark Lord was resorted to shaking his head in agreement.

Brit was laughing as Nagini filled him on what happened the night before. *It's not funny.* The Dark Lord had tried to speak English but couldn't. He was standing by the fireplace as he was a bit cold. He wondered if it was another side effect of being a snake for so long.

*You should have seen him screaming at them that he was speaking English.* Nagini rose up until she was about the same height as Tom. *Nagini, this isn't funny. I can't keep hissing.* Brit had tears in his eyes. *Nagini, stop it, I said stop it.* Nagini imitated the Dark Lord perfectly. *Nagini, this is important. I can't have Brit translating everything for me.*

*You would make a perfect pair of boots.* The Dark Lord wished he had his wand. *I do need a good pair of snakeskin pants, too.*

*Oh, I'm scared.* Nagini stuck her tongue out and waved it up and down. *Big, bad, Tom.*

Brit knew the snake would have rolled her eyes if she could have. *Marvolo, it is fixable. We still have two weeks of the Yule holiday left.*

The Dark Lord huffed. Draco, Severus, Narcissa, and Lucius just watched the interaction between
the three. Over the years they had relaxed around the Dark Lord but the man was still their Lord. This discussion had been going on since breakfast. Breakfast was a bit different than normal. In the past, the Dark Lord was usually curled up around Brit or Severus. Today, he was sitting between Lucius and Brit opposite where Draco normally sat. They usually had informal meals. "We will start now.*

"Marvolo, we will need to see if this happened before and research it. I'm sure Lucius, Narcissa, and Severus might have an idea of where to start.*

"Fine.* The Dark Lord sat down.

"He is fine with researching it. He is just doesn't want to keep hissing." Brit rolled his eyes. "He is afraid I will leave and he won't be able to speak English."

"You make it sound like I'm a child having a temper tantrum.*

"You are acting like one.* Nagini smacked the Dark Lord's leg with her tail. "Go and research. It will make you feel better. You love to research."

The Dark Lord didn't respond. He glanced at Brit. "Am I?*

"Yes, you would have given me a long lecture if I acted like that.*

The Dark Lord didn't pout. "Let's go research.* He stood up.

"He wants to research now." Brit rose. The Dark Lord was still by the fireplace. "He is a bit worried about not being able to communicate when I return to Hogwarts."

"Understandable." Narcissa rose. "Draco is over at Theo's and is planning on spending the night."

"We have a lot of the books already pulled. I had the elves look through all of the libraries." Lucius knew the elves would find the books faster than if they tried to gather from the different libraries of their families. "I had them put them in the library."

The Dark Lord hadn't stopped talking since they found a simple cure. He would read the newspaper and any book out loud. He even sang. The cure was a simple spell that they discovered when one of Salazar Slytherin's great-grandson accidentally transformed into a snake and it took them over a year to teach him to change back. It was a translation spell that worked as a permanent link between the two languages. He did slip into parseltongue if he looked a snake. He also made another decision that the rest were a bit wary of. "I can return in my snake form."

"Marvolo, you can't come to Hogwarts as a snake. Dumbledore has been expecting you to appear." Brit didn't want to have the Dark Lord in danger. He was returning to Hogwarts tomorrow. Draco and Brit had spent many days visiting their friends.

"He's right, my Lord." Severus knew the Dark Lord was interested in protecting Brit but he didn't want Dumbledore to learn the Dark Lord was back. "Dumbledore has his focus on his numerous issues. He has been attempting to stop the adoption of Ron Weasley and get the blood adoption of the twins voided. He hasn't been happy with the articles about the Weasley family. He is trying to find Potter to show he isn't dead and keep himself out of trouble. He is focused on finding you and Harry to prove he was correct. His name has been taking a beating. Many are questioning his ability to run Hogwarts and his sanity." Ron had been staying with the Parkinson family. He had been over with Pansy and the rest of the Parkinson family for celebrating Yule and the New Year's Ball.
"My Lord, the only reason he hasn't been at the Ministry is that all the offices have been closed for Yule. He even tried to the Unspeakables redo all their previous work. He claimed he wanted it all verified. Fudge was able to stop it before I got involved so he couldn't blame me." Lucius had kept himself away from all the bad press Dumbledore was now enduring. While his firm was handling the legal aspect of the adoptions and now were the in process of proving that Dumbledore and Arthur Weasley had no cause to void the adoptions. "Dumbledore had been attempting to use the disappearance of Potter to prove you have returned."

"You also need to get a new identity and set up things." Brit added. "You know you want to work out getting rid of Dumbledore."

The Dark Lord glared at Brit. "I am aware." He had been researching the family lines to select which name would be best.

*No taking your mood out on him.* Nagini hissed from her favorite spot on the hearth. *All of them just want to keep you safe.*

The Dark Lord sighed. "Please forgive me. I am aware this is about protecting me."

Narcissa smiled. "If I may be so bold, my Lord, it's because we are family and care about you."

"Thank you." The Dark Lord recognized a lot of his feelings were based on protecting Brit has he had done since he and Nagini found him. They really had never been apart for any length of time. "I do apologize." He looked at them. "Please call me Marvolo. I'm not the same person I was during the war."

*I will be with Brit. I won't let anything hurt him. You know that.*

*Yes, I'm aware.*

Brit sighed. "Great, she is going to be in hyper-protective mode."
Brit had been sitting quietly reading in the library when he saw Draco storm past the doors heading toward the converted sitting room that the Dark Lord was using as his office. Brit had been wondering when the showdown was going to happen. As much as he liked Draco, Brit wasn't unaware of the boy's flaws. Draco hated strangers in his house and hated change. The Dark Lord covered both of those flaws in Draco's eyes. Brit wasn't blind to his own flaws, either.

Lucius and Narcissa were out for the night at some Yule Ball the Ministry was holding. Severus was also at the ball as well as most of the wizarding world. Brit figured he better prevent the Dark Lord or Draco from doing something stupid. They had the same temper when it came to things. Neither was willing to listen but wanted their own way. Nagini curled up by the fire and wasn't planning on moving any time soon since the night was one of the coldest they had so far this year.

Draco had only been home about an hour before his parents left for the ball. They hadn't had a chance to speak to their son. Draco hadn't officially met the Dark Lord since his return to human form. They had believed that Draco was going to return tomorrow not an hour before they had to leave.

"You revamped the sitting room. Who gave you permission?" Draco's voice with his snotty superior tone.

The Dark Lord arched a brow. "Who gave me permission? I do not answer to little boys." Brit hadn't heard the beginning of the conversation but it didn't start off on a good based off of the raised eyebrow of the Dark Lord's.

"Draco, meet Marvolo, a relative of all of our families, including Severus." Brit figured it would cover everything and he hadn't lied. All magical families were related one way or another.

Draco whirled around and faced Brit. "You knew he was here?"

"Yes, I did. He arrived yesterday. Your parents were going to inform you when you arrived home tomorrow." Brit stared at the Dark Lord. When he saw the Dark Lord open his mouth, he shook his head no.

"What aren't you telling me? I saw you sh... take your head no."

"I shook my head no because I don't want either of you to fight or do something that the rest of us who live here will regret." Brit folded his arms across his chest. "Draco, he is here to stay, get over it. Marvolo, Draco has issues with strangers being in his home. Neither of you like change and have tempers, so you two need to deal with those facts without starting a war."

"Brit, I'm not that bad." Marvolo ignored Draco sound of outrage.

"No, you're worse." Brit turned and looked at Draco. "Draco, how about we finish wrapping some presents?"

"Brit, we don't know him. How can we trust a stranger in our house?"

"He's not a stranger, Draco." Brit moved closer to Draco. "He has been protecting me and will continue to protect me, you, your parents, and Severus." The Dark Lord frowned a bit. He didn't want Draco knowing who he was. "He has been in the background of my life for as long as I can..."
Draco looked doubtful as he searched Brit's face. He stared into Brit's eyes before lowing his defenses. Draco turned and faced the Dark Lord. "I trust Brit, so I will take his word regarding you. However, if you hurt anyone that is part of my family, I will find a way to kill you."

The Dark Lord kept a straight face. "I believe you would." The Dark Lord when he was in his snake form had seen how protective Draco was of those he believed part of his family.

"I'm going to get something to eat but we can wrap the gifts after I get a sandwich. Do you want one?"

"No, I'm fine. Thank you for asking." Brit watched Draco leave. He didn't turn to face the Dark Lord. "Marvolo, you could have played nice." The Dark Lord didn't reply. "Be nice to Draco. He has been there for each of us."

The Dark Lord was aware of Draco's protective nature of Brit, of him when he was a snake, and of his family. "I agree. He has been. I am just not used to being human."

Brit turned and faced the Dark Lord. "It will take time. I'm sure Nagini will help you keep your temper in check just as she did when you were a snake."

The Dark Lord smiled. "Yes, I expect she will." Nagini was a mother hen when it came to the Dark Lord and Brit. She was protective of Draco, Severus, Lucius, and Narcissa but she would kill anyone who might even think of hurting Brit or the Dark Lord.

Severus was watching Brit who was pretending to read. Lucius and Narcissa were out with Draco attending a New Year's Day celebration. The Dark Lord was walking up and down the bookshelves pretending to search for books. The man had made five different attempts to find a subject he wanted to research. Hogwarts was due to start in three days and as it got closer to the restart of the day the more nervous the Dark Lord and Brit were getting.

It didn't help that the Weasley family was still working on getting their three sons back. The Parkinsons and Greengrass families weren't giving up that easy and had the law on their side as well as the three boys staying they wanted to remain with their three adoptive families. Dumbledore was throwing what he could at the Ministry when it reopened for a few days between Yule and New Year's Day. The articles in the paper weren't helping Dumbledore's cause as trying to void two blood adoptions voided as well as stopping another adoption. Many people heard from their children about the howlers that Molly had sent the twins and Ron regarding their sorting into Slytherin.

Severus watched the Dark Lord walk back to the table he was using for his research. He knew the reason and wondered if the two were going to continue to ignore their own concerns about Brit's adoption if Dumbledore did manage to get the twins' blood adoption voided. The Dark Lord had provided the blood for Brit's blood adoption when they first removed Harry from the Dursleys. Brit's concern was that if the blood adoption was voided would that mean that Dumbledore would be able to locate him. Severus put the magazine he had thought he would be able to read tonight. "Dumbledore won't be able to get the adoptions voided. He won't discover that Brit is Harry, and Nagini and the new snake will make sure that Brit is covered."

"I'm not worried." The two exchanged looks before repeating the same words again.
"Indeed." Severus saw Nagini shaking her head at him and didn't continue it any further. When he stared at her for several more seconds, she nodded her head as if to say she would be handling it. "Do you want me to review your assignments?"

"Yes, Draco and I reviewed each other's but I wouldn't mind having you review them." Brit didn't wait for a response before he was up and heading to get his assignments.

"He's worried about us being apart, also."

"It would be the first time since he could really remember. It has been the two of you for a long time. Yes, we were around and he spent a lot of time here. It's been a lot of changes in a few short months for him and you."

The Dark Lord put down the quill he was holding. "It's been a bit tougher than I imagined for me to give up the idea of attending Hogwarts with him. I have many of the same fears he has. Dumbledore is crafty and knows a lot more magic than he likes the rest of us to believe."

"True. Dumbledore won't do much in the power move department until he has Harry Potter and confirms you have returned. I am wondering when the Wizenagamot sessions return if he will connect your titles to you being the Dark Lord."

"I don't believe he will. I won't be using the Gaunt or Slytherin title, I will be using the Peverell title. I don't believe he will go after Brit since he is in Slytherin."

"No, he won't. He will expect me to watch him and Draco. He believes all pure-bloods will just automatically follow you and won't question anything." Severus never understood Dumbledore's belief that anyone who was in Slytherin was a supporter of the Dark Lord. The last war had Death Eaters from all houses but the ones with power in the government were in Slytherin.

"It did make it easier to recruit the others since they were aware of his policies." The Dark Lord still had a lot of supporters from the other houses as well as followers. Some that were in positions of power. While Dumbledore stuck to children and those in Gryffindor the Dark Lord wasn't so limiting on who he accepted. He hadn't summoned any of his followers and wouldn't until it was the time to get rid of Dumbledore permanently. "He will believe you to be his spy."

"He did. Losing Harry Potter has changed his agenda a great deal. Right now he is focusing on returning the Weasleys to being the beacons of the light while seeing if he can use his connections to get the Unspeakables to work on locating Harry Potter."

The Dark Lord sighed. "It is understandable. There is a lot of different forms and types of magic. I have been crafting some protection jewelry for all of us to use in the future but I have some special pieces for Brit and two for you. One will be a port-key that you will be able to use in Hogwarts. The other piece is one that will keep you and Brit from memory charms and complusions. I discovered it in a parsletongue book."

"I would like to see the spell if you can get it translated." Severus had read many parsletongue books that Brit, with the aid of the Dark Lord, had translated for him. They spent the next several minutes discussing spells when Draco and Brit returned with their assignments.
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