Summary

Galahad was an agent revered among his peers for not only his impeccable manners but more importantly for his limitless patience. At least he had been until he’d made the mistake of testing Merlin’s fortitude, and thus landing himself with the temporary title of Recruit Trainer for a new batch of potential Kingsman- a duty many an agent detested.

*OR*

That one fic no one asked for where the Kingsman agents are a bunch of Chatty Cathys and a very much alive!Lee Unwin is able to witness his son enter Kingsman as a recruit for one of their highly coveted seats at the Round Table in 2014, and all before he’s dealt one zinger of a surprise that he’s not sure he’s quite ready to deal with...

“Pardon my manners Lee, but I do believe your son is – how do the kids say it these days? Ah, yes! - ‘hitting’ on Galahad.”

Notes

See the end of the work for notes.
In the history of Kingsman it has never been a requirement that each knight exemplify the characteristics of their fabled namesakes. However, curiously enough, it seemed that the man who won the right to be knighted a gentleman spy more often than not did indeed embody the personality and character of their chivalrous titles.

This phenomena was never truer with any other knight than it was with the men who held the codename Galahad. Every bearer of this title was renowned for their patience, their virtue and their gentlemanly ways, almost as if only they had been destined from the beginning for the role meant only for the purest of knights.

At least that was the case until Galahad VII came along and proceeded to brand his very existence into Kingsman’s proverbial family tree the only way he knew how; with finality, verve and a heaping of dramatic flair.
Harry Hart—often renowned among his colleagues as a saint for the patience he demonstrated during the most difficult of missions, with even the most difficult of targets—had come to find himself in something of a conundrum as he had, apparently, found a limitation to said patience.

Harry inhaled what should have been a deep, calming breath before quietly chanting:

“My good blade carves the casques of men,
My tough lance thrusteth sure-

An irritated huff escaped before Harry could purse his lips together and think better of uttering such an undignified noise. Damage done, however, he followed up with a despondent sigh that found him with no clearer percipience regarding that which plagued him.

*Bollocks*, Harry scoffed, further berating himself with a few choice words.

While his erstwhile mentioned tolerance was indeed something he took pride in—if his volatile self-deprecation in lieu of falling short of said pride was any indication—it was also a horrendously trying thing to rein it in when it snapped.

However, patience was not the only virtue Harry kept within his rather impressive arsenal; he’d have been a piss poor excuse of an agent if that was all he’d cultivated in the last twenty-five plus years after all. No, out of all his accumulated feats, determination was quite possibly the only other advantage on par with, if not greater an asset to Harry than even his knack of withstanding people’s nonsense was. Which was fortunate for Harry since ultimately his patience wore thinner by the moment.

If not for his steadfast determination he’d have given up even trying to ascertain his natural serenity instead of trying to approach even a glimpse of it from an entirely different angle. Instead of focusing on its current state of frailty, he concentrated on the simple desire that burned within him to *catch it*.

A simple if barbaric tactic for a gentleman of his years but a tactic all the same.

Thus, he continued his murmuring repetition of Alfred Lord Tennyson’s literary masterpiece, *Sir Galahad*, forcing himself to attenuate his woebegone expression and hopefully regain some decent measure of self-control before he did more than verbally flagellate himself.

“My good blade carves the casques of men,
My tough lance thrusteth sure
My strength is as the strength of--”

Unfortunately, these lines were as far into the poem as Harry was able to attain—only three bloody lines—before the image of Merlin’s smug face would blossom to the forefront of Harry’s mind, an accompanying headache throbbing between his eyes before he’d have to fight his quickly rising temper and begin the poem all over again.

For the seventeenth blasted time!
Harry was fully aware, with the certainty that belayed not only an international spy but a man with fifty years of life experience behind him, that his ability to effortlessly reiterate his namesake’s mythos was far more telling than he’d ever care to admit.

Yet while Harry had utilized this method of patience-building before, it seemed that not even the passionate words of Sir Galahad could quite dilute the terrible fact that his once-adversary-turned-friend of two plus decades, was entirely and explicitly at fault for every grueling second of Harry’s god-awful mood.

There was no doubt in Harry’s mind Merlin had pulled a few strings, quite possibly going as far as to call in a few of the many favors owed to him, to ensure this dreadful outcome was seen to optimal fruition. The outcome of Merlin’s scheming was admittedly nothing so barbaric as sending Harry to some remote corner of the world to freeze and or boil to death--Merlin would do that simply if he were bored...

No, this was an orchestrated move that would not only keep anyone from catching a whiff of Merlin’s involvement but would also lead directly to the Round Table, making it seem all the more official business rather than personal vendetta.

Now, normally, Harry wouldn’t have been quite as bothered by Merlin seeking reparations for admittedly poorly timed comments on Harry’s behalf. After all, he could handle a Merlin looking for a bit of payback. But this? This was a Merlin out for blood, so of course Harry was understandably weary for many reasons, and irked for so many more.

Though none of those reasons aggravated him quite as much as the simple fact that he should have seen this coming, what with being a goddamn spy for Christ’s sake! Not only had he three decades worth of espionage to fall back on, said instincts had completely abandoned him until after Merlin had played his hand.

The incident that had sealed Harry’s foul mood into place for the foreseeable future had occurred at the end of a routine meeting exactly one week ago as the tech wizard left them all with one last damning announcement:

“Therefore, due to the Merlin Department being overly encumbered with missions, dossiers, inventory et cetera, the department head will henceforth temporarily abdicate as instructor for the Caradoc trials. As such, a ballot was distributed to all active agents approximately one week ago in order to determine the best fit substitute.”

“A vote—” Harry nearly croaked out, spine straightening.

“Through a nearly unanimous poll—a resounding nine-to-one, gents!—we have determined this trial’s recruitment stand-in to be none other than the knight most renowned for not only his purity but also his civility.”

“At least in myth,” someone mumbled under their breath, resulting in a few titters from around the table.

“Gentlemen,” Arthur warned, despite the mirth lighting his eyes, as he called everyone’s attention back to the announcement at hand. “You may proceed, Merlin.”
The quartermaster nodded gratefully, continuing. “Harry Hart has been found to be the most deserving agent to oversee the Caradoc trials as substitute-instructor.”

There had been no applause. There wasn’t even the slight creaking of the old window panes as the cold wind outside wheezed against the shutters. There wasn’t even the sound of a jaw hitting the floor. There was only the deafening silence that spread through the room like a potent and particularly noxious gas as all eyes surreptitiously flit over to and immediately away from Galahad.

“Congratulations, Galahad,” Merlin—the cheeky twunt—said, landing a solid clap to Harry’s shoulder.

He closed his eyes heavily, recollecting himself. This was to be his revenge then? Very well, I can work with that, he remembered thinking at the time. Harry had then gone on to offer the table a tight, closed-mouth smile as he’d accepted the highly “sought-after” position that’d been so graciously bestowed upon him.

It was from that moment on to now, a week later, that Harry had doubled his efforts to remain true to his Kingsman namesake—Galahad the Pure. He had begun his new, if only temporary, duties by tackling the preliminary paperwork for each proposed candidate--their history, strengths, weaknesses, favorite fruit tart flavor and other use(less)ful trivia--and all with the vivaciousness of a lion going in for the slaughter did he execute each and every endeavor.

He’d even gone on to pour through the preparations checklist that he’d misappropriated from Merlin’s desk to ensure the dorm was well stocked with fresh linens and down feather pillows, all of which he had personally fluffed to ensure maximum comfort during such a rigorous training, as well as--

As well as…

Oh, bollocks, Harry cursed, utterly abandoning the heinously poor excuse of a character that he’d nearly convinced himself to be, at least the part of him that wanted to be convinced.

No, it was foolish to continue on as things were, Harry thought, deciding it best to cease any and all self-congratulatory praises he’d been mentally giving himself for all of the supposedly gallant feats he’d accomplished in the last seven days since Merlin’s rather off-color punishment commenced.

With that truth brought to the forefront of his mind, he should also confess that he always did have a great bias when it came to his own ego. As such, it should also be mentioned that all of that aforementioned hard, tireless, selfless work he just detailed himself doing? Well, in a word, he would have to admit that it’s just a bit of an exaggeration.

First off, of course Harry hadn’t been unanimously voted to undertake a job that he found to be absolute codswallop, but he also hadn’t put a thought into anything that came after despite Merlin’s best efforts otherwise.

Unanimously voted. Please, Harry snorted. The word unanimous meant that every party involved had a say on the specified topic and then voted homogeneously with one another to come to a united decision. In this particular instance it was, to put it inelegantly, utter bollocks. The simple, ingenuous answer was that Merlin had gotten tired of Harry’s shite and tasked him with the role of recruit trainer as his twisted form of punishment.

However, apparently Merlin wasn’t the only one who got his jollies from watching Harry’s pride suffer. No, it seemed the other Kingsman agents also found Harry’s misery as something resembling entertainment. As such, they’d easily gone along with the quartermaster’s decision lest they too get
caught in the tech wizard’s ire.

In cruder terms, no one fucked with Merlin. With the exception of Harry, that is.

Over their years of service, their rivalry-friendship became known to many a Kingsman operative; many of which believed that Merlin and he bickered like an old married couple, what with having been friends for little more than twenty years. There was also the very popular opinion among the sycophants of the organization that Harry and Merlin were in a relationship... of a sexual nature. Thankfully the few individuals that possibly still believed that egregious slander kept their opinions closely guarded ever since someone had been caught speaking about it while both Merlin and Galahad had been within earshot.

That man, if the underlings believed the rumors to be true, was now in a coma.

To be fair, the coma the man was in did not stem from any action Merlin and/or he may have taken upon hearing his suspicion of the two agents being, well, rather intimate with one another. The unconsciousness that had befallen the man, tragic though it was, in Harry’s opinion, was undoubtedly well deserved.

No one deigned to ever mention that particular assumption again.

The secret (and truth) to the survival of their longsuffering friendship was probably due to their similar natures of not taking anyone’s—especially each other’s—shit. But, oh, how a row could go on and on and on and on when the two of them clashed and turned their no-holds-barred attitude toward one another. That was how Harry had ended up where he was now, tasked to play nursemaid to the new batch of Caradoc potentials.

“Now,” Arthur cleared his throat of something that sounded suspiciously like amusement as he spoke up, “with that announcement made, this meeting is adjourned. Gentlemen,” he dismissed with a nod and exited the room.

Finally, with dignity somewhat intact, Harry had made his own farewells and walked out of the conference room, having refrained--just barely--from vaulting down the hallway to escape the ugly expression lighting up Merlin’s face. Once within the safety of his office, he immediately threw his glasses against the wall, if only for a moment of reprieve.

Since then Harry had merely been biding his time, taking an uncharacteristic amount of care not to add to Merlin’s vendetta against him.

For the moment, that is.

As things were now, however, he would content himself with thoughts of how utterly pissed Merlin would be when Harry’s own plans of righteous punishment came into play.

The day had come for the training process to begin. Merlin politely requested each knight and their candidate to convene in front of the designated dormitory at 2110 hours. It was a good move tactically, one that would give the recruits ten minutes to sweat wondering where their trainer was, and an extra ten minutes--by Merlin’s assumed calculations--for Harry to meander through the halls before he’d decide that he’d met his tardy quota for the day and would show up.

Regrettably for Merlin, Harry saw through his schemes, often going along with them regardless, merely to appease his follicly-challenged friend. However, this time Harry would take great joy in thwarting the other man’s carefully premeditated agenda for the evening by showing up even later than even Merlin had surely considered.
It was half nine and instead of being arsed to finally go and meet up with a severely (undoubtedly) cantankerous Merlin, Harry detoured instead to the observation room.

Standing there with his hands gently clasped behind his back, Harry surveyed the young men and women on the other side of the two-way mirror, taking note that most of the candidates displayed the typical amounts of blue-blooded bravado and superciliousness. However, as time continued on with no sign of their instructor the tenser things became, the recruits looking this way and that, as if that would ease their twitchy minds were they to catch first glimpse.

The corner of Harry’s mouth quirked up in a tight, dark thing that an untrained eye might construe as a fond grin, something that one in his line of work would never dismiss so easily.

Oh, he’ll be taking great joy in making his time as trainer unforgettable, uncomfortable, and utterly remiss of Merlin. He would rue the day that he cornered Harry Bloody Hart with such menial-

“Yikes, you look rather scary right now,” a deep voice suddenly cut in from behind. “And here we thought you’d be in there terrorizing them already.”

Bugger, Harry’s eye twitched imperceptibly at the unwelcome voice nearly breathing down his neck in whimsical amusement; he truly wasn’t in the mood for James’ taunting.

“Did you know your breath smells of stale peanut butter?” Harry snipped beneath his breath, unable, it seemed, to rise above the utterly adolescent petulance James evoked in him whenever he happened to open his mouth. Or breathe really.

A pause and huff confirmed that James was indeed checking Harry’s assessment of his hygienic care routine. He snorted derisively.

“You certainly are in a sour mood, aren’t you, Harry? What, has Merlin struck again?” came a far more welcome voice.

“Lee,” Harry greeted kindly as his protégé came to stand on the other side of him.

“I feel as if Merlin may never truly learn the more he kicks it up a notch, it’ll just come back to bite him especially hard with whatever it is you’re planning to do in return.”

Harry hummed, preening slightly. He knew there was a reason he favored the younger man other than the fact of that he’d been Harry’s candidate for the Bors position seventeen years ago. That and he also had impeccable taste in mentors.

“Well, to be fair, the same could be said about our esteemed Galahad,” James inserted.

Harry resisted giving in to the quirk of his mouth. James--he had discovered over the years--was the only other Kingsman Harry had met that had a lack of self-preservation that quite possibly rivaled even his, but only just. And while Harry genuinely liked James despite how much he whinged otherwise, the other man had the uncanny knack of ruffling his proverbial feathers with his teasing.

And, as if sensing Harry’s thoughts, the utter berk was now barking with laughter at his expense. Harry’s forehead creased as he glared at the overgrown child that somehow held the title of Lancelot.

“Ohh ho-ho! Now he’s looking at me like I’ve been bad, Lee!”

Lee sighed, sparing his friend little sympathy. Yet another reason why he was regarded as Harry’s favorite. “James, I’ve told you before. Don’t think I’ll have your back if you get on Galahad’s bad
“Oh, as if he could bring himself to ever truly hurt me,” James scoffed, as if the idea in and of itself was preposterous.

“Do not tempt me, Lancelot,” Harry murmured lowly, attention drawn back to the recruits. There were only eight that he counted; in total there should have been nine in attendance. With one missing Merlin couldn’t completely blame Harry for being thirty minutes late then it seemed. Damn it.

“I don’t think Alastair would like it if I tried to tempt you, Harry. He’s very possessive you see,” James said lightly as he adopted the same stance as Harry, his teasing face doing something Harry’s facial muscles hadn’t ever had the capacity for. Thank God.

“Percival notwithstanding, I’d still kick your arse.”

“Alright, that’s enough,” Lee stepped in half-heartedly as the door on the other side of the mirror opened to permit the final candidate. “Don’t lower yourself to James’ level, Harry. You know he’d never let any of us hear the end of it.”

Harry’s brow twitched. “Quite right, Bors. Alas, it looks as though our straggler has finally arrived,” he nodded toward the young man walking in backwards, clearly talking animatedly to a very annoyed looking Merlin. “Take care, Lancelot. I do hope Alistair notices the tomato stain on the tie he bought you for your anniversary. I’ll be sure not to attend your funeral.”

“Shite,” James cursed as he picked up his tie to get a better look, licking his thumb and dabbing at the stain uselessly.

With that, Harry exited the viewing room, turning to find a few agents walking down the corridor. Harry nodded respectfully at Kay, ignored Lamorak’s colorful jeers and made sure to send an especially steely look towards Mordred as he passed them in the hall, all of them more than likely on their way to join Bors and Lancelot in the viewing room.

Turning the corner, Harry’s eyes landed on a fuming Merlin down the way. He picked up his pace, pleasant façade in place as he walked forward with a little pep in his step, lifting his shoulders in a “what can you do?” motion before starting with his usual excuses for tardiness. As he went into why he was against newspapers being banned from being served with Fish and Chips in Canada, he finally felt like this whole fiasco was going to go his way every time he saw a new line crinkle Merlin’s flushed face.

Besides, giving all the flippant excuses he could to make him even more late to introduce himself to the recruits was only just the beginning of Harry’s retribution. Because, oh, he was feeling especially vengeful due a couple of unrelated--though no less taxing--incidents from earlier in the evening. One that involved glitter. Of which Harry loathed and wished it and its creator into the deepest pits of hell. And he didn’t hide this fact either, which was probably another reason the tech wizard had used the vile paper confetti to desecrate one of the only two places Harry felt he could truly take solace within headquarters.

It had all come to a head earlier that evening, when Harry had found himself with an extra hour before the recruits were due to arrive. He decided on taking a trip down to the cafeteria to stop by what James often referred to as Harry’s “evening haunt.”

As he approached Little Italy’s counter, the woman in charge looked away, hastily busying herself with this and that. It was at that moment--Harry relented to himself later--that should have been the
first clue that his evening would turn out to be utter shite.

As the woman kept her back turned to him, Harry politely cleared his throat. “Good evening, Mary,” he greeted genially, smiling as she turned around, bright eyes and rosy-faced.

“E-Evening, Mister Galahad,” she said slowly, unsure of what to do with herself now that she wasn’t wearing a hole into the counter she’d previously been cleaning. “It’s a... lovely night isn’t it, sir?”

Harry almost replied before he closed his mouth, brows scrunching together as her peculiar actions finally seemed to click into place. He took a steady breath, careful to keep his voice even. “Mary,” he began. “Who was it?”

Mary, to her credit, remained relatively calm as she was stared down. She started sweating when the agent raised a delicate brow, and she cracked when his shoulders relaxed, waiting patiently for her answer.

As the woman nearly cried out whom the perpetrator was, Harry nodded civilly in understanding. “Very well, thank you Mary. Have a pleasant evening.”

And with that Harry turned around, frown in place as he stared about the lunchroom in agitation.

So it’d been Leodegrance who had secured the last of Harry’s favored Tuesday Special: Spaghetti Plate.

What the bloody hell was he to do now? He could hardly go and threaten the older gentleman into giving up Harry’s favored dish in exchange for his life like some common yard bully. No, that was not an option, especially since Harry quite liked Leodegrance, what with the other having been a longtime friend and senior agent. A friend that also happened to be the Head of Archives and Other Such Texts, a part of Kingsman that Harry often utilized to death.

Harry huffed, vexed, as he conceded the spaghetti plate to his longtime friend.

As he continued to think about what could be done about his dilemma he failed to (rather, he didn’t really care to) take note that he was being side-eyed by not only the café staff but Merlin’s underlings that were there to eat as well.

Had he cared enough to acknowledge their rude stares Harry would have realized his brooding had been mistaken for some kind of passive aggressive tactic. One that suggested he was aware someone took the last of his favored pasta dish and that if staff within the direct vicinity didn’t sacrifice their own food right the fuck now he’d make them regret it.

Of course Harry was nowhere near so juvenile, though he had actually been plotting to simply intimidate Mordred in Leodegrance’s stead (the little bugger had just walked off with the last plate of a very appetizing looking gelatin dessert) so Harry barely noticed the offerings being placed hesitantly on his tray. Before long, Harry blinked himself back into alertness and surveyed the food that had appeared before him out of nowhere. And, oh look, half a Tuesday Special: Spaghetti Plate was there as well!

Harry nodded to himself and walked out of the cafeteria toward the conference room so he’d be able to dine in private, knowing but never once caring for the nearly weeping minion in the corner (who’d valiantly given up his favorite Italian plate in the name of all that was good).

However, when Harry arrived at the proverbial and metaphorical Round Table he found the room had been lavishly decorated to the nines with confetti, streamers, balloons and a hideously bedazzled sign by his seat declaring rather loudly for him to “Do your best, Galahad!” and “Fight! Fight!
Fight!

Harry glared around the otherwise unoccupied room. All this sparkle-ized mayhem had the ornery wizard written all over it (though the bedazzling was most likely completely James’ fault).

Because truly, Merlin was nothing if not a needlessly extravagant party planner. Harry sighed as he paused in the doorway, deemed the immediate area contaminated and promptly backtracked to his office in a rare show of self-preservation. He really didn’t need to deal with a reproach from Arthur were he to simply tear the streamers to shreds and put bullets in the wall. Again.

Damn that foolhardy Scot, Harry grumbled as he stabbed at his fruit tart. Oh well, he supposed it was just another thing he’d have to tack on to the ever growing list of things he’d get justice for.

Harry squared his shoulders, drawing up to his full height as he pushed open the metal door leading to the room of recruits, ready to begin the terror that he would make sure was left in his stead.

Standing before the Caradoc recruits, he propped his Rainmaker in front of his person and, crossing his wrists on top of the wooden handle, briefly scanned the faces he was sure to come to despise in the next several months before going on to make any mental notes about each one in particular. God, but he reviled the looks reflecting back at him. Especially if they were to continue to look far too bushy-tailed and smug-eyed for their own good as the evening progressed.

After a good two minutes of finishing his survey he realized what it was that had begun to make them sweat.

Harry blinked, outwardly calm despite the excitement tingling through his limbs as he began envisioning each and every one of them cracking under his, to-this-day, unlimited patience or at the very least until they looked more to Harry’s liking (scared shitless and, ideally, weeping in repent). And all he had to do was stand there, utilize his most renowned trait and wait the little whelps out.

Harry couldn’t help but fantasize as the silence went on to suffocate the room further.

Yes, it would later be said at the Round Table, the Caradoc recruits certainly were a weak bunch this round, no match for Galahad, the ne plus ultra of gentleman spies. Harry’s lip twitched, the only sign he was sure that foretold his jubilation. Perhaps in reprieve Arthur might consider ordering Merlin to grant Harry a few days’ vacation for this utter cockup on Merlin’s part.

Sooner than even he expected the confident set of their shoulders devolved into nervous twitching, their skin flushing with perspiration and doubt in their self-worth.

Ah, yes, this truly was to be the best moment he’d probably have with this lot. And Harry was nothing if not tenacious at the best and worst of times. He’d need to get his kicks somewhere in this farce of a chore and he’d take what little wins he could.

And here all of my colleagues thought I’d fail as a trainer so spectacularly, Harry scoffed. How hard could giving orders out to young people be anyway, especially when given to ones who would only be too happy to comply?

“Huh. I was half convinced Galahad’d pull the pin out and toss that sucker in there with them,” Lamorak commented, somewhat disappointed, as Bors, Mordred, Lancelot, Kay and he observed Harry entering the new recruits’ dorm room.

The on looking agents were anxious, though covertly so behind the two-way mirror, to see how one
of the laziest, most successful and abysmally dramatic Kingsman would go about introducing himself to a bunch of so-called miscreants.

The grenade idea had, unfortunately, been a bust.

If he wasn’t going to utilize explosives, would Galahad instead attack one of his new pupils to see if the others would jump in to the rescue them? Or would they all assume there was a reason for the attack? (Lancelot and Mordred)

Would Galahad continue with one of his favorite Hemmingway quotes before then going into the merits of cannibalism in the bee community? (Bors)

Maybe Harry would start the introduction like Merlin had done in the past with the body bag gag? (Kay)

But none of the agents’ assumptions occurred. Instead, Harry began: “My name is Galahad, and I will be your trainer for the foreseeable future.”

And that was it. That’s all Harry says before just standing there. Quietly. Just staring around at the recruits.

Not saying a word.

For at least ten minutes.

Like an utter berk.

The still-wet-behind-the-ears candidates, however, stood their ground uncertainly, though remained surprisingly silent.

The seasoned agents standing in the viewing room on the other hand... Well, ten minutes and fifteen seconds was to be, apparently, their breaking point.

“That... entrance was rather lacking, wasn’t it?” Lee said, thrown.

James hummed in agreement as he continued to scrutinize the situation on the other side of the mirror quietly.

“That stare’s sure intense, don’t you think?” Lamorak observed, grimacing even from this distance.

“I’ll have to concur,” Kay replied. “I know better than to think he can see through the mirror, but the intensity of it—”

“He can’t actually see through it though, can he?” Mordred whispered, nearly biting his nails in worry.

“Of course not, you twat,” Lamorak said, guffawing loudly.

Kay continued on as if he hadn’t been interrupted. “Still, he’s starting to make even me uncomfortable and I trained the reticent bastard.”

James snorted at that before humming in mock seriousness. “The creepiness is strong with this one.”

Mordred joined Lancelot in his snickering despite his reservations.

Lee shook his head at the pair of laughing sods. Sure, Mordred had an excuse, he was currently the
youngest and newest knighted agent, but James was only a year older than Lee himself and so he really had no excuse to be acting like a toddler. Still, at least Lee’s friend could hold his own against Galahad, at least in witty repertoire, whereas Mordred was still apprehensive around Harry even after five years of being the senior agent’s colleague, ever since the Jell-O Incident of 2012. An incident not many of Kingsman had the heart to tease the poor boy about even to this day.

The knights continued to watch the staring contest in front of them.

“Ah, the intimidation act, hm?” a voice sounded from the doorway.

The men spared the newcomer a glance as Lee greeted Gawain with a wave before arching a brow as the man pulled a chair into the room. Once he’d positioned it just so he sat down and took a sandwich out from his large coat pocket, biting into it as he watched Galahad’s... well, whatever the hell it was Galahad was doing now.

Lee turned back around. Turned out something was finally starting up again as Harry moved on from his uncomfortable gaze to walking back and forth, like a tiger in a cage, and launching into a rather short and straight to the point speech of why they were here, which basically consisted of:

“You will most assuredly get seriously injured if not just plain dead, and all except one of you will turn out to be failures; the one lucky candidate that does happen to survive all phases of testing will then be knighted in Caradoc’s seat.

Oh, and also, if any of you breathe a word about the existence of Kingsman, I will personally see the culprit when they’re least expecting it. Just when you think they’re safe in your parents’ Dubai summer home, I’ll either cut off or pull out your tongue and make you eat it just before I leisurely watch you suffocate in your own bodily fluids as I begin to raid your family’s rather expensive collection of imported bourbon.”

The younger agents on the other side of the mirror gaped as many a recruit coughed or choked on their own surprise.

Gawain snorted at his peer’s actions, nodding in approval. “Classic Harry.”

“Good grief, look at his face!” James suddenly crowed as Harry took pause in front of one of the young men at the end of the first row. He couldn’t believe that Harry’s face was currently dusting—before their very eyes—a light shade of pink. “Wonder what that kid sai—Oh... Oh, bugger. Lee, is that Gary?”

Lee’s eyebrow twitched as he refused to respond, continuing to instead survey Harry’s facial expressions and the twitching and swaying of the candidate’s head and shoulders.

“Who’s Gary?” Mordred asked, looking over at Lee and James curiously.

“Lee’s son.”

“I thought his name was Eggsy?”

Kay and Gawain chortled. “Oh, it is. James simply enjoys using the boy’s given name,” Kay answered.

“Mhm.” Gawain nodded. “Bugs the hell outta the kid.”

“Ah.”
Kay coughed into his hand the next moment and looked away from the display before them as he turned apologetic eyes toward Bors. “Excuse my manners, Lee, but I do believe your son is--Oh, how does today’s youth say it? Ah, yes!–‘hitting’ on Galahad.”

All six men turned in a mixture of shock, embarrassment, mortification, misplaced pride and horror to stare at the going-ons on the other side of the two-way mirror.

Lee paled significantly before burning to an impressive shade of red. There was no way his son, his little Eggsy would ever-

“Isn’t that what Eggsy refers to as his pulling stance? Because that looks like Eggsy’s pulling stance,” James said in the most unhelpful way possible, before he went on to nudge one of his burly elbows into Lee’s shoulder, nodding at the spectacle before them in utter elation.

Lee refused to look over at the scene, instead choosing to keep his glare leveled on the bastard he once called friend a few minutes ago. One that’s now been quickly promoted to Enemy Number One--No, Enemy Number TWO. Lee was ready to kick Harry Bloody Hart from somewhere safely off his hit list and directly into Enemy Number One’s slot if he saw even a thought of the man responding to his son’s, ugh, advances more than with the coloring of his face.

“Bet Galahad didn’t see this coming; look at his face, he’s actually blushing! Never thought I’d live to see the day!” Lamorak howled, clutching at his belly. “This is definitely going on my blog.”

Kay rolled his eyes, exasperated. He really didn’t know how Harry hadn’t killed at least one of the younger-than-him agents by now. Sans Bors of course; Lee was too precious to Harry to murder, in cold blood or otherwise.

James joined the fray again, completely ignoring what Lee’s son had stressed to him was (on multiple occasions) a sacred code among male friends known as the ‘bro code’. “Bloody hell, I’d thought you were just overreacting when you were all nervous and cross this week after you mentioned Eggsy was going to be your candidate. I can see why now if this is what had your knickers in such a twist.”

“Who knew the kid had the bollocks to hit on Hart!”

“Lee will kill you Alexandre,” Gawain pointed out absently, not sparing the pyromaniac a glance.

Lamorak shrugged still typing away on his phone.

Lee took a deep breath and barely restrained himself from hissing, more than ready to bring out--as his little Daisy said--the kitty claws and scratch all these bastards to hell.

“While I’m certain Bors doesn’t appreciate your suggestions, Lancelot, I can’t say for sure what Harry would do to you in retaliation for such careless comments as to whether or not he’d shag Lee’s son,” Merlin surmised, joining the thrall. His voice was a strange combination of mirth and something else resembling a warning. After all, Merlin was the only one allowed to torture Harry to such extremes. Everyone else would just have to deal with what Lamorak referred to as Merlin’s “thoroughly done mother hen attitude” until justice was served.

James mock-gasped at Merlin’s sudden appearance and obviously on-purpose betrayal, complaining, “I thought we were friends.”

“Yes, well, I’m also thinking about my well-being,” the wizard added nonchalantly as he watched Harry’s less than stellar performance. Though Merlin really didn’t expect much better to be honest; this was Harry Hart after all.
“In Lancelot’s favor, Harry did just lick his mouth,” Lamorak snorted, apparently done posting to his blog.

Merlin let out a hard sigh. “Alexandre, we’ve had this talk before. When you open your mouth you are not helping anyone. In any way. Ever.”

Lamorak just snorted at the dismissal of his input on the conversation as his fingers effortlessly glided over his phone’s keys in quick succession. He tapped the “Post” button, sending his thoughts on this development into the internet atmosphere where they would never die! He’d even attached photographic evidence (and a video!). Galahad will certainly kill him when he’s made aware of it but it’s certainly going to be so worth every crack of bones!

“Harry’s what, 60 years old? Eggsy’s just turned 23! Such a scandalous affair that would be!” James poked fun.

Alexandre guffawed, joining in once more. “Do you think Harry’d have a HART attack in the middle of-!”

With a final nod, Harry dismissed their attention before the cadets dropped formation and began unpacking their belongings. Admittedly, he was quite looking forward to the precise moment they’d realized their soon-to-be near drowning experience was merely the first of many tests to come.

Harry smoothed a hand down the lapels of his suit in an effort to contain his glee, turning to exit the room as was customary; Merlin said it was to give new initiates time to digest their decision of accepting the proposal for training and regather themselves mentally before advancing in their trials. That was utter rubbish. In the end it was simply a far politer way of saying they were left to their own devices so they could begin bonding together as a unit, on that deep cutthroat level of which Harry wholeheartedly advocated.

He paused in his discreet escape as vibrant green eyes dragged up from the area that had previously been Harry’s arse, and before the older man could even raise an eyebrow at the bold onceover a voice cut through the otherwise intrigued air wafting between him and his visual assailant.

“Do you really think he can handle training eight 20-somethings?” came the brunet’s rather pompous rhetoric, not even bother to stage whisper.

Harry’s gaze flicked to the two-way mirror briefly as he analyzed the speaker’s facial features, recognition lighting the next moment as he remembered this boy from Merlin’s pre-hire roster.

Hesketh IV, Charles; born 12th of December, 1992, age 22; Sponsor-Chester King.

Of course.

Harry held the urge to roll his eyes at bay as best he could; how typical of Arthur to recruit the snobbiest of his associates and their broods.

“I’d reckon he’s a tad past his prime to be doing this, yeah,” one of Hesketh’s compatriots replied, nose wrinkled in scandalized distaste.

Harry snorted quietly to himself, and without turning around or otherwise indicating he’d overheard their not so hushed speech he instead indulged himself in the rare pleasure of reciprocating the eyefuck the incorrigible green-eyed blonde was still giving him.
Lee sputtered, turning a betrayed look on his friend. If only he hadn’t left his gun off in the Armory for cleaning, then James wouldn’t just happen to be from Switzerland because he’d been born there. Oh no. The bastard would be riddled with so many goddamn holes there’d be no question of his nationality!

James quirked an eye at his friend, pressing the back of his hand against his mouth in a weak attempt to stave off his laughter. “You really are rather adorable when you’re throwing a fit, Lee. Look at your cheeks! I bet Harry’d like Eggsy blushing like tha-”

“That’s quite enough, Lancelot. I’d hate to think of what Michelle would do if she heard the way you’re talking about her son. Especially at work.”

James immediately snapped his mouth shut without further rebuttal.

"Yes, Lancelot, we’re at work,” Lee said, steam almost billowing out his ears as he turned back and kept his eyes heavily glued on his son.

The recruits in the room jumped suddenly as Harry snapped something about everyone’s posture. They all stood at attention, backs ramrod straight. Eggsy did something with his frame where his back was perfectly positioned but his hips jutted forward just so, his body language suggesting that Har- Galahad now had his undivided and besotted attention.

Christ.

Yes, that was his little boy in there, staring in a completely bugger-eyed fashion at Lee’s surely-past-his-prime of a mentor. A man that could even be Lee’s father, age-wise.

Bollocks! Lee crossed his arms, sticking his hands under either armpit, scrunching them up against his body so he wouldn't do something ridiculous like break through the mirror and strangle his son. Or Harry. Or both.

Someone would have to be strangled.

---

But all my heart is drawn above,
My knees are bow’d in crypt and shrine;
I never felt the kiss of love,
Nor maiden’s hand in mine.

A gentleman does not reproduce slander in retaliation to an offense, nor does he fall prey to a lesser man’s limited capacity of keeping his arbitrary opinions to himself, Harry repeats to himself lest he revert back to primary school and need to count to ten.

“You think he’s really using that brolly as a cane so he doesn’t come off old as fu-”

The heat in Harry’s gaze smolders suddenly, doused by the impertinence of today’s youth, as he takes a steadying breath and—leisurely as he can—replies to the discourteous slurs being uttered behind his back whilst he was not but ten feet away.

Gentleman rule, number he-didn’t-care-to-remember-as-of-this-moment, was promptly thrown out the window. “My apologies boys that such a man of my advanced years was essentially blackmailed into babysitting 20-somethings that seem to have the same social etiquette as five-year olds. However, while said old man—of whom is still in the midst of his prime, mind—is more or less completely at peace with seeing said miserable children drown in their own ignorance, he would
greatly appreciate being shown a modicum of respect that the second position in Kingsman deserves.”

The boys in question squawked with indignation and colored in embarrassment before Hesketh muttered in nothing but misplaced bravado to his friends, “Well, maybe he could handle that chav at the very least.”

Green Eyes narrowed a dangerous glare at Hesketh, moving soundlessly around Harry to stand in front of the pack of jackals.

The agents remained in the observation room, some still squabbling with one another while others remained quiet and judging.

“Oh, I’m sorry. Ya think you would of done any better?” Lee snapped, accent thickening as his pulse shot through the roof.

“Could’ve,” Lamorak sniffed, shrinking back slightly but refusing to be cowed. “I would have locked them all in a room with a live bomb.”

Merlin doesn’t even bother to restrain his long suffering sigh. “And that is why it’ll be a cold day in hell before I ever approve you to be a recruit trainer.”

“Don’t be such a spoilsport, Llachlan! It builds character!” Lamorak pouted, folding his arms across his chest in defeat.

“I sincerely hope you’re not referring to the child that was merely sitting in my office two years ago—”

“What? I’m a firm believer that when someone tries to kill you, you try and kill them back,” Lamorak said, sniffing.

“He was just a child waiting for his father to finish debriefing with Arthur!” Lee piped up.

“Well then he should’ve been retained to Merlin’s daycare and not waving suspicious, possibly explosive pink concoctions in my face!”

“He was seven! At least! And--”

“And?” Lamorak taunted.

“And my son,” Gawain added, sipping at what was labeled Apple Juice but looked to have the consistency of something far more vodka-y. Through a paper straw.

Gawain met Lamorak’s wide-eyed gaze calmly, watching amusedly as his colleague’s mouth fell open and then snapped shut again.

“Oh,” Lamorak paused, grimacing. “Sorry?”

Gawain barked a laugh, “S’fine. Alexandre.”

Lamorak looked skeptical while Lee merely looked aghast.

“Truly,” Gawain reassured. “Besides, like you said it builds character, right? He’ll probably replace Morgana one of these days anyway whenever she decides to retire.”

“--old bag is going to live forever just to spite us,” James grumbled indignantly.
“Besides, the kid’s on a mission to make the world’s deadliest poison for whatever reason.”

“He’s eleven,” Lee stressed.

James looked over at his friend, thoroughly amused as he realized something. “You’re just--throwing out random numbers, aren’t you? You’ve got no bloody idea how old the kid is, do you?”

Lee sent him a scathing look over his shoulder.

“Bloody hell, you really are!” James cried out.

“Just so everyone’s on the same page, he’s actually fourteen,” Gawain chuckled, slapping a hand against the back of Lee’s shoulder in amusement. “Oh, don’t you worry about my son, Lee; his mother and I raised that boy to take care of himself,” he paused before remembering how particularly awful their son could be when proving a point and added, muttering, “Vindictive little shite that he is.”

“Just like his old man!” Kay snorted as he held his knuckles out in challenge. “Fifty quid it’ll be pink.”

“I like them odds,” Gawain said, bumping the other’s fist, grinning.

Lee pulled a hand through his hair, trying not to pull it out as the other grown men began squabbling amongst themselves. Bunch of lunatics, all of them!

“You got something to say to me, then at least have the bollocks to say it to me face, bruv,” the young man postured, tone equally defensive.

The other boy sniffed through his nose imperially. “If I want to say something, chav, I’ll say what I want, when I want, where I want,” Hesketh said looking unimpressed with Green Eyes’ bravado. The brunet took a step forward, chin held high as he appraised the blonde with a rather lewd look that had Harry narrowing his eyes.

Something in the blonde’s face flashed darkly as he pushed forward, shoving at the blueblood’s chest. “Say that again, I dare you!”

“Chav,” Hesketh acquiesced, shoving back with what he surely believed to be the end of said confrontation as he turned back to his compatriots, all a riot.

The blond stumbled backwards into Harry, a look of derision crossing his face before he quickly regained his footing and started after Hesketh once more.

“You wanna go? Come on then!” and with that the blond fireball launched his attack. Said attack that was launched being his own body, and with a resounding cry the pair fell to the ground in a scramble of limbs and colorful curses.

Harry had the manners not to roll his eyes heavenward before he took the few steps forward that brought him within range of plucking the boys off one another. “That will be enough,” he said sternly, feeling every bit his age and then some.

While the brunet with the prominent nose shrank back into formation along with his friends, the lively blond was anything but compliant as he tried to take a final swing at his opponent, this time with a rather uncoordinated vertical kick (though the follow-through, Harry noted, was quite impressive).
Harry caught the boy by his thigh before any further reprimand would need to be distributed but stopped short, nearly biting through his own lip as the corded muscles beneath his fingers flexed with unerrning strength. *Fuck*, he cursed to himself as warmth pooled in his groin. If the young man’s cheeky onceover hadn’t piqued Harry’s interest before, those thighs certainly would have just now.

Quick as a whip Harry pulled him backward by his bicep--This was ridiculous. He really was too old to be feeling this rambunctious!--before he sent a reprimanding look over at the three others. “Finish unpacking. Another agent will be by shortly to collect you for supper. I don’t want to hear even an utterance of disobedience.”

“And you,” Harry started, turning to the blond in hand. The eyes that stared up at him in waspish defiance mirrored his own; irises blown, frenetic gazes doing nothing but stoking the fires burning low in their bellies.

Christ, but the blonde felt it too...

Harry abruptly cut himself off before he could utter his traitorous thoughts, or worse, a lustful battle cry, when an irate caw broke into his revelry.

Of course, it was the tall, pompous one, demanding to know that the other candidate would be punished for his assault (Harry bit back the instinctual caustic remark) as he started for the door, blond still firmly wiggling in his grasp.

“And for the record, I’d let a posh bloke like him *punish me* anytime!” the blond crowed one final jab before being pulled out into the hallway behind Harry.

At the cry of misplaced outrage from inside the dorm Harry could only smirk in something like pride and excitement.

“--*and* regardless of whether you’d be shite at training children or not, I’d like to get back to what you’re all apparently too dense to see in the dorm roo--” James tried to interrupt.

“Yes, yes. But on a more interesting topic, I rather think Eggsy’d be good for Harry; might even teach the tight arse to loosen up a bit,” Gawain said, eyes narrowed in consideration.

“Yeah, I’m sure one of ‘em will be *loosening* something!” Lamorak crowed, shortles erupting in chorus with pained moans.

“That was in rather poor taste, Alexandre,” Kay chastised Lamorak, though he was unable to keep the quirk of his lips at bay.

“Thank you, Kay. At least one of you is--” Lee began.

“Besides, I’m fairly certain Galahad’s knee is still smarting.”

“Oh yeah! What was it again? ‘I took an arrow to the knee--’” Lamorak guffawed.

“‘--and therefore cannot possibly be considered for missions in Siberia,’” Kay interjected.

“‘--even though it was 359 days ago!’”

“Nor should I be held accountable for the destruction of that building. I still maintain it blew *itself* up.” Merlin couldn’t help but join in.
“So, what? You gonna punish me now? That dickhead deserved it, and then some.”

“Yes, he did,” Harry agreed. “But no, you won’t be punished,” the agent answered as he slowed his pace down the second corridor he’d walked them through before coming to a standstill.

“Heh,” the boy grinned, shooting a look over his shoulder. “Bastard’s gonna be right miffed when he hears—”

“That really doesn’t excuse your behavior in there regardless, so I wouldn’t begin preening just yet.” Harry spared the young man an unimpressed look before turning to continue on his journey to someplace he couldn’t be found so easily by Merlin. He wasn’t looking forward to the thorough tongue lashing the quartermaster was sure to give him for that particular display back there.

Harry let out a much needed breath.

“Uh, so then...” the young man muttered, fidgeting from foot to foot as if waiting for some kind of trap.

Harry refused to be enchanted by the innocent act, despite knowing that this was still the boy that had been giving him a thorough eyefucking before the events in the barracks had turned things sour.

Pity, that.

Harry cleared his throat, dismissing the man, “That’ll be all, cadet. You can head back now.”

And that was that.

Harry continued on down another hallway before looking round a corner and surreptitiously ducking into one of the older storerooms not often utilized by human inhabitants anymore.

Strangled, wheezing laughter erupted.

“So it may be apt to say my protégé may be too old and too set in his ways to... plough the field, as it were, if he can’t even take responsibility for his destructiveness,” Kay tests.

“He’s also lazy as fuckall,” Lamorak said condescendingly.

Kay leveled him with a flat look. “That’s precisely what I said.”

Lamorak rolled his eyes.

“So would that make him the opposite of a power bottom, but as a top?” Mordred wondered aloud.

“What, like a lackadaisical top?” Lamorak supplied, laughter wheezing out through his nose. “Hey-**Hey, Lee, is Eggsy by any chance—”

Lee glowered, staring disdainfully at the bunch of traitors around him. “Oh piss off, all of yeh!”

The chortling picked up once more.

“Great. Wonderful. Splendid. But may I point out that all of you are still overlooking something vital,” James groused.

“Oh, and what would that be Lancelot?” Merlin asked dryly.
“That neither Galahad nor Eggsy are in the goddamn dorm room anymore,” James finished with a put-upon sigh.

Every other pair of eyes widened just before Lee tore out of the room, shouting down the hall something about fields and that this was not the season for ploughing.

Thankfully the clearances for these rooms were still available for tier 1 staff, otherwise he’d have probably run into the other agents who’d surely taken a front seat in the observatory room to witness Harry’s less than stellar introduction. Agents who, he knew from past experience, were hardly willing to be the gentlemen they claimed to be when it came to any behind the scenes dramatics that popped up from time to time around HQ.

Jesus, those chatty Kathy’s were going to be hard to dodge when the time came.  But for now...

Finally, reprieve. Harry leaned forward against the desk of drawers, hanging his head as he closed his eyes, letting out a much needed breath.

He wasn’t hiding,... He just-- needed a moment to collect myself lest he lose his patience and return to the recruit’s dormitory to distribute a few much needed lessons on those troglodytes. Or to keep himself from dragging the blond minx back to this very room for a few far lewder lessons. Bloody hell, but that boy’s come-hither gaze did things to Harry that he hadn’t felt for an embarrassingly long time.

He clenched his teeth, brows drawn together as he gripped the desk at either side of his hips, squeezing and relishing in the shrill protest the metal made before caving in slightly with a satisfying groan.

It was then that the soft, mechanized snick of the door’s automatic lock--a lock that only engaged when prompted to by way of someone with a level 1 clearance--sounded throughout the otherwise undisturbed room that had him opening his eyes.

It was only a moment before he realized his luck had run out if someone was able to sneak into the room after him without his knowing. Instead of ignoring the disturbance, Harry whipped around, expression contrite in preparation of defending himself against Merlin’s onslaught only to pause abruptly, eyes widening at the sudden appearance of the blond, who was quietly leaning against the door.

The door that also happened to be the only means of escape coincidentally.


“Nicked the security pass off my sponsor this morning,” the blond shrugged, hardly interested in giving any more pertinent information than that as he pocketed the card into those very, very tight jeans of his. Harry forced himself to look back up the boy’s body, steadily focusing on any part of him that was above the shoulders.

“Ya know...” Green Eyes cut in, sauntering forward and keeping his hands raised to show he wasn’t posing any threat. At least more of a threat than quickly closing the distance between them. “About that punishment-- Wanted ya to know, wouldn’t mind a lesson or two, me. In fact, I’m sure I could even teach ya a couple of things myself, I reckon,” the boy said, biting his lip anxiously as he gulped when their knees knocked against one another.

Harry’s pulse jumped as the other’s hands touched either of his knees--why were they suddenly so sensitive?--hands sliding upwards to knead Harry’s own shapely thighs. The boy groaned looking
transfixed as he took in his fill of the picture Harry surely presented, deer caught in the headlights and all.

“Fuck bruv, you definitely ain’t nowhere near as geriatric as that twat was suggesting, just like I thought. You’re right fit, you are,” the blond marveled, biting his lip as he pressed further toward the juncture between Harry’s legs.

Before the greedy hands could cop more of a feel Harry’s snapped into action, gripping the boy’s wrists and securing them at the small of his back as the agent in him pressed for verbal answers. “What exactly is it that you think you’re doing?”

* Asking, however, Harry found, was one big fucking mistake. *

“Introducing myself; it’s only polite, innit? I’m Gary.” Gary and his mesmerizing green eyes flicked up to meet Harry’s and suddenly they were standing far closer than the spy had originally surmised, no more than a few fingers of space remaining between their lips. “And you are?”

“Harry...” the agent mumbled, following the motion of Gary licking his lips. Christ, that mouth was truly indecent.

“Harry. I like it.” Gary swayed forward slightly, brushing his body against Harry’s and pressing a soft, barely-there kiss to the side of the older man’s mouth. Instinctively, Harry parted his own, leaning forward to follow the mouth now pulling away. “Ya know, this would be a lot easier if you stopped feeling me up and let go of my hands, yeah?”

Harry blinked, confused, before his fingers flexed and he realized he’d been holding Gary’s wrists with one of his hands as the other clutched at the boy’s tailbone, both of them coping generous handfuls of that admittedly sinful arse. Harry actually couldn’t school his features before a blush spread up his neck. “My apologies, I didn’t...” Shite, he was at a loss for words.

Gary looked at him with a brilliant smile, “Then let go so I can stick my tongue down your throat already, you daft bugger.”

Harry’s stunned expression soon morphed into one of apathy as he pursed his lips, all the while relenting his hold of the blonde’s wrists, if somewhat reluctantly. “Well, aren’t you an ambitious little shite.”

“The ambitioniest,” Gary grinned.

“That’s not a word, Gary--” Harry began before he had all common sense snogged out of him. Mind having gone foggy he closed his eyes and enjoyed in the thrill running through his limbs as a hard body pressed up against the length of his own.

The boy moaned into his mouth when their tongues collided, sliding wetly over teeth, tongue and lips, a deep sound that shot straight to Harry’s cock, as hands haphazardly grabbed at hips and arses and thighs-

And all Harry could think was how he couldn’t find a single reason that’d he’d regret fighting the temptation leaning against his body as he met that sweet mouth in a heated embrace.

“Ah! Fuck, bruv, I--”

“Do not refer to me as bruv,” Harry said, biting at Gary’s mouth in reprimand before soothing his tongue over the abused folds. “And I’m sure someone with as much *ambition* as you believes everything should be handed to them on a silver platter, hm? Given up without a fight to see just who
Gary groaned, rubbing his cock against Harry’s in retaliation. “Fuck, I’ll take your geriatric arse to the floor in less than thirty seconds if you don’t fucking get on with—”

Harry nipped again.

“Come now, I rather think I’d have you under me instead, boy.” Harry growled. He shoved his thigh between Gary’s thighs to ride, relishing in the low moans panted harshly against his neck as he worked at those sinfully tight trousers.

The young man moaned at the hand trailing down his clothed chest and Harry lost it.

Hours later and he’d still had no luck finding even a trace of either his son or mentor, so Lee gave up and trudged through HQ to the Merlin department like a weighed down ghost.

His colleagues--Kay, Gawain, Lamorak, Mordred, Merlin and Lancelot--had all gathered in the large room, either drinking coffee, tea or trying to work before Lee entered the office, all eyes turning to look at the downtrodden man with thousands of questions in their gazes.

“I give up. Merlin, send me to Siberia for three--no, six months. Think that’d be enough time for ‘Chelle to get over wanting to kill me,” Lee bemoaned, sitting down heavily.

“That bad?” Kay asked gently.

“What, did you catch them in the act or something? Your face looks positively ashen--” James tried before shutting up at the dark look Lee shot his way.

“No, I didn’t,” Lee said, tone clipped. “Thank bloody Christ for small mercies because I wasn’t actually able to find them anywhere. Not in that bastard’s office or--”

“--on top of the Round Table?” Lamorak snickered. James helpfully knocked Alexandre upside the back of his head.

“Here, son, have a cuppa,” Gawain offered, coming to sit down and place a comforting hand on Lee’s shoulder. “Do you, eh, want to talk about it?”

Lee looked at the men around him with gratefulness. Yes, he did indeed want to talk about it.

An hour later, Lee eventually came to the conclusion that while his little boy was 23, he could admittedly do so much worse than Lee’s 50-something-year-old mentor.

“Bors, if they break it off, just think of how terrifying of an ex Hart would make,” Lamorak supplied.

“Yeah… Yes, you’re right. I suppose Harry’d at least keep the bad ones away,” Lee breathed. That was an oddly comforting thought in all this madness.

“Christ, you don’t even know if they’re off shagging and you’re already preparing for a break up?” James snorted into his coffee, ¾ filled with scotch.

Everyone chuckled, spirits returning to higher ground. Not even Merlin’s grumpy, frowny face could dampen the mood.

“You realize this room is neither the supper nor social hall, correct?” Merlin said dryly as he gave them a look that clearly said he was dismissing them. “You’re all ridiculous. Get out.”
Everyone remained where they were, ordering take-out and sharing failed relationship stories well past midnight. And at some point a wonderful idea hit Merlin as he discreetly unbuttoned the top of his trousers after eating too much lo mein, sighing out contentedly of what a wonderful life it was being him, as he tapped out field assignments with absolute and complete prejudice.

The next morning found Harry adjusting his wrinkled suit as he walked to his office for a spare. He swallowed, trying to moisten his sore throat as he rubbed at his bruised neck. It was unfortunate that he’d had to wake up alone on a bed made up of his own clothes, dusty cloth tarps and suspicious bodily fluids that weren’t entirely all his own.

However, perhaps luck continued to aid him since he hadn’t been flanked the moment he’d stepped out of the supply room?

Harry allowed himself to grin at the small but significant victory of his elusiveness within a veritable fortress that had eyes everywhere.

Perhaps if his liaisons with the young man—for there had been multiple filthy acts committed—had yet to be discovered then perhaps he could arrange a few--

“Ah, Galahad.”

Harry’s confident stride deflated the moment that sharply amused voice sounded behind him.

Ah, well, bugger luck then. What a bitch.

Harry inhaled deeply and then turned around, keeping a straight face despite the many discolorations (that happened to be in the shape of a certain mouth) adorning his neck and collarbone. “Good morning, Merlin,” he greeted, clearing his throat and forcing his facial muscles to shift upwards implicating something of an uncomfortable smile.

“I must admit, you did far more admirable a job last night than expected.”

Harry’s brow twitched. Never in the history of their friendship had one of them ever admitted defeat in their scuffles. But now it almost seemed like Merlin might be doing just that, and it had Harry so flabbergasted he wasn’t quite sure how to proceed with the conversation.

“Oh please, do try and restrain your glee, Harry. While this may be my white flag you will of course be aware that I’ll be kicking things up a notch the next time around,” Merlin sighed, minutely moving the mug in his grip around in surrender.

“…Of course.” Merlin was... conceding defeat then? Harry would have subtly crowed in victory were it not for how raw his throat was feeling from the rather vigorous fellating he’d given Gary the night before. Lord, even that brief memory made his mouth salivate--Harry shook himself out of that line of thinking for the time being.

Oh but he would enjoy the shame this win of his would bring his longtime friend. Merlin did so hate to act against protocol, but long ago it’d been decided that if either Merlin or Harry called ‘uncle’ the winner would receive a highly coveted Kingsman secret the other didn’t know as the loser’s penance.

“About my winning then,” Harry started, just barely containing his elation.

“Yes, I’ve got that sorted out already.”
Harry’s other brow twitched. Somehow, that nor the look the wizard was giving him felt anything but reassuring.

“Your suspicion is usually well-founded, however,” Merlin started, “have I ever lied to you?”

Harry held his tongue on this one. Lying was the least of Harry’s concerns right now. No, the way the tech master was circling him didn’t bode well for Harry at all either.

“Right, if you don’t want to know then I won’t tell you. I will, however, give you your next assignment.” Merlin handed Harry a rather thick file. Harry scrutinized it for a second before giving in and asking for the classified secret he’d been promised.

Merlin waved at him absently as he started walking away, dismissing Harry’s admittedly lame attempt at collecting what was owed.

“Merlin,” Harry pressed before the man could disappear.

Merlin kept walking. “Very well. Here’s your due, Hart: A young man from the Caradoc candidates went missing for some time after you introduced yourself last night, did you know?”

Harry didn’t like where this was going.

“I happen to have footage of where this young man went and with whom.”

“…Oh?”

Merlin nodded sharply. “And while earlier I stated you ‘did far more admirable a job than expected’ please note that said expectations were not set very high. In fact, I’d actually like to take a moment to inform you of a personal complaint I have--”

“Of course you would,” Harry sighed.

“One which I assure you will be brought up with Arthur,” Merlin added testily.

Harry made a subtle wave of hand as if to say ‘well go on then’; the man did so loathe being interrupted after all.

“Since the boy was absent for the majority of the night, naturally he’d have missed the water test--”

Harry’s eyes widened, breath catching as he stepped forward to--He didn’t know what, but Merlin’s unimpressed brow brought him back to sobriety and kept him in his place. Still, somehow, the thought of Gary being kicked out because Harry had entertained a selfish whim--

“Stand down, Galahad,” Merlin said in a bored tone. “Really, dramatics seems to run deep in your blood. The whole bloody thing had to be postponed.”

Harry’s eyes darted up hopefully.

“The look on your face is making me physically ill,” the quartermaster grumped. “It wasn’t for you, you twat. Off the record, it was for the boy and his sponsor. On the record, it was a technical malfunction.”

“You soft old sod,” Harry snuck in, a fond smile only just lifting his mouth up to one side.

“In any event,” Merlin snipped. “I’m currently withholding the privileged information of your liaison with one of the candidates specifically from one of our knights but as I’m feeling rather
magnanimous, I’m giving you a heads up before that happens.”

“And why would you be doing that?” Harry asked back on guard.

“Because those candidates are your responsibility, Galahad,” Merlin said, pleasant as you please. “Besides, I’d think you’d be a bit more worried that the recruit up and disappeared also happens to be a particular agent’s family member not your standard, run-of-the-mill pick-ups from the military,” Merlin said, hooked smile curving cruelly about his face in a very predator like manner as he turned around.

Harry’s mind went blank before then the cogs started up again; he broke out in an anxious sweat regardless of his schooled features. Christ Almighty.

“Oh? You don’t say.” Harry wracked his mind for whose family the young man named Gary could belong to never mind just how much trouble he’d be in with said family, depending on who it was of course.

Gawain? No, his children either had yet to reach puberty or were happily married living in China and Spain.

Kay? No, he had a 30-year-old daughter.

As for Lancelot and Percival’s... No, while Roxanne was part of the Caradoc trials as well she certainly was nowhere near male enough in the least.

Arth--No, Hesketh was his candidate--a possible relation but not direct family, was his next thought. But even so, Gary couldn’t have been related to the Kings; he was simply too attractive and witty to be. There’s no way Harry would have noticed the beauty he’d been with the night before if he’d been spawned by the King family...

Then possibly Dinadan’s…?

“Time’s up, Hart. Who’s our winner?”

Harry knew better than to think Merlin was referring to his best guess as to who’s family member Harry had slept with. The bald bastard was, after all, a complete and utter wanker.

“Your worst case scenario at the moment, I’m guessing, is Arthur,” Merlin poked him in the most uncomfortable place he could, Harry’s ego. “And what have we learned about you and worst case scenarios, Harry?”

Harry’s mouth thinned at the prodding. Well, if it was Arthur’s family, possibly sponsored by another knight--a grandson or nephew perhaps--he could live with that. Secretly. In fact, he’d take it to the bowels of hell before he ever spoke on it.

Harry stepped forward, lowering his voice and narrowing his eyes in warning. “Arthur never has to know. And I know you better than that, so come off it already. What exactly is it that you want, Merlin?”

“Oh, so you were thinking Arthur?”

“Merlin.”

“Bloody hell, you just have to suck the fun out of everything, don’t you? Can’t get my kicks watching you muck up an introductory training with a bunch of children, nor--”
“Merlin?” a new voice carried down the hallway. Merlin turned to look at the newcomer as Harry peeked around the corner that obscured the voice from his sight.

“Merlin, have you seen--Oh,” Lee’s jog slowed to a pace before he dug his heels into the cement below. He snapped his mouth shut staring at his mentor, expression flat.

“Good morning, Lee. You’re here awfully early,” Harry remarks kindly, genuinely elated to see a friendly face.

Lee’s mouth thinned before he thought better of his manners and threw a curt nod in Harry’s direction before simply just standing there.

“Lee, are you quite alright--?” Harry stumbled over his words, perplexed by his friend’s peculiar behavior.

“So, you wanted to know that intel, Harry? Here it is: That recruit you allowed to follow you into Storage Room E? His legal name might be Gary but he’s better known to his father--never mind the rest of Kingsman--as Eggsy.” Merlin let that sink in for a moment before he got bored with seeing no reaction from Harry. “Well, Bors, I believe you were looking for Galahad here. Good day, gentlemen.”

A stunning silence fell heavily before everything clicked into place.

Shite, bugger--EGGSY? That was the Unwin boy all grown up--?

Harry employed every calming tactic he could think of to not just flee the fucking vicinity, city and country like he wanted to. Instead, he slowly and so, so cautiously turned from glaring daggers at Merlin’s retreating back to face his longtime friend with a rather weak smile.

What the fuck does one say in such matters?

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_Sorry I thoroughly bugged your son? All three tim-__ Well, actually it was only two times; the third one he bent me over a desk and took my arse like a well-bred stallion before sucking me off like the latest Hoover vacuum model?__

My... apologies for your boy’s remarkable refractory period?

My- my bad?

Harry could merely cough-squeak as he searched his internal gentlemanly database for something that didn’t completely stick his foot up his arse.

Lee narrowed his eyes even further at Harry before he made a considering noise and immediately perked up. “Well, it’s good to see you’re hanging out with my son, Harry. Teaching him the ways of a knight like you did for me I’m certain?”

For what felt like the millionth time in the last 48 hours, Harry felt his mouth drop open in shock at the implication. “I--I’m sorry?”

“Well, that’s why you went into the storage room that Merlin mentioned?” Lee sighed in relief. “I’m glad. I admit, I’d thought my son, who you remember was born a few years before you recruited me-well, I thought he’d run off to go do suspicious things with God knows who, but I’m glad he was in a safe and... productive environment with someone like you whom I’ve trusted for--oh--some seventeen years.”

Harry couldn’t even blink.
Lee smirked. Oh, yes. He had an idea of how he’d handle this situation. If he couldn’t kill Harry (he did have limits after all) or be as crafty as Merlin when it came to payback, well, Lee would just have to kill Harry with kindness. He knew the man would drive himself crazy, even if he did continue seeing his son, because of all the variables: Eggsy was half his age, Eggsy’s father was probably Harry’s best mate, not to mention colleague, and also--

“Oh, by the way, Michelle wants me to invite you to brunch sometime this week! We just got off the phone and apparently Eggsy’s going to be bringing his boyfriend as well. Isn’t that splendid?” And with that Lee began to walk away, whistling to himself. “Do make sure to stop by before Merlin’s got you going off to Siberia for six months, won’t you? Have a wonderful day, Harry!”

Harry half expected a tumble weed to bounce past him with how quiet the corridor had just become once Lee left. The only sound really was Harry’s pounding heart. Thankfully he still had the presence of mind to not lean against the wall and simply slide down it in utter befuddlement.

Lee’s son? That had really been... Eggsy? He still couldn’t quite believe it. The last time he’d seen Eggsy was back when the boy had been five or six years of age.

And wasn’t that just a swift kick to the bollocks.

Though in retrospect, the young man did quite resemble Lee in the face a bit, the bone structure perhaps, but Gary--Eggsy’s eyes... they were the color of cerulean waves rushing a lush and virile golden shore.

No, Eggsy’s eyes were certainly not something he had acquired from either Lee or Michelle, Harry thought in retrospect before abruptly freezing.

Michelle...

Regardless that her son was of consenting age--

Regardless that the young man would surely become not only his father’s colleague but Harry’s as well--

Regardless that Harry had been good friends with Lee and her...--

And regardless of all of that--and then some--Michelle was going to utterly eviscerate him when she found out.

Shite.

Harry walked to the offices in a daze and in no particular rush as his brain felt halfway into shock and grief. He mumbled something he often thought of when he found himself in hopeless situations where a mission might go awry or, in this case, where a good friend might murder him in cold blood.

He chanted the end of Sir Galahad:

“Then move the trees, the copses nod,
Wings flutter, voices hover clear
‘O just and faithful knight of God!
Ride on! the prize is near.”

“As is mine end,” Harry lamented.
The end.
Michelle Unwin woke up in the morning to the high-pitched sound of a wailing child.

She peered around the room groggily in search of her daughter’s sudden disturbance, automatically humming a tune that had always calmed Daisy as she rubbed a soothing hand across the little girl’s back. She snuggled Daisy to her chest and whispered reassurances.

“Shh, shhh, mummy’s here, Daisy May. Hush now, little one, it’s alright; mummy’s here.”

Daisy whimpered but quieted almost immediately; Michelle smiled softly. Her little flower had always been a well-tempered child, but between Lee’s work schedule and the rare emergency call from Kingsman the toddler frightened easily when not gently weaned from sleep.

That’s when Michelle took note of the sharp blipblip coming from the nightstand. She frowned as she reached for her mobile, yawning so deeply that her tongue curled with relieved satisfaction. Blinking, she pressed the phone to her ear, listening with vague attention to her husband’s voice message. It was far too early in the morning to try and make sense of the gibberish Lee was blathering on about. It had something to do with work, and also mentioned... the other agent’s staying at HQ with him all night (Ah, so that’s why, Michelle thought, glancing over at the empty side of the bed) before Lee went on to describe something that rather sounded similar to a sordid soap she’d caught on the telly the day before... Huh.

Admittedly she wasn’t really following what Lee was so upset about- he tended to skip lines of conversation and jump topics before diving headfirst into tangents when he was thrown into a tizzy over something (often times it had something to do with his good friend Harry Hart)- and while she loved and adored her barmy husband, she also wasn’t worried despite having been called from Lee’s emergency line.

Because, honestly, after 17 years of the odd emergency call every so often it turned out that 80% of them weren’t actual emergencies (Michelle learned long ago that any call from Lee’s work-issued mobile meant he was overthinking things and getting himself worked up over nothing). Then of course there was the 10% that WERE actual real life danger-danger emergencies that she always received from Lee’s main handler, Merlin.

It was then that Lee’s voice rose, taking her out of her reverie, as he mentioned anxiously, “-and Eggy, he just... and, God, I should have never put him up as a recruit! What was I thinking, ‘Chelle!”

Mind in all a flurry she scrambled out of bed, Daisy having already toddled off the bed to play with
her toys. She blinked curiously at her mother’s sudden commotion.

Eggsy?! Michelle thought frantically. Did something happen to- !?!

But Lee had already moved on to another topic—saying he’ll be back in the afternoon if he doesn’t murder someone first. No mention of what happened to Eggsy, if Eggsy was okay or—

Michelle grabbed her coat, purse, daughter and a nappy bag and took off to Savile Row, teeth grinding when all she got was a busy signal when redialing Lee’s number.

She arrived at the shop and was promptly escorted to the staff offices by an oddly pleasant Dagonet who assured her everything was fine and everyone in her immediate family still had their limbs intact. He brought her as far as Harry’s office before bidding her goodbye and turning tail to all but run from whence they came.

Michelle shook her head of the oddity before turning around to peek inside the office, somewhat taken aback when she zeroed in on Harry who for all intents and purposes was sitting in a fetal position- head in his hands and elbows digging into his thighs, grumbling at the other occupants of his office to “…just bugger the fuck off already.”

Surrounding the desolate shell of a man Michelle took in each of Lee’s other colleagues - Gawain, James, Alastair, Kay and Dinadan – as she entered the office, every single one of them (sans Harry) laughing about something (probably at Harry) that had them in high spirits. However, their chuckling ceased the moment they caught sight of her in the doorway.

She nodded to them politely as Alastair broke out into a rare, tooth-filled smile, standing up gracefully to step forward. He held out his arms in a rather reminiscent display of Daisy’s grabby hands.

“Hello, Princess,” the man gently addressed the little girl before his eyes met Michelle’s. “May I? You might wish for a moment to speak to Galahad,” Alastair suggested as he removed his jacket and, beneath that, his guns and holster, trading them for the adorable ray of sunshine. It was a win-win as far as Percival was concerned; he got to spend some time in the company of Miss Daisy while also arming Michelle for what was surely to be a worthwhile bloodbath between her and Hart when she found out the news.

Percival smirked as he blew raspberries into Daisy’s chubby cheek.

Now all eyes, even Harry’s, had moved to focus on Michelle. She brushed hair out of her face and swept it behind an ear, feeling a little out of place surrounded by posh men and women in even posher suits when all she sported was one of Lee’s old threadbare Uni shirts and mismatching trackies.

Phew, I must be a sight. Like I’ve dragged myself up from hell or sumfin’. Where on earth is that ridiculous husband of mine? She blinked before her eyes caught on Harry’s.

“Ah- Oh, Michelle, you look- lovely today, as usual. You’re certainly a rather fetching sight amongst all this rubbish,” he started, waving a dismissive hand around at his coworkers. Someone snorted in the background.

“Cut the crap, Hart,” she snapped, knowing instantly that whatever had Lee so riled up this morning was certainly his senior co-worker’s fault. “My husband woke me up at arse-o-clock this mornin’ sounding like he was in a right tit. I’m tired, I’m angry and-,” she began flatly, shoving Percival’s bundled armory at a red and quietly heaving Gawain.
Harry seemed to pale further when she scooped Daisy out of Alastair’s arms, the toddler giggling thrilled, unintelligible squeals echoing around the room. “And now I’m armed.” Michelle finished her unsaid threat.

_Continue to be non-compliant and I’ll make you face your crimes with this face, and then you’ll be sorry!_ Michelle thought.

After all, Daisy wasn’t just a princess to her father and older brother, she had also swept into the hearts of Kingsman’s own knights-in-shining-armor.

Who knew a 2-year-old could hold such power over a non-blood relative that even the great and terrible Harry Hart would push aside his immense dislike for glitter and play arts and crafts to play with said glitter and crafts during the times when they would stop by to pick Lee up from work, only to find that her husband was in a debrief that would take longer than expected?

And _oh_, yes. She had photographic proof.

But she wouldn’t pull that out of her arsenal unless things truly got dire. So instead, she fixed the men in the room with a look of _just try me, I dare you_. “Now, is someone gonna tell me what the hell is going on or are we gonna stand around here all day?”

The chortles started back up instantly.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you ALL for reading! I hope you liked it (also kind of terrified you might not have :x), so please take a moment to leave a comment (cause this sucker took two years... yes, I am slow xD).

My [tumblr](https://www.tumblr.com).

P.S. This fic took nearly two years to complete... I'm not even lying. Began in November 2015 :x

End Notes

Thank you to my betas over the last two friggin years: [Sina](https://www.tumblr.com), [Aeris](https://www.tumblr.com), [CaryceJade](https://www.tumblr.com) and [Czarinakitty](https://www.tumblr.com)!! Any and all mistakes are mine alone.

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