The New Marauders and the Trickster God

by JasminSky

Summary

Gabriel, or lately known as Loki, the pagan god of mischief and mayhem, is bored as hell. Since the Winchester brothers are more inclined to kill him after his stunt at the Mystery Spot, pranking them is out of the question. But wait isn’t the saviour of magical Britain and son of one of his most devoted followers attending Hogwarts soon? Moreover, weren’t there also twins who worshipped him? That sounded of a lot more fun but will Hogwarts survive it? Or better yet, will the world survive a Harry Potter trained by him?
Hello, what happens when I'm ill...I correct yet another story of mine, this time a more humorous one.
But first before anyone of you is confused about the threesome pairing that I declared as non-slash. The relationship between Dean and Castiel in this pairing is only friendship. Think of it as them sharing the same woman without having anything with each other. Sure, Dean will lightly tease the angel from time to time, but that is as far as it goes.
So now enjoy!
Gabriel, or Loki as he was called lately, was bored as hell and that was never good. He just finished pranking the Winchester brothers. Well more a funny way of teaching Sam a lesson by killing Dean in over one hundred different and mostly hilarious ways. Okay, funny only if you were not a Winchester, but he had tried to show Sam with this that he would eventually lose his brother and he could do nothing about it. However, unfortunately, these idiots were too stubborn to understand the lesson and now they both were more likely to kill him than enjoy another prank of him. A massive prank war was also out of the question now because that would call deities and other supernatural beings onto him whom he was more inclined to avoid at the moment.

So now he sat in some no-name city whose name he did not bother to remember somewhere in the middle of freaking nowhere in the US on a park bench and had nothing to do. He popped up a lollipop and started to suck it while watching a mother beating her child because it did not keep up with her to look at a window shop.

In this world, Loki abhorred two things no matter what the reason behind it was. That was for ones messing around with sweets in harmful ways. He would go nuclear on everybody’s ass who messed with candies except when it was for a good prank that hurt nobody, but everything else was a total no-go for him. Candies were for joy and fun, and he loved the sparkle in a child’s eye when it got something sweet.

The second thing he detested like the first were adults beating children. In the whole world, there was not one good reason he could tolerate that would make hitting a child acceptable. Children were supposed to have fun, play around, and explore the world. Adulthood came early enough as it was, well for some it came never, but that was something else.

Therefore, when he saw the scene on the other side of the street, he decided it was time for a lesson. He snapped with his fingers and watched with satisfaction that the woman stumbled and fell flat with her nose right into dog faeces.

“Each his due,” he said with a smile.

While this had been a nice distraction, it did not solve his problem. He was bored, and he did not know what to do.

Teaching some idiots a lesson, was not something he wanted to do right now especially not after the Winchesters. No, he needed something more on the long-term but what?

He sat there musing when suddenly a person with strange clothes entered his field of vision. The man wore a long robe with long sleeves and an even warmer looking sweater beneath it, but it was 32°C, so that seemed a bit of an overkill.

“European wizards, no sense for keeping a low profile,” Loki shook his head on that sight, but then a thought occurred to him. Was the great British saviour not going to visit Hogwarts soon? If he remembered correctly, the boy also was the son of one of his most devoted followers, the Marauders, a group of fellow pranksters. He was always correct when it came to his followers because unlike the
other deities or the feather-stuffed brains from heaven he cared about them.

Thinking about Hogwarts, he came across twin brothers also fellow pranksters who attended the school. He flipped the stick of his lollipop away that vanished before it could land on the footpath.

A wide grin came across his face. Here was the distraction he had sought-after, and it would be hilarious. He could even mess with the oh-so-great Albus Dumbledore. Yes, that would be it. He would only have to prepare a few minor things, but that should be no problem.

Therefore, he popped up another candy and put it into his mouth before vanishing to England with a devilish grin.
Loki lingered in one of the seats of an otherwise empty compartment in the Hogwarts-Express looking out of the window. He had been on the train early, and his compartment was at the very far end of the train, so it was unlikely that he would be disturbed any time soon. Therefore, he watched the crowd now while sucking a candy cane he had popped up earlier.

His gaze fell on a pale blond boy that talked to a tall man with the same blond hair only longer. Naturally, his father, who had a cane in his right hand with a snakehead as a handle. Loki smiled before he snapped with his fingers and the cane mutated into a real snake, which instantly started to crook. The man threw the animal away from himself looking at it in disgust while the people around him began to shriek and jump away. Loki snickered.

Then his view fell on a group of redheads, from which two identically looking ones laughed their ass of at the performance he had done with the blond man.

‘Hmmm whether these are the twins who worship me?’ he asked himself.

One of the twins looked in his direction, so Loki waved at him with a broad grin. The first twin poked the second one, said something to him and then pointed in Loki’s direction. They both then disappeared into the train.

‘Well, it looks like I’ll find out very soon.’

He let his view glide over the masses on the train station again when he saw the boy he came for. Black wild hair, green eyes and…wait he was far too thin for how an average boy his age should be. Loki narrowed his eyes and hoped that his suspicion was wrong when suddenly the compartment door opened, and the two redheads came in.

“Have you been.”

“the one.”

“pranking the older Malfoy?” they asked performing a perfect twin-speak.

Loki grinned. “A prankster never confirms, nor denies any accusations and only makes counter-accusations. You know there is a time and place for the truth,” he answered.

“The time is never.”

“and the place nowhere.”

All three broke out in loud laughter.

“You pal”

“have to be our friend”
“Who are you anyway?”
“Because you are”
“not a second year or above”
“and no one else we know.”

“Loki Laufeyson, at your service” he replied with a bow towards them and a snicker at the performance they both gave him.

On that statement, their both mouth flew open so fast and wide that Loki feared they wouldn’t be able to shut them ever again.

“Don’t tell us that you are.”
“The one.”
“The only.”
“The absolutely best.”
“God of mischief,”
“mayhem”
“and absolute awesomeness!?”

“Well, the last time I checked there wasn’t another one, not within this universe anyway but that’s something different,” with that he conjured three lollipops, gave two to the twins and popped the third into his mouth.

“Our prayers have been heard.”

“but why are you here?”

“To be honest, I’ve been bored…badly. My latest pranking targets were more inclined to kill me than enjoying my pranks, everything else seemed dull, and when I heard that a certain lad will attend Hogwarts from this year on and I also knew you would be here I thought, the hell why not…” Loki told them with a shrug.

“Tried to kill you?”

“Tell us their name.”

“and we show them how we think about that,” they growled.

Loki laughed. “Thanks, but that won’t be necessary. But you could do me another favour.”

“Anything you wish from us.”

“You see the boy over there with the wild black hair and the snowy owl on his cart?” he asked while pointing out of the window. The twins looked and nodded. “Would you please help him and direct him to my compartment?”

“Who is he?”
“The lad I came for, son of one of the Marauders,” Loki smirked.

“You don’t mean.”

“Harry Potter?!”

“Yes, Harry Potter. Be nice to him, I fully plan to corrupt him to pranks,” he said with mad laughter that would send shivers down the spine of every sane person.

In Hogwarts Dumbledore shuddered. It was like something terrible was going to happen soon, but he shrugged it away. Harry Potter was going to attend school from today on, and all his plans were playing out smoothly, so nothing to worry about.

How wrong he was.

In the Hogwarts train, Loki continued looking out of the window after the twins left. His view fell on the red-headed family again, especially on the youngest son. Right now, he got his nose rubbed by his mother, which seemed to annoy him. Perhaps Loki also could get him into his little prank war at Hogwarts, but with a look at his soul, he flinched. This boy was a hypocrite and one of the worst too. His hygienic standards also were next to non-existent and about his manners; he did not even want to start with those. No, that guy would not get anywhere near him and Harry. It might become problematic with the twins because he was their brother, but he could not help it. He could not stand hypocrites except for a good prank towards them.

He got ripped out of his musings when the compartment door opened once again. He looked around and saw Harry standing in the doorway.

“Hello, may I sit with you? Some redheaded twins called Fred and George said this is the only compartment which isn’t full,” Harry said sheepishly.

“Sure, sure, come in and take a seat. My name is Loki Laufeyson by the way, but you can just call me Loki,” Loki grinned, this was the first step.

“Harry,” he replied with a tentative smile. “Harry Potter.”

“Nice to meet you, Harry. Your first year at Hogwarts?” he asked while standing up and helping the boy to put his trunk on the rack.

After putting his trunk away, Harry sat down at the window opposite of Loki.

“Yes. It really surprised me when I got my letter. Didn’t think magic was real.”
“It’s my first year too, but I knew about magic beforehand, so it wasn’t that surprising. I assume you are from a muggle family?”

They heard a ringing and shortly later the train began to move slowly before picking up speed.

Harry sighed. “I live with my aunt and uncle because my parents died when I was fifteen-month-old, I didn’t know about magic until my eleventh birthday. It’s a wonder they let me attend Hogwarts with how they reacted to the letter,” he now looked sad, so Loki did not press any further.

That was when the compartment door opened for the third time, and the youngest redhead stood in the doorframe. Loki flinched and snapped with his fingers unnoticed by said redhead.

“Hello, might I sit with you? Everywhere else is full,” the redhead asked.

Harry who heard the snapping looked at Loki when he saw it.

“Uh Loki, you have a big spider on your shoulder…,” he stated, pointing at it.

The redhead on the other hand hearing that, paled visibly while turning around to Loki. When he saw a spider as big as the hand of an adult and hairy as hell, he started to scream and ran so fast that Loki thought he might have broken the actual world record in 100m sprint.

“Did you just conjure that spider to freak out that red-headed guy?” Harry asked quizzically.

Just at that moment, the door opened once again, and the twins appeared in the compartment.

“Hey was that”

“our dear brother Ronniekins.”

“running away, screaming, and crying like a small girl?” they asked.

“It seems Loki here scared him by conjuring up that big hairy spider there on his shoulder.”

The twins looked at Loki, and both started to laugh.

“That was”

“one hell.”

“of a prank.”

“Sorry to say it but your little brother is an ass and a hypocrite. Hygiene also seems to be a foreign word for him. So sorry, but I do not like him. I hope you aren’t mad about that,” Loki told them in a voice like he was commenting on the weather.

Both twins started to laugh again.

“No problem with us.”

“We don’t know how often we told him to bathe.”

“But he never listens,” they shrugged. “We are Fred and George Weasley by the way.”

“and who are you?” they asked, acting as if they didn’t know.

“Loki Laufeyson,” he replied.
“Nice to meet you Loki.”

“but we have to go now.”

“our friends are waiting,” with that, they waved at them and vanished.

“So how did you know that this Ron is a hypocrite and an ass? I mean the thing with the hygiene was…obvious but the other things not.”

Loki smiled at that. “I’m sorry but that will be my secret for a bit longer, but you will eventually learn that I’m right.”

“Hmmm okay,” Harry decided that he would have to see that for himself before he comes to a conclusion but for now, he settled with it.

They did some small talk while observing the landscape flying by, talking about Hogwarts, the houses, as well as different subjects and how they expected them to be and many other things. That was when the compartment door opened again. This time a chubby boy their age stood there.

“H-hi I’m Neville. Have…have you seen a toad? Mine went missing,” he asked shyly.

“I’m sorry I haven’t seen a toad. What about you Loki?” Harry replied.

Loki looked at the boy more closely. He seemed to be shy and one who did not find friends easily but once he made friends with someone he was loyal. He also looked like he was friendly and might not decline a good joke. All in all, Loki liked him.

“Is this perhaps the toad you are looking for?” he asked after secretly conjuring up the toad from where ever it had been.

“Trevor!” Neville exclaimed, jumping forward, and grabbing the toad.

Harry meanwhile gazed at Loki who only shrugged. “I like him.”

He shook his head and grinned. Until now, Harry learned that Loki could conjure up everything he liked, which were mostly sweets, with just a snap of his fingers. Loki also told him that he was not that trustful and only a very few people he liked could call themselves his friend. Luckily, Harry was one of those because Loki was funny, nice to have around, and he had good pranks up his sleeve (Loki told him about some of his more or less harmless pranks). Therefore, if Loki liked that boy, he wanted to get to know him.

“Would you like to sit with us now that you have your toad back?” Harry asked.

“I-If it is okay with you,” Neville stuttered, but his face brightened up.

“My name is Harry Potter by the way, and that grinning idiot over there who happened to find your toad is Loki Laufeyson,” Harry introduced them while kicking Loki against his foot.

“Hey what was that for?”

“For you grinning like mad. You’ll scare of Neville.”

Neville who heard that blushed but sat down nonetheless.

After that, they continued talking now together with Neville, who they got to know was a so-called pure-blood and who was raised with magic. At first, he was shy, but after a while, he warmed up
with them and a bit later, he told them everything he knew about the magical world and Hogwarts.

It was around noon, and they were in the middle of a discussion about Quidditch and different teams when it knocked. In the corridor before the compartment stood a woman with a trolley full of sweets and other things. Harry just wanted to get up to look at what was offered, but Loki was faster. He bought up the whole thing.

A few minutes later, he sat in the compartment with a huge pile of sweets and other food right next to him. Both Harry and Neville looked at him in disbelief.

“Hey, don’t make such a face and cheer up. We have enough sweets for the rest of the ride, and I don’t have to conjure it up anymore,” and with that, Loki threw them both a Pumpkin Pasties each.

They sat there for some time again talking about various things and eating through the massive amount of food when Harry grabbed a Chocolate Frog.

“They’re not really frogs, are they?” he asked, of the opinion that nothing could shock him anymore since he got to know Loki.

“No, they are made from chocolate, and it’s only a spell. They mostly only can make one real jump before it wears off,” Neville explained.

Harry opened the box, and the frog jumped to the window, but Loki caught it before it could jump out and gave it to Harry.

“Thank you. Hey, there is a card in there, it says Albus Dumbledore,” Harry excitedly exclaimed munching on the frog.

“Hmm? Yes, in each box is a card of a famous witch or wizard. Albus Dumbledore is the headmaster of Hogwarts; you will see him when we arrive. Granny says he is one of the greatest wizards of our time.”

Loki flinched on hearing that which was why Harry gave him a quizzical look.

“I happen to know that his power isn’t what it seems to be. He also is the biggest hypocrite of this time, an even bigger one than this so-called Dark Lord,” he huffed.

Now it was upon Neville to look at him questioningly, but it seemed they would not get the answer to that anytime soon, so they let it rest. Loki would tell them when he thought he should.

The rest of the journey they continued talking about everything that came to their mind. The funniest moment was when Harry tried Bertie Bott’s Every-Flavour Beans and happened to pick one that tasted like vomit and Loki got one that tasted like salted herring.

Finally, they reached Hogsmeade Station and got off the train.

“Firs’-years over here!” a giant man called out.

Harry who recognised the man waved at him, and the giant nodded in greeting.

“This is Hagrid he was the one who introduced me to magic and the magical world,” Harry explained.

“Firs’-years over here and follow me!” he called out again.

When he had finally collected the first-year students, he led them down to a lake where many small
boats were tied up.

“No more’n four to a boat. Yeh’ll get yer firs’ sight o’ Hogwarts soon.”

Harry, Neville, Loki and a bushy brown-haired girl sat in one boat. After every student sat, the boats left the shore and drove around a corner where they got their first sight of Hogwarts. It was huge with so many small and large towers you could not count and lights shining from every window.

However, Loki had an eye for something entirely different. He looked over to the blond boy whose father he had pranked at the train station this morning before he snapped with his fingers. The boat of the blond began to reel and the blond, as well as his companions who sat in the boat with him, fell overboard. But in his attempt to stop himself from falling into the water he grabbed the redheaded boy Ron in the boat next to him and drew him with him, so both landed in the water with a loud splash.

Loki had a tough time not to outright laugh his ass off and even Harry and Neville, who tried to give him a scolding gaze, could not help themselves and snicker. The bushy haired girl, on the other hand, was not even the slightest little bit amused.

“How should I? I don’t even know how to perform magic,” he replied with an angelic smile on his face. Okay, it was a blatant lie, but he was not going to tell her, she should mind her own business.

After Hagrid had helped the boys back into their boats, the ride continued until they reached some kind of underground harbour where they all got off. They climbed a stair at which end a stern looking woman in emerald green robes greeted them.

“Welcome to Hogwarts.”

She gave them a short speech about the houses of Hogwarts and the house points, that good behaviour earned those points while bad behaviour would result in lost points. At the end of the term, the house with the most points would win the House Cup.

“The Sorting Ceremony will take place in a few minutes. I shall return when we are ready for you.”

With that, she left through the door behind her leaving the soon to be students behind to wait.

Soon they would be sorted, and the year of study and magic will begin. Then again, in Loki’s case the year of massive mischief and mayhem! That let him grin evilly.
Harry and Loki leaned against the stair railing while Neville stood opposite of them, his toad safely in his hands. They chattered when the blond boy with two square-shouldered bodyguards stepped next to them. It seemed he had dried himself or got dried by someone else, Loki neither knew nor cared.

“So, you are the famous Harry Potter. My name is Draco Malfoy,” he introduced himself with an arrogance in his voice that let Neville huff.

Draco turned around to him. “And you, round face, dull eyes, Neville Longbottom I assume. My father said that it was even questionable whether you are a real wizard or only a squib.”

“That is coming from someone who isn’t even able to ride a boat properly without any incident,” Loki retorted while narrowing his eyes. The other two snickered.

“And who would you be?” Draco demanded to know.

“Loki Laufeyson and if I were you I’d be really cautious whom I make my enemy.”

“That’s more likely what I’d say to Potter. It seems that your companions are not fitting a boy of your reputation. I could help you sort that out,” he said while holding out his hand.

However, Harry just broke out into laughter.

“I think I can manage myself pretty well but thank you.”

On hearing that, Draco growled before returning to his other friends.

“I’m sure as hell going to teach you both trickster magic if only to prank the living shit out of that ass,” Loki snickered while snapping with his fingers.

Draco suddenly sported red hair and worn clothes and to put the icing on the cake Professor McGonagall just stepped through the door and behind him.

“Mr Weasley,” she said while tapping on his shoulder with the scroll in her hand.

“What did you just call me?” he growled offended while turning around only to be met with the not very amused face of the stern professor. “Oh, I apologise I thought you were someone else.”

“Mr Malfoy?” she raised an eyebrow at his appearance but did not say anything else.

“Well, I hope everyone is ready because the sorting is about to start. Form a line and follow me,” with that McGonagall turned around and walked through the door into the great hall.

Harry was fascinated by the sight of hundreds of candles floating in the air and the masses of students. Loki on the other hand only was mildly impressed by the ceiling, which was enchanted to show the sky outside and Neville looked nervous not noticing any of that. They heard the bushy-
haired girl holding a monologue about something, but they didn’t listen.

“Please stay down there,” Professor McGonagall said and waited for the last students to arrive.

Behind her on a four-legged chair laid an old and dirty looking wizarding hat. When all the new students had gathered a rip opened, and the hat began to sing so off-key that Loki quickly tuned it out. Even Harry and Neville tried not to listen. When the hat had finished the hall burst into applause, which Loki flinched at. It seemed that wizards had no idea, what good music was. Somewhere Ron muttered something about wrestling a troll when Professor McGonagall stepped forward with a long parchment floating in front of her.

“I’ll now call out your name. When I do so, you step up here, sit on the chair, and I put the hat on you for you to get sorted. Abbot, Hannah!” she called out.

The girl went up and did as the professor said.

“Hufflepuff!” the hat called out after a few seconds.

It went on while Loki took the time to look around for the next target when his gaze fell upon one of the teachers. It was a man in violet robes and a violet turban on his head. He didn’t know why but that man gave him the creeps.

“Laufeyson, Loki!” Professor McGonagall called out.

‘Well then, time to get sorted’ he thought.

He went up the stairs and sat down and before the hat blocked his view, he gave Harry and Neville a reassuring smile. Then everything went dark when the hat slipped over his eyes.

“What? Hell no! Is it too late to resign?” the hat exclaimed into his head, which made Loki laugh out loud.

“Yes, I think it is,” Loki replied on the same telepathic way with a snicker.

“I should outright refuse to sort you or put you into Slytherin…it would be fun to see what happens then.”

“You could do that, but then I’d be obliged to hex you to be the cleaning rag for the worst toilets in the castle,” Loki stated as if he was talking about the weather. “And I’m not James and his group of Marauders you were comparing me to. I hate bullying as much as you do. I’m only here to have some fun."

“We will see, we will see. The bright side of this is that Dumbledore will be in much trouble,” the hat snickered. "GRYFFINDOR!” he called out loud.

Loki stood up, and on the way to the twins, he gave Harry and Neville a thumbs up.

“Longbottom, Neville!”

Neville stumbled up to the hat and nearly fell over, but he could catch himself. It took only a few seconds until he also was sorted into Gryffindor.

Loki in the meantime had sat with the twins.

“Hey, guys ready to plunge the school into chaos?”
“Always!” they replied when Neville sat next to Loki. “And who are you?”

“N-Neville L-Longbottom” he stuttered.

“He is a bit shy but a good guy so, be nice to him.”

Neville blushed upon hearing that. Nobody had ever stood up and defended him.

“We are Fred”

“and George.”

“Weasley, nice to meet you too.”

When he heard the name Draco Malfoy, Loki looked up only to see that the appearance of the boy hasn’t changed which earned him a questioning look from the professor with the greasy black hair, but Loki snickered. It also seemed that Draco was fuming about his momentary appearance.

“What’s so funny?” one of the twins asked.

“You see the boy who just gets called for sorting?”

“Yes Malfoy”

“what is it with him?”

Then both looked up and saw what Loki had meant before they both started to laugh outright which got them quizzically looks from the others around them. They only pointed at Malfoy. It didn’t take long before the whole table sat there laughing.

“You didn’t”

“do that.”

“did you?” the asked between laughers.

“You know the best thing? Before we entered the hall, even Professor McGonagall addressed him by ‘Mr. Weasley’ when she came to collect us for the sorting,” Loki replied with a grin.

That made them laugh even harder until Dumbledore called out to be quiet but that only helped a bit.

A few others were sorted before it was Harry's turn.

“Potter, Harry!”

The whole hall went quiet while Harry stepped up to the hat and sat down. The hat didn’t even touch the boys head.

“GRYFFINDOR!” it called out with a slight panic in his voice.

It seemed the hat had taken his not so empty and subtle threat to heart, Loki thought while making space for Harry to sit. The whole Gryffindor table in the meantime was roaring that they had Potter in their house. Loki doubted that they would say it anymore when they knew what he was up to but he shrugged and gave Harry a welcoming grin.

“Hey guys” Harry greeted them. “What did you tell them to cause such an uproar Loki?”
“Why do you assume that it was me?” he asked with his angelic smile that would only fool an idiot, therefore probably Malfoy, Dumbledore and perhaps the youngest Weasley boy.

“Because despite knowing you for just a few hours I learned enough about you to know that you must have something to do with this, if even remotely.”

Loki laughed. “You got me. I told them about what happened before we entered the hall or rather showed them.”

With that, he took a look at Malfoy who now seemed to be back to normal again. What a shame.

It was when the second last Ronald Weasley was called and then sorted into Gryffindor. Funny how he couldn’t sit far away enough from Loki to his liking, so he ended up next to the bushy-haired who they got to know was Hermione Granger. It looked like Hermione tried to introduce herself to Ron when he barked at her that she should mind her own business and should leave him alone. Harry flinched at that thinking about what Loki told him on the train about this particular boy. It seemed he was right.

The last student was sorted, and the headmaster welcomed them before saying four totally unrelated words. Loki looked at Dumbledore and then at Harry and made a movement that indicated that he thought the headmaster was more than a bit mad. After Dumbledore sat down again, food appeared on the tables. It was everything one could ask for, and so everyone started to eat.

“So what are you planning for this year?” George asked.

“What do you mean? Something like that?” he asked with an innocent face.

Loki snapped his fingers visibly, but it seemed that nothing happened. Not until they heard gasps from the Slytherin table and snickers from the other. Some students even laughed outright. So the twins swept their gazes through the hall when they saw it. Their eyes grew wide before they nearly fell off the bench from laughter. Now even Harry and Neville looked around when their look fell on one of the professors who sat on the very far end of the table. Harry saw him before, a professor with greasy black hair who looked at him with hatred in his eyes he couldn’t explain because he never met the professor before. Now said professor had bright pink clean hair bound to twin pig-tails on the back and also wore robes in very bright pink. This could compete with the cardigan some woman called Umbridge at the Ministry had worn when Loki was there to temper with their records so that he could attend Hogwarts. Harry couldn’t help it but also started to laugh because the professor looked like he had been slapped with a fish…repeatedly.

“WHO DID THIS?” the professor roared which earned him more laughter from Loki.

“When I get to know who did this he gets kicked out of the School before the year has even started!” he could make a guess who did it, but he had no evidence.

The professor took out his wand tapped his head with it and returned to normal. Well mostly, because some pink streaks remained in his hair, but the professor didn’t notice before he sat down again with a growl. Dumbledore meanwhile coughed into his hand seemingly having problems not to laugh too.

“You are crazy!” the twins stated.

“No one pranks Snape.”

“and gets away with it.”
“But it was hilarious!”

“And I have it on good authority that he has no evidence against me,” Loki snickered.

Shortly after that, the food on the table disappeared, and the desert appeared. Loki was in his own personal heaven, so he dove in leaving everyone astonished about how much he could eat.

At the staff table in the meantime, McGonagall had a hard time fighting the growing headache. She had thought that it had been the twins, who pranked Severus but she had watched them carefully. Not one of them had had a wand in their hand, so this one time they were innocent. But who had it been then? Perhaps the same who let Malfoy look like the youngest Weasley? She had a distinct feeling that this would become a very long year. She would have to restock her liquor.

After the dinner, Dumbledore stood up and gave a few words of advice.

“To the first-years, the forbidden forest is called that way for a reason, it is forbidden to anyone. Some of the older ones should remember that too,” he said with a gaze in the direction of the twins who made an innocent face.

“Second Mr Filch our caretaker asked me to remind you that no magic is allowed in the corridors as well as several items. A full list of those hangs at his office door.

The Quidditch trials will be held in the second week. Anyone interested can go to either Madam Hooch or their respective head of the house.

At last, I must mention that this year the corridor on the third floor on the right hand is out of bounds to everyone who doesn’t want to die very painfully.”

Hearing that Loki looked alarmed. Who would have something in a school full of children, that was this dangerous? He would have to investigate this if only to take care that no one got hurt.

“Before we go let's sing the school song, everyone in his favourite tune!”

He flicked his wand, and the lyrics appeared above him. After that, a cacophony of what was supposed to be music echoed through the hall. Again, Loki wondered how wizards could call that music. Everyone ended at a different time the twins the last as they sang it along with a slow funeral march, which let Harry snicker.

“Ah music, a magic incomparable. And now off you trod, bedtime!”

With that, the student started to move, every house to its own dorms the first-years lead by the Prefects. On the way, Harry, Neville, and Loki talked about the day. Yes, this was a very great start
and the year could only get better, that they were sure off.
First Lesson: Transfiguration

Chapter 4: First lesson: Transfiguration

The next morning they all sat together at the Gryffindor table talking about the last evening and what had happened that night.

-Flashback-

Initially, Harry should have slept in the bed right next to Ron Weasley while Neville had been on his other side. Between Neville and the window had been Loki’s bed but Loki quickly suggested Harry switch beds with him especially since Ron had tried to approach Harry several times that evening only to get shouted at when Harry finally had enough. Harry was happy not having to sleep next to the redhead. Loki didn’t care since he didn’t need to sleep at all.

But the best thing had happened in the middle of the night.

Ron had snored very loud, and everyone had woken up to that point when Loki had given him his personal ‘Ice Bucket Challenge’, something he had seen on TV before he came to Hogwarts. He had conjured up a bucket, had gone into the bathroom, filled it with ice-cold water and had emptied it on Ron’s head. Said idiot had woken up snorting and had glared at Loki.

“I’ll do this every time you wake someone with your snoring, understood? And next time there might be actual ice in it.”

Ron had started rambling about this treatment, but Loki hadn’t been in the mood for it.

“There are people here who try to sleep but you are effectively preventing that and now be quiet, or I’ll throw you out” Loki had warned him for the last time.

But Ron, the stupid idiot he was had kept on rambling, so Loki had snapped with his fingers and had dumped the boy in the middle of one of the Slytherin dorms where he had effectively woken up everyone. Not to mention that they had been pissed as hell and had hexed him for good before calling Snape in.

The Gryffindor dorm in the meantime had been happy that they could sleep without any further interrupt.
Now they all sat at breakfast chatting lively while Ron entered the hall with a bright red head.

“You Laufeyson, I'm going to kill you!” he shouted what let students at the different tables look at him.

“Have fun trying.” Loki shrugged.

“Do you have any idea what I have been through last night?” Ron fumed.

After waking up the entire female 6th year Slytherin dorm, he had had a tough time to explain a pissed off Snape and McGonagall, because they had been woken in the middle of the night, how he had gotten in there and what he had been doing there especially in the girl’s dorm. Not to mention that they hadn’t believed him one word when he told them that Loki had ported him there with a snap of his fingers. He had received two weeks’ worth of detention, and the Slytherin girls branded him as a pervert.

The best was that he hadn’t been able to get back into the Gryffindor rooms either because the fat lady also hadn’t been the slightest bit amused having been woken up in the middle of the night and had outright refused to let him back in.

The Gryffindor’s had it taught to never piss off others who thought taking on with them would be a good idea.

They had asked him who he was after the incident because nobody of their age would have been able to pull that stunt but he had only told them to ask the twins. Earlier that morning they had done just that, and with his consent, they had told them. He had laughed his ass off upon the sight they had given him upon learning that he was, in fact, the ‘Loki, God of mischief and mayhem’ while sucking some sweets.

Later, after someone had asked, Loki had explained to them that there wasn’t a ‘Not-to-prank-List’ not even for those he considered friends, which had come as a blow to Harry and Neville, but that he would gladly defend everyone who wasn’t on his ‘Shit-List’, which Ron led with a huge advance, from bullies and the like. Oh and that he didn’t have a problem with getting pranked himself which had conjured several mischievous smiles, especially from the twins. But overall they liked him and had agreed to cover him up when he did something to protect them. Pranks on the other hand…that depended on who got pranked and what the prank was.

“I don’t know, and honestly I don’t care,” Loki retorted before resuming to his breakfast.

“You ported me right into the 6th year female dorm of Slytherin!”

Some started to snicker, and it seemed Ron was about to explode, but just at that moment Professor McGonagall went around and gave them their timetables while giving him a stern glare. Growling, he took his and nearly ran out of the hall.

“Don’t you think that this was a bit too much porting him into the female Slytherin dorm?” Harry asked him after McGonagall was out of hearing distance.

“First he is an imbecile and an ass. He has no actual manners, he rarely if at all takes a bath hence why he smells like weeks-old socks, and he is a bully of the worst kind. Did you hear how he had treated that Granger girl yesterday? He is even worse than Malfoy,” at the end, Loki growled. “And to my defence, it hadn’t been my intention to dump him in a female dorm. I aimed for the Slytherin
dorms in general, so it was sheer dumb luck he landed there. Or bad that depends on who you ask.”

Harry looked at him in disbelief, but several from his house nodded in agreement.

“He is right Ron mistreated Hermione yesterday. I asked her what had happened when I found her crying in our dorm and she told me everything. How he called her a know-it-all and a mud-blood and made jokes on her. It seems he had been very cruel to her,” Lavender Brown told them.

Just at that time, Hermione entered the hall seemingly coming from the library because she had a massive book under her arm. About Norse Mythology? Loki grinned upon which Hermione blushed while she sat down.

“Hermione I’d like to ask something form you,” Loki said, and Hermione nodded. “If that imbecile Weasley ever again bullies you, tell me. I’m fed up with his attitude and its time he learns that he is not at the top of the food chain and can do however he likes.”

Hermione looked at him as if he was an alien. Nobody ever stood up for her or defended her, but she nodded. She had also been in the common room this morning when the twins told them the truth hence why she now was carrying that book. First, she didn’t believe them but now after some reading she began to trust Loki, even while he stretched the rules a bit far for her liking.

“So that said what lessons do we have today?” Loki asked cheerfully trying to get rid of the gloom.

“Hmm first Transfiguration, second History of Magic, break and at last double potions. Doesn’t sound that bad,” Harry mused.

“I heard that Professor Snape teaches potions. He is very strict and doesn’t tolerate any mistakes. It is also said that he hates children and only teaches because he is indebted to Dumbledore,” Neville said.

“That doesn’t sound very good. Which of the professors is he?”

“The one with the greasy black hair Loki pranked yesterday.”

Harry gulped. He remembered said professor very well and he didn’t like him. It didn’t sound very promising; he had looked forward to potions.

“I think in the worst case I can convince him not to give you too much trouble,” Loki grinned.

“Thank you and while it is nice to have a friend who cares don’t you think it would better that I sort it out myself should there be any problems? These are my problems anyway,” Harry replied.

Loki reluctantly nodded. He was very protective when it came to those people he called his friends mostly because he had only very few but for now he wouldn’t intervene. Should Snape, on the other hand, go too far, well he would get to know what it meant to be on his ‘Shit-List’.

After they finished breakfast Harry, Neville and Loki together went to Transfiguration.

The three entered the Transfiguration classroom early and sat down in the front row. Harry looked at the tabby cat that sat on the teachers’ desk but dismissed it as Professor McGonagall’s pet.

“What do you think will this class be like?” Neville asked curiously.

“I don’t know, but you are the one with the most magical experience so you should be able to tell us,” Harry answered.
Neville blushed. “I know, but I haven’t shown any magical sign until I was eight. Draco was right that my family thought for a long time that I might be a squib.”

“What is a squib anyway?”

“A person born to magical parents but without any magic themselves,” Neville explained.

While they talked, more and more students arrived and sat down.

“I wonder where Professor McGonagall is,” Harry mused.

Loki chuckled while secretly conjuring up another cat, undoubtedly a male one, behind the one sitting on the desk in the front. The tabby cat jumped up in surprise when the other cat walked up to her and started to snuggle her. She eyed the other one warily watching how it approached her again clearly attempting more than snuggling before she jumped off the table while transforming back into a human, Professor McGonagall to be precise. Some of the students took a gasp on that performance.

“How did you know it was me and how did you conjure up the other cat, Mr Laufeyson?” Professor McGonagall demanded to know from Loki.

“Well while I knew that the one cat was you because of the marks around your eyes which resemble your glasses I didn’t conjure up the other cat” he explained playing the innocent.

“Don’t play dumb I heard you chuckle before that other cat appeared out of nowhere.”

“I chuckled because of Harry's question, I know for a fact that you saw that I never once touched my wand which laid visibly on my table the entire time,” Loki argued while an angelic smile crept onto his face.

Professor McGonagall snorted. He was right his wand laid on his table the entire time without him touching it once, and she doubted he was able to perform wandless magic. Well, she questioned whether he could do it even WITH a wand because they was taught it in the fifth grade at the earliest. That was also the reason why she didn’t believe Weasley this night. Remotely teleporting a person was so advanced they didn’t even teach it at Hogwarts not to mention doing it silently with only a snapping of the fingers like he had claimed. She doubted that even Dumbledore was able to do it and he was one of the most powerful wizards. But she would have an eye on Laufeyson never the less. He was up to something; she wasn’t even the slightest little bit fooled by that angelic smile of his.

She turned around starting the lesson by giving the class a speech about Transfiguration, the dangers and what one can do with it. As an example, she demonstrated her skills by transforming her desk into a pig and back. After that, she gave everyone a matchstick they were supposed to turn into a needle.

Harry and Neville tried very hard for some time, but they couldn’t change it in any way while Loki played with his matchstick observing them.

“It sounds easier than it is in reality” Harry growled while Neville nodded.

“That’s because you approach the subject in the wrong way. You wave your wand and say the spell hoping it reacts as you want. But magic and that includes every branch of it, not only Transfiguration, is a combination of imagination and willpower. This transforming a matchstick into a needle issue for example. First, you have to look very closely at the matchstick, get to know it. Then conjure up an image of a needle in your mind. Think about the needle what it looks like what is the material etcetera. The last step is to take your wand, point it at the matchstick say the spell and
will it into the form of the needle you have in your mind” Loki explained. “The more accurate the image in your mind the easier the transformation.”

Harry and Neville nodded before they did what Loki had explained. Harry’s matchstick transformed the halfway to a needle before it stuck at that. Neville’s in the meantime only slightly changed colour. Loki gave them some more advice. At the end of the lesson, Harry managed to entirely transform his matchstick while Neville just got a partial transformation.

“Mr Laufeyson, Mr Longbottom and Mr Potter, please stay behind” Professor McGonagall called out while the students packed up and left the classroom.

“Good work Mr Potter, Mr Longbottom and an excellent explanation Mr Laufeyson but the entire time I haven’t seen you performing it once,” she told them.

Loki picked up one of the matchsticks, put it on the table, took out his wand, murmured something and watched the matchstick transforming into a lollipop before popping it into his mouth with a smile.

Professor McGonagall huffed. “While not a needle, in the end, a perfect result. Three points to each of you Mr Longbottom and Mr Potter for good work and four for you Mr Laufeyson for an excellent explanation and performance. Oh, and you owe me a matchstick. You’re dismissed,” she told them with a smile.

Loki laughed and pointed at the table where innocently laid a matchstick before the three left the classroom.

Professor McGonagall shook her head. She couldn’t pinpoint it, but there was something about Laufeyson.

The three friends agreed that this was a perfect start and they were eagerly awaiting the other lessons.
Chapter 5: Sleeping and Potions

The second lesson this day was History of Magic. To say that this lesson was dull would be a massive understatement. Loki fell asleep after about five minutes of the monotone droning of the ghost teacher Professor Binns. He sat there his head resting on his left palm while he muttered something about sweets in his sleep.

Harry and Neville who sat on either side of him exchanged a look after about five more minutes before Harry gently pushed Loki just enough to destabilise him. It was like slow motion when Loki’s head slid from his hand, and he hit the desk before him with his nose ungently waking him up.

“Ouch” came the not very eloquent reaction together with some curses from him while he rubbed his nose.

“You fell asleep,” Harry chuckled.

“I don’t sleep!” was the retort from him.

“Ah okay how would you call it then? Eye preservation?” Neville now also started trying to suppress his laughter.

“Okay, okay the great Loki has fallen asleep. But what other would you expect if one has to listen to the monotone droning of a ghost about goblin wars? I can’t even hex him for that!” Loki growled quite loudly while he threw a ball he conjured at the ghost. It flew straight through him. After that, he slid down in his seat conjuring up some chocolate for him and his friends.

Professor Binns in the meantime didn’t even look up when the ball flew through him. He just continued his lecture. Only a few classmates looked at him dispraisingly, most from Ravenclaw who had the lesson together with them.

“How shall I explain that…? Ah yes, there are two kinds of ghosts in the world. Normal ones who are in fact souls who didn’t pass over to the afterlife, heaven or hell respectively, and magical ones. Magical ghosts are like a footprint. You know all those pictures around here which can talk and seem to be like the real person? Those ghosts are pretty much the same only that those are corporal and can move freely and to some extent through magic interact with the world. While a normal ghost someday goes crazy because they are souls stuck here these ghosts are just images of the original person, with the memories and their respective behaviour but images never the less. And because they have no physical form, I can’t tamper with them,” Loki sighed.

He didn’t register that now everyone around him listened to him instead of the professor because his information was much more fascinating and useful in life than something about wars long ago.

“Hmm I have never heard about those other ghosts,” Seamus muttered from behind.

“That might be because those mainly appear in America and only very rarely here in Europe. In
America, there are also people called hunters who hunt those ghosts down and forcibly send them onwards because as I said those ghosts go insane after a while and then mostly start to kill people.”

“Hunters…I have heard they hunt everything supernatural without mercy even the harmless ones,” Neville stated. Purebloods tended to tell their children that, shouldn’t they behave, hunters would come after them. It was their version of the boogeyman.

“Well most of them don’t. The hunters are more like the Aurors here in Europe who only hunt those who hurt or kill people only without the paperwork. But as always you have extremists who shoot first and ask questions later. Luckily most of these don’t live long enough to do any real damage because they often are on their own. The other “normal” hunters hate such a philosophy and give them a wide berth. But should one of you ever go to America you should have them in mind because most of them know only the demon witches who made a deal for their powers, so they are quite suspicious about magic.”

“Demon witches?” someone from his right side asked.

Loki sighed and started to explain the difference between demon-deal witches and natural-born ones and after that some more about demons in general while providing sweets. At the end of the lesson, the Gryffindor half of the class learned more from Loki’s stories than they ever would have by listening to Professor Binns. Even some Ravenclaw joined them at some point after they saw that Loki shared some genuine and useful information they would never be able to look up in the library other than all this history stuff.

On the way to lunch, they all chattered excitedly about what they learned from Loki.

The trio sat at the Gryffindor table when the twins joined them.

“We heard that you fell asleep in History of magic—“

“-and that you hit your nose when Harry pushed you,” they said with a wide grin.

“Ah, so you have been the one who pushed me” Loki growled at Harry who only smiled innocently.

“Well the good thing was after that he told us some quite interesting things about magical and supernatural beings,” Neville told them.

Loki huffed at that when suddenly Professor McGonagall stood behind them.

“Professor Binns informed me that you have been disturbing his lesson, Mr Laufeyson. Detention this evening with me and five points from Gryffindor. I’d ask you to pay attention next time” McGonagall said.

“How often do we have History?” Loki asked.

“Twice a week on Monday and Thursday, why?” Harry replied.

“Well, then Professor McGonagall make sure you have free evenings at every day we have History of Magic because I definitely won’t stop until Professor Binns decides to tell us something useful and not about wars long ago” Loki deadpanned.

“History is important so that we can learn from it and avoid making the same mistakes again” McGonagall explained on which Loki started to laugh.

“Professor, had you really looked into history you would know that the same mistakes tend to repeat
over and over again sooner or later with or without history lessons. Besides that, I doubt knowing 
that Urg the Unclean lead a Goblin Rebellion helps you in any given way should you, for example, 
strive through a forest in America and suddenly face a Wendigo” Loki stated, yes he had listened to 
Binns while explaining things to the others, well partly.

“I don’t know how this should be of any relevance. We are in England and not America, we don’t 
have any Wendigos or whatever these creatures are here.”

“Ah yes I forgot. All you English wizards do is sit in your homes with your wards never leaving the 
comfort. No wonder you all run around like a headless chicken when a Dark Lord rises.” Loki shook 
his head about this ignorance.

“Five more points from Gryffindor and three more evenings with detention. You should remember 
who you are talking to!” With that Professor McGonagall left.

“Idiots…all of them. Hey Mandy!” he called over to one of the Ravenclaw’s whose name he 
remembered from the History lesson, having an idea.

The girl came over to them. “Yes?”

“Professor McGonagall was mad with me because I disturbed the History lesson, but since it seems 
that these lessons don’t get any better I thought why don’t we meet in an empty classroom instead 
during those? Then I can tell you some more about the magical and supernatural life outside Europe 
without ‘disturbing’ the history lesson. It seemed you are more interested in my ‘lesson’ than in his” 
Loki explained.

“To be honest, that sounds a lot better than History of Magic but won’t we get detention when we 
don’t show up?” She asked.

The history they could read in books instead of listening to Binns. The hell, most of the students did 
it that way while sleeping in class but doing or learning something useful during that time was even 
better.

“Let them try. What could the teachers do when most of the class refuses to go there? Mass 
detention? They will have to take it, or it’ll drive them nuts quite quickly, and I have my methods to 
achieve that” Loki laughed.

“Okay, I’ll tell the others.”

“And I’ll look for a room we can use. Thursday at lunch I tell you where we meet since we have 
History afterwards.”

Mandy nodded and went back to the Ravenclaw table to tell the others about Loki’s plan while Loki 
started to sing “Another brick in the wall” from Pink Floyd, which gave him some laughter from the 
muggle born.

He even hadn’t stopped singing while they went down to potions class. They waited in front of the 
room because it was locked when the first Slytherins arrived lead by Draco Malfoy.

“You…” he growled at Loki. “I assume you had something to do with the…incident yesterday?”

“If you would enlighten me. There were several ‘incidences’ as you put it so aptly, beginning with 
you falling into the lake” Loki started to laugh at which Malfoy grew angry.

“I meant that you let me look like that Weasley” he retorted.
“Ohhhh that,” he said stretching the words. “What makes you think that it was me?”

“Because you seem to be the only one stupid enough to antagonise me. Have you any idea who I am or who my father is?”

“Let me guess. You are the imbecile brat of some blond idiot who is also called Malfoy?” Loki replied with a mock thought on his face.

“My father can make your life hell so be careful who you insult” Malfoy growled.

“Oh yes, that’s something I’d like to see especially since your daddy has no idea what the hell is like…but I’d gladly show him.”

“You wanted it that way so don’t cry when my father gets to you” replied Malfoy turned on the spot and left to his friends with his head high.

“Do you think this was a wise thing to do?” Neville asked carefully. “His father is pretty influential in the wizarding world and the Wizengamot itself. He could get you thrown out of school with one owl.”

Loki laughed at that. “Let him try. First, he has to find out who I actually am and after that, he should carefully think about whether he wants to cross me or not. If he is stupid enough, I show him what the hell is really like…I hate idiots like him who think that power and money are all you need and think that everyone is beneath them.”

Harry and Neville shook their head. They didn’t know whether they liked that or not but it was Malfoys own problem when he got on the wrong side with Loki.

Just then the door to the potions classroom flew open, and Professor Snape called them in with a sneer. Everyone went in and sat down, Loki again between Harry and Neville.

Professor Snape took out a parchment and started to call out the names. It went fluently until he reached Harry Potter.

“Ah, Mr Potter…our new…celebrity,” he said before he went on with the rest of the names.

“You are here to learn the subtle science and exact art of potion-making” Professor Snape told the class. His voice was only a mere whisper, but he caught the attention of the students with ease.

“I can teach you how to bottle fame, brew glory, even stopper death – if you aren’t as big a bunch of dunderheads as I usually have to teach.”

The class was utterly silent during the speech. Only Loki flinched especially on the last part. He hardly doubted that he would survive this class for very long without pranking that professor through and through.

“Potter, what would I get if I added powdered root of asphodel to an infusion of wormwood?” Snape asked.

Harry was just about to tell him that he had no idea when suddenly a voice echoed through his mind.

-It gets you a sleeping potion so powerful it is also called Draught of the Living Death- Loki told him. He knew very well that this was knowledge not taught before the fourth or fifth year because of the sensitive nature of said potion.
Harry turned around and looked at him shocked, but Loki just nodded towards Snape who looked at him expectantly. He turned back and repeated everything Loki had told him.

“Hmmm, perhaps that was just a lucky guess. Let’s give it another try. Where would you look if I told you to find me a bezoar?”

Loki growled.

-You can find a bezoar in the stomach of a goat, it cures most of the known poisons- Loki again supplied Harry with the necessary information which Harry repeated word for word.

Snape rose an eyebrow. “What’s the difference, Potter, between monkshood and wolfsbane?”

Loki now grew quite angry because this was another question from a higher level than theirs.

-These are questions for fifth-grade students what is he trying to achieve? Never the less both plants are one and the same also known as aconite. While the flowers and roots are excellent potion ingredients, mainly used for the Wolfsbane Potion, the leaves are highly toxic, which can easily be cured with a bezoar by the way.-

Harry again repeated everything except the first part, which earned him a sneer from Snape before he turned around and waved his wand at the blackboard. He told them that they now had to brew a cure for boils.

Harry was paired with Loki while Neville had Seamus Finnigan as his partner.

“How did you do that?” Harry asked Loki curiously while preparing the first ingredient.

“What? The telepathy? You forget who you are talking to” Loki grinned.

“You are right, why have I even asked” Harry replied shaking his head. “Thank you anyway, you saved me because I doubt Snape would have been happy if I couldn’t give him the answers. Well, he wasn’t anyway but have that really been questions from the fifth grade?”

“Except the one about the bezoar which indeed was a question for a first grade, yes. The knowledge about bezoars is required for brewing potions because of the many poisonous ingredient ones has to work with. But the other ones really are higher grade knowledge” Loki explained while stopping Neville from putting in the porcupine quills without taking the cauldron from the fire. The result would have been catastrophic like exploding and melting down the cauldron.

“I think Snape hates me, but I don’t know why. I mean I don’t know him so why would he hate me?” Harry confusedly asked while stewed the horned slugs.

Loki sighed. “I may know the reason, but I tell you later” Loki whispered because in just that moment Snape approached them looking at them with a sneer.

While the rest of the lesson they both silently brewed their potion. Harry prepared the ingredients while Loki did the actual brewing. From time to time he intervened in Neville’s and Seamus’ work to prevent any catastrophes, and in the end, both groups had some pretty good potions which they put into bottles, named them and gave it to Snape.

After they left the classroom to go to dinner, Harry spoke up again.

“What did you mean you might know the reason why Snape hates me?”
“Well, I think it has to do with your parents. You have to know your father was in a group called ‘The Marauders’ who pranked nearly everyone in school and they worshipped me hence why I know” Loki told him.

“Snape was together with them at school and was befriended with your mother, Lily. Your father was quite envious about that. That’s why Snape was one of your father’s favourite pranking targets. But from time to time, and that grew quite worse in the upper years, he went overboard with his pranks up to outright bullying him, something I don’t like at all. On top of that Snape loved your mother and you can think how happy he was when she married your father.

“I think the reason why Snape hates you is that you resemble your father quite much and that Snape sees him in you. That’s also the reason why I didn’t prank him during the lesson because I highly doubt that this would do any good…” Loki explained.

“Hmmm, I see what you mean. Do you think it would be a good idea to talk to Snape in private? Showing him that I'm not my father” Harry thought.

“I don’t know how he would react, but you can give it a try. In the meantime, I’ll keep a low profile within his class, so he doesn’t attack you for my doings, but outside class, I can't promise anything” Loki snickered.

With that they went to the great hall ending a good day with a good dinner, well for Harry and Neville it was the end of the day, Loki, on the other hand, had detention with Professor McGonagall.
Chapter 6: Of Pranks and Bets

After he finished his evening meal, Loki went to Professor McGonagall’s office for his detention. He had to write an essay about how to behave towards teachers, and with a smirk, he went to work. He was halfway through his piece when he saw that Professor McGonagall was carefully watching him.

“Is there a problem Professor?” he asked curiously.

McGonagall, ripped from her thoughts slightly blushed upon being caught staring.

“I’ve just been thinking about something Mr Weasley told me this night. He was caught sneaking around the 6th years female Slytherin dorms. You don’t happen to know anything about it, do you?”

“Well, from what I heard it seems that he effectively woke everyone up there and got hexed for it pretty badly. Not to mention that they marked him as a pervert” he answered, suspicious about what the point behind all this was.

“So you don’t know how he got in there?”

“Should I?” he grew even more suspicious.

“Mr Weasley insisted that you ported him there with only a snap of your fingers.”

Ah, so that’s how the land lies. “We both know that this should be impossible. I assume that there are many wards around the school which prevent things like porting someone somewhere within them. Also porting someone with only a snap of his fingers? I doubt that anyone who isn’t a real master of the art could pull such a stunt and I'm just a first-year student” he told her with a grin which spoke of nothing good.

McGonagall narrowed her eyes. There was something about Loki she couldn’t pinpoint. On the one hand, he was right he was a first-year student at Hogwarts, so he shouldn’t be able to do such a thing. But on the other side, there seemed to be much more about him. That had also shown the lesson this morning where he had transformed his matchstick without any real effort. She even heard the subjunctive in his explanation so there really was something wrong but she couldn’t say what.

“Well, continue with your essay” she definitely would have an eye on him.

Half an hour later Loki was back in the common room. He went straight to the twins who sat in a corner obviously planning something. Harry and Neville who sat in front of the fire also came around, and the three sat down with the twins.
“Guys I need your help” Loki started.

They looked at each other before with a broad grin they looked at him.

“~What do you need, master?”

“Please stop calling me master” he growled, but upon seeing their puppy dog eyes, he sighed. “Okay, okay, if you really want to…I want to prank someone, and I need your help with it.”

A malicious glee appeared on the twins face, and Loki explained what he wanted to do. Even Harry and Neville, while not as eager as the twins but glad they could help, got a part in it and so they started to plan how to pull it off and prepared everything.

When they were done, they changed the topic.

“How was detention?” Harry asked.

“Had to write an essay about how to behave towards a teacher. I also might or might not have started to drive Professor McGonagall nuts” Loki explained.

“Why, what did you do?” one twin asked.

“She asked me about what happened last night.”

“We heard you ported Ronykins straight into the 6th year female Slytherin dorm,”

“where he effectively woke everyone up.” they both grinned widely.

“Exactly. McGonagall, while doubting that a first-year student could do such a thing she seems to be suspicious about me, and while I neither denied nor confirmed that I did it, I dropped some hints about possibilities. Should be enough to drive her crazy not knowing what to think of it.” Loki grinned.

After a bit more talking they all went to bed eagerly awaiting the next day. Luckily for Ron, he didn’t snore this night, so he didn’t get a one-way ticket to another dorm this night. Only Neville snored slightly, but he didn’t wake anyone up, so Loki left him be.

The next morning Loki, Harry, Neville and the twins sat at the Gryffindor table early with a good view on the Slytherin table. It was about half an hour later when Malfoy and his goons Crabbe and Goyle entered the hall and started to eat.

When they drank some, it set off. Suddenly there wasn’t a boy with two gorillas anymore. Draco transformed into a 5’ 11” tall platinum blond woman with long hair while his goons transformed into two playboys with brown hair of equal height. Just at that moment, Loki snapped his fingers, and Draco wore a very short pink dress together with pink high heels, and his hair was bound together with a pink bow. Crabbe and Goyle in the meantime both wore a black suit.

All three started to dance while a song began to echo through the hall.
“I'm a Barbie girl in a Barbie world…”

A few heads rose in surprise looking around what was happening.

“…I'm a blond, bimbo girl, in a fantasy world
   Dress me up, make me talk, I'm your dolly…”

Malfoy Barbie and his Kens now were on the Slytherin table dancing. Quite a few who saw what this was about started laughing, especially the Muggle-born and the half-bloods who knew this song. Also, the five Gryffindor friends laughed at that sight.

“…Make me walk, make me talk, do whatever you please
   I can act like a star, I can beg on my knees…”

Now Malfoy, who performed right on the text of the song, was on his knees in a pleading pose, one Malfoy usually never ever would even think about taking. For the five Gryffindor’s there was no holding back anymore. All five of them literally fell backwards off their bench and rolled on the floor laughing.

“…You can touch, you can play
   if you say, I'm always yours…”

The teachers were too stunned to act in any possible way, well all of them except Dumbledore who sat there grinning and swaying to the beat of the music. Malfoy Barbie in the meantime once more acting according to the lyrics started to snuggle with one of the Kens. Quite a lot of the students didn’t see that anymore because they were either lying on the ground, sunken onto the table or their view was obstructed by tears, but they all were howling with laughter.

When the song was over, and the dancing charms wore off, Malfoy ran out of the hall with a high redhead followed by his goons. Harry who caught a breath at that time and looked in his direction instantly started to laugh all over again.

After getting out of their shock, the teachers who tried to get peace into the masses of students had a hard time, except Snape because the Slytherins only looked indignant around while McGonagall straight went to Loki and the Weasley twins.

“Who of you was this?” she demanded to know with a stern glare.

Loki who lay flat on his back trying to breathe normally looked at her and laughed.

“I have it on good authority that you have no evidence” he replied when an idea struck him.

He took out his wand pointed it at his pullover and transformed it into a shirt with just that statement on it. The twins upon seeing it howled with laughter once more and even Harry and Neville who had managed to sit on the bench again laughed too.

McGonagall sighed before she left with a last glare at them shaking her head because there was nothing she could do.

The incident had been the only topic of the conversations the whole day, and Malfoy had been called Barbie Girl more than once even after transforming back.
The Wednesday and Thursday morning went without any more incidents.

On Thursday during lunch break, Loki told the Ravenclaw first years that he found an empty classroom right opposite of the History classroom and that they would meet there.

Five minutes before classes started Loki went to Professor Binns and informed him where most of his students were so that they didn’t disturb his lesson and that he could find them there. Only three Ravenclaw’s and Hermione decided to stay in the original class.

It was about seven minutes into the lesson and Loki was in the middle telling them everything he knew about demons in detail when there was a knocking on the door. A few seconds later the door opened, the four who decided to stay with Binns came in followed by said professor.

“Professor Binns thought since most of the class refused to attend that it is better to cancel the class for today entirely and join you,” Hermione told them sheepishly looking at the floor.

“No problem with me. Take a seat. Where have I stopped…ah yes demon deals” Loki said before he continued his lecture.

He continued telling them about demons, hell and what else lived there. He also conjured up small animated versions of the beasts of hell to show them how they looked like or to show them little scenes of historical events related to hell.

The lesson ended in the opinion of the most far too early. The students listened to Loki like hypnotised, even Binns paid close attention, and most of them took several notes if only because of personal interest. After the bell rang, they departed with some moaning that the lesson was over, but Loki said that if they liked they could meet in this classroom again next History lesson. Binns interrupted him and said that the also could use the History classroom since it didn’t really matter whether they all met here or there.

Because History was the last class of the day, they collectively went down to the great hall for dinner eagerly talking about what Loki told them.

Two hours later Loki sat in McGonagall’s office again having his last detention for now.

“Mr Laufeyson, I got to know that you again disturbed Professor Binns class” she scolded him.

Loki rose an eyebrow. “How can I disturb a class when I haven’t even been there?”

“Exactly! You and nearly the entire rest of the class have outright refused to attend class.”

“Professor, you personally told me to not disturb the History lesson another time, so I thought up a method how we could avoid falling asleep because of Professor Binns monotone teaching while not disturbing him. As I said last time, should you have a problem with it you should reserve your evenings for detention with me because I won’t stop. Besides that, I hardly doubt that my classmates
are more eager to listen to Professor Binns than to me.”

McGonagall sighed and pinched the bridge of her nose. This would induce her a lot of headaches.

“Mr Laufeyson, I told you that it is important to learn history. You can't go on preventing your classmates from learning it.”

Now Loki sighed before an idea struck him.

“What about a bet?” he replied.

McGonagall looked confused at him.

“You give me the syllabus of the first year History class. Should I be able to teach it to my classmates until the Christmas holidays, so that, they can take the final exams of this year right then and succeed you'll leave us be for the entire seven years without any complaints that they don't learn ‘important’ History. I'll make sure they learn the yearly syllabus, but the how and the timeframe within each year where I teach the necessary knowledge is up to me as long as they can take their exams in the end and pass them.

“Should I prove unable to do so until the holidays we gladly return to Professor Binns class, and I also promise to never again interrupt it in any way. You also can give me any punishment you see fit for it then.”

She sat back in her chair, she had expected a lot but definitely not this. Yes, she knew fully well how boring Binns lessons were because she got enough complaints about it but up to now Dumbledore outright refused to change anything about it. Perhaps this was the perfect opportunity to show Dumbledore how grave the situation was. She didn’t know why but she doubted that Loki Laufeyson would be unable to teach his classmates properly.

She heard how her Gryffindor's talked about today’s History lesson and what Mr Laufeyson told them. It was profound knowledge even she hadn’t, she wondered where he learned it.

So after thinking about it, she came to the decision that she would risk it. She knew how easy the exams at the end of the first year were and that most students slept in class anyway reading the needed information later. So even with half a year lost it shouldn’t really matter.

“Okay, I take the bet but shouldn’t you be able to perform as you promised I’ll see that you will be expelled for it. The only requirement you have to fulfil is that Professor Binns is present in every lesson so that he can make sure everyone attends but he won’t help you with rebelling students. This is entirely your problem. Understood?”

Loki nodded with a grin. “Sure. Do I get the syllabus from you or from Professor Binns?”

“Professor Binns. When there is nothing else you can go now, I think you have a lesson to prepare.”

Again Loki nodded before leaving the room. McGonagall took out the scotch she stored in the drawer and a glass before she poured some in and drank. She prayed that this wouldn’t become a too massive headache.
Before returning to the Gryffindor common room, he took a loop way to Binns office to get the syllabus of this year’s History class and to inform him of the arrangement. He also told the professor that he from time to time would change the location where the lesson would take place and that he will inform him beforehand.

After that done, he went to the common room where he slumped into an armchair in front of the fire. It got quite late, he was glad to have his peace now.

Harry, the twins and Neville joined him, and they talked about the prank from this morning.

-Flashback-

The twins provided the gender switch potion while Loki adapted it so that Malfoy looked like he did. They also applied the dancing charm and got the house-elves to spike the food from Malfoy and his goons with it. Harry in the meantime looked up the song after Loki conjured up a laptop that worked within the wards of Hogwarts for him with the best w-LAN you could get. Harry and Neville then fed small speaker-balls Loki also conjured up with it and made them invisible following Loki’s instructions. It took them several tries, but in the end, it worked. Loki then connected everything so that the speakers would start to play when the spells and potions sat off. While waiting for Malfoy to arrive Loki and the twins then distributed the speakers, and the result of everything could be seen a bit later. Only the clothing Loki did manually.

-Flashback end-

Now they sat in the common room again snickering about the spectacle, it had been hilarious.

Next Monday the History class once more met. This time Loki decided that with such a warm and beautiful weather to not hide within the castle and so he told everyone including Professor Binns that they would meet right next to the Black Lake. Now they all sat on a slope leading down to the Black Lake while Loki stood in front of them.

“I spoke to Professor McGonagall last Thursday about our situation with the History class, we came to an arrangement. She allows me to tell you about supernatural things during the History lessons under the one condition that I also teach you the necessary information from the History lessons we are supposed to have. To prove that I'm capable in doing so I have until the Christmas holiday’s to teach you everything for this year's end exams,” he told them.

“So we are supposed to learn everything we normally would have a year for within half the time?” Hermione asked anxiously, but Loki started to laugh.

“I talked to some of the older students…I could teach you everything needed within one week so that should be no problem.”

Yes, all the questions asked were so easy even a child could do this. It seemed that the standard fell so low to make up for the incompetence of the teacher, but that was nothing he would ever say aloud.
“But to do it properly I came up with a system. From now on I’ll teach you History every Monday and tell you more about the supernatural on Thursday. Oh and don’t think that only because I’m no official teacher and I, therefore, cannot deduct points or give detentions, you could do as you like and not pay attention. I have my own methods of punishment, and I doubt you want to learn them” he warned them.

“The thing is, should I fail to prepare you for the exams before the holidays you'll have to go back and listen to Professor Binns, and I'm most likely expelled. So if you don’t want that to happen, you should pay attention.”

With that, he started his lecture, this time about history. Again he helped his explanations with visualising several scenes. For example, he conjured up two small armies on the Black Lake to show them one of the goblin wars (not as bloody or brutal as the real one, it was only to get to see the strategy behind it). He also told them things even Professor Binns didn’t know of.

Everyone, even the laziest person, took notes. The way Loki taught them was far more interesting than the droning of their usual professor, everyone was eager to prove Professor McGonagall that Loki was the better teacher for the subject.

In the end, it was a good day, and they were eagerly awaiting the next lesson, something that rarely happened before in Hogwarts in the last centuries especially when it came to History of Magic.
Chapter 7: I Believe I Can Fly

It was Thursday morning; the three friends sat together at the Gryffindor table excitingly chatting about the today’s flying lesson. Harry was eager to fly while Neville was a bit scared because he had never been on a broom before. His grandmother kept him away from those as she feared he would have an accident. Loki, on the other hand, was pretty bored. He was an angel after all, and he could fly whenever he wanted without something stupid like a broom.

This was when suddenly a barn owl descended and landed in front of Neville carrying a small package from his granny. He unwrapped it and out came a small glass ball about the size of a tennis ball filled with white smoke.

“This is a Remembrall but what do I want with it?” he asked curiously.

“What is a Remembrall?” Harry looked at the ball curiously.

“It is a ball that shows you when you forgot something. As long as the smoke in it is white everything is okay but when it turns red, it means that you forgot something” that was Seamus.

Neville looked at it not knowing what to think of it, and the smoke stayed plain white. Loki grabbed it and turned it in his fingers. Suddenly the smoke went a bloody red.

“Oh great I forgot something, but it won’t mind telling me WHAT…stupid useless thing…” he rambled.

In a fit of frustration, he threw the ball behind him.

“Ouch, what was that for?” Malfoy rubbed his chin while holding the glass ball in the other hand.

“Ah hi Barbie, how are you?” his mood lightening up significantly upon the sight of his favourite pranking target in Hogwarts.

Malfoy’s head turned slowly red out of anger and embarrassment.

“I would be careful if I where you or I shatter your sweet little ball.”

“It isn’t his; it’s mine” Neville retorted. “And you can keep it if you want I have no use for it.”

Upon hearing that Harry looked at him shocked. He hadn’t thought Neville would openly attack someone like Malfoy. It seems that being with him and Loki did a lot about the shyness of the boy even if it was only a few weeks since they first met, or he wasn’t able to take Malfoy seriously anymore since his little dance, Harry wasn’t entirely sure about that.
It was after lunch, and they had their first flying lesson. Loki, Harry and Neville stood together. Neville was looking slightly ill while Loki warily eyed the brooms which laid in two neat rows on the grass. They looked like they saw better days decades ago and were a catastrophe waiting to happen. Harry in the meantime was eagerly awaiting the lesson.

“Good Afternoon everyone. Now, now step forward and stand next to a broom” Madam Hooch told them shortly after she arrived.

“Now hold out your right hand over the broom and say: Up!”

Everyone shouted “Up”, and several brooms jumped into the hand of the respective person including Harry. Neville's, on the other hand, stayed firmly on the ground while Loki hadn't even commanded his yet, but with a sharp “Up” his also jumped up and into his hand.

When everyone including Neville managed to get his broom up and sat on it Madam Hooch went around and checked the grip and the posture of everyone. To Loki's delight, she scolded Malfoy for holding his in the wrong way even when he said that he used this grip for years now.

“So now on my command, everyone kicks off as hard as you can, hovers a few seconds, leans forward and comes down again, understood? Okay three, two, one.”

She was about to blow her whistle when suddenly Neville started to hover without kicking off the ground. He flew even higher before the broom, without any further doing from his, shot off, letting him yelp in surprise.

“Mr Longbottom get down here at once” Madame Hooch ordered.

Harry who saw that his friend’s broom was out of control kicked off the ground on his broom without even knowing what to do, but in this situation, he didn’t even think about it. He shot after Neville to help him control his broom, but it was quickly evident that this was a futile attempt. Every time he got near him the broom suddenly changed his direction or did something other which would only endanger Neville’s life. So Harry just tried with several crazy manoeuvres to keep him from crashing into anything by forcing the broom to change direction.

Loki in the meanwhile took out his wand and pointed it at a random stone lying on the ground. With a quick flick, he transformed it into a huge fluffy pillow. Harry saw that during a risky stunt in which he shot at a neck-breaking speed towards a window and between it and Neville to prevent another crash before pulling around his boom inches before he crashed himself.

“Neville when I shout now let yourself fall off the broom, okay?” he shouted towards Neville who flew a U-turn.

“WHAT? Are you crazy?” came Neville's shrieked reply.

“Trust me, please. NOW!”

Neville who shot with high-speed towards the next wall made the decision within a split second. It was either crash into the wall because Harry wouldn’t be fast enough to prevent it this time and god knows what might do that to him, or trusting Harry. He could only hope that Harry knew what he did and so he let go and fell. It was a few meters in which he thought that he made the wrong decision when he suddenly hit something that felt like a cloud.

Loki had hovered the pillow beneath him just in time. Harry shot down and landed directly next to it.
“Are you okay Neville?” he asked worriedly.

“Ouch. Harry you nearly gave me a heart attack, idiot” he replied but grinned.

“Jerk.”

“Hey, hey girls you know I love you both” Loki walked up to them grinning and vanished the pillow with a wave of his wand which let Neville yelp again because he sat on the edge and now fell flat on his butt.

He shot him a glare while Madam Hooch reached them.

“Mr Longbottom are you alright?” she asked

“Only a few scratches and a little shock but apart from that I'm okay.”

He had on several occasions hit the wall when Harry wasn't fast enough, but luckily he had no serious injuries.

“Never the less you have to pay a visit to the infirmary if only for a calming potion. For you two,… ten points each for quick thinking and one hell of a flight show Mr Potter.”

With that said, she led Neville towards the castle.

“You all stay on the ground while I escort Mr Longbottom to the infirmary. Should I see anyone flying said person will be thrown out of school quicker than he can say Quidditch.”

The two friends looked after their friend worriedly while Harry began to sing lowly.

“I believe I can fly. I believe I can touch the sky.”

“Oh yes, this is more than true. Where did you learn to fly?” Loki was curious.

“Nowhere, that was my first time on a broom.”

“You are a natural flyer. You nearly gave ME a heart attack with some of your stunts….” Loki shook his head in exasperation.

“A heart attack? That I would like to see” Harry laughed but decided that he would have to do something to thank him properly.

They talked a bit further when suddenly Professor McGonagall came running from the castle.

“Mr Potter, please follow me” she exclaimed.

Harry gave Loki a confused look on which he shrugged before he gave him his broom and followed the head of his house back into the castle. He followed her through several corridors before they finally stopped in front of the DADA classroom. Professor McGonagall went in and shortly later came back out with an older student.

“Mr Wood I found you a new seeker,” she said proudly without any introduction.

A few seconds later it came to light that one of Harry's stunts led him to McGonagall's office window behind where she was grading papers when she saw what he was doing. Wood, on the other hand, was the Gryffindor Quidditch team captain and in dire need of a seeker, whatever that was, and McGonagall thought he would fit that position best.
“Mr Potter, did you ever play Quidditch?” Wood asked.

Harry blushed. “Unfortunately not, to be honest, today was the first time I ever rode a broom.”

Wood gave McGonagall who went white as a sheet of paper an incredulous look.

“You never rode a broom before? What were you thinking to fly like that then?” her voice was a mere whisper.

Now Harry grew angry.

“I was thinking that if I don’t do anything, Neville would have crashed either into your office with high speed or into any other part of the castle breaking his neck and besides that, it wasn’t so exceedingly hard to fly like that. On the contrary, it is quite easy once you know how to do it.”

“Easy?” McGonagall looked like she wanted to faint.

“I don’t know what happened during your flying lesson, but I would like to see you flying. Do you have anything to do on Saturday morning?” Wood intervened before McGonagall lost consciousness or something graver would happen.

Harry shrugged. “Madam Hooch’s only comment was that it was ‘One hell of a flight show’ though I don’t know what she meant by that and I gained ten points for it. For Saturday there is nothing I have to do so I’m free.”

“Okay then meet me at ten at the place you had your lesson today.”

“Professor, you wouldn’t happen to know where I could find the kitchen?” Harry addressed McGonagall seeing that this conversation was over.

She meanwhile was too stunned to even think about what he would want there and just replied.

“Entrance Hall corridor on the left. There is a painting of a bowl of fruits, tickle the pear, and it lets you enter” she said before she dismissed him with a wave of her hand.

Harry thanked her before he left. He went where McGonagall told him the kitchen would be and soon found himself in a room full of buzzing elves. One of them asked him how he could help him and an hour later and with the help of the elf Harry left the kitchen again with a huge three-storied Tarte au Chocolate with white chocolate cream in between safely stored in a box. Harry carefully balanced it back to the Gryffindor common room where he luckily found Loki and Neville. He had prayed that they would be there because otherwise, he would have to search the entire castle.

“Hey guys” he greeted them.

“Harry, where have you been? We were worried because you didn’t come back after you followed McGonagall” Neville exclaimed.

“Have been in the kitchen afterwards preparing something for you.”

He placed the box on the table they were sitting at and opened it. Neville and Loki looked at it with huge eyes. Beside that he put three plates, forks and a knife he also got from the elf.

“I thought that after the shock this would be a great cure,” he told them with a huge grin. “One of the elves helped me.”

Loki took the knife and cut up the cake and gave each of them a piece.
“So what happened? I assume you are not expelled?” Neville asked in the meantime.

“No McGonagall lead me to Oliver Wood. He is the Quidditch captain for our house, and she thought I’d make a good seeker after she saw one of my stunts today. But I think I nearly gave her a heart attack when I told her it was my first time on a broom” he chuckled.

“That’s something I would have liked to see” Loki smiled before taking a bite from the cake. “Oh heaven where did you learn to bake that good?” he groaned in delight.

“Well having to cook and bake every day has its perks, eh?” Loki gave him a strange look but didn’t comment on that.

It was when the twins came in, both with a broad grin on their face.

“We just heard it-“

“-you made it into the Quidditch team!”

“Huh? That’s news to me…the only thing I knew was that I should fly again on Saturday to show Oliver what I'm capable of” he cut two more pieces from the cake, placed them on plates Loki conjured up and gave them to the twins.

Loki looked somewhat unhappy about that because it seemed he wanted to claim the entire rest of the cake for himself upon which Harry started to laugh.

“Wood said that after you left-“

“-McGonagall told him everything she saw.”

“~and he damned near hexed her shouldn’t she let you into the team” they both grinned and tried the cake.

“Did you conjure up the cake?-“

Loki shook his head and pointed at Harry.

“-You made that?”

“You have to be a GOD for baking so good-“

“~who are you really?” they eyed him.

Harry’s head went a bright red that stood on par with the twin’s hair.

“No one, I have just experience that’s all” he replied sheepishly, but the twins huffed as if they didn’t believe him.

In the end, they talked for the entire afternoon and evening about Harry’s manoeuvres on the broom and Quidditch in general eating up the whole cake, Loki ate the most of it. They were too full even to consider going down to the great hall for dinner, even Loki and that really meant something. At ten they all went to bed and except Loki who didn’t sleep they were out the moment their heads hit the pillow.
Chapter 8: Teachers going nuts

The next few weeks flew by quite unspectacularly. Harry had his first Quidditch lessons in which he nearly gave Wood several heart attacks with the stunts he flew. That only proved that he was a natural born flyer and everyone was eager to see him in the first official match.

The friends also met several times with Hagrid, during ones they learned that someone broke into Gringotts.

“Who is so stupid to break into a goblin bank? Even I wouldn’t be so stupid to anger the goblin nation, not after what happened to Thor” Loki rambled shaking his head.

Everyone looked at him curiously, so he explained that several centuries ago that hammer happy moron called Thor waltzed into a goblin village because they refused to forge a weapon for him and started a massive fight with them. It took three decades before he was even remotely able to leave bed again, not to mention that this incident put a gigantic dent into his overblown ego. Loki just found it hilarious that the mighty warrior who always boasted himself with stories how he defeated entire armies two dozen goblins had beaten him singlehandedly, and it gave him healthy respect towards them. To thank them for this amusement he even helped the goblins from time to time.

After that, they all fell into some kind of routine. A few minor pranks, some courtesy to the twins some to Loki but mostly harmless things like gender switch or colour potions in the food or some minor hexes like the babbling curse towards the teachers. That was funny because not one of the students thought about ending the curse and ending it without chanting the counter curse correctly is kind of hard to achieve so, unfortunately, they had to cancel the lessons until the curse wore off naturally which took its time since it was Loki who cast it.

The most surprising prank was when Neville got Loki to eat laced chocolate with what later turned out to be a root he learned about from one of the many Herbology books he read which coloured his skin bright red. After that Loki double checked any chocolate, the boys gave him.

Another thing was that Ron one night, Loki had been out for some time to check what his favourite targets the Winchesters were doing, was snoring once more…loud. When Loki was back again, he looked into the eyes of glad Gryffindor boys because they knew they soon would be able to sleep again. This time Ron got a one-way ticket straight into the bed of Albus Dumbledore right next to the man. Loki then conjured up a mirror through which they observed what would happen. Curiously though was that both didn’t wake up from it, but both started to cuddle with each other snoring like there was no tomorrow. The next day Ron ran around with a bright red head while Dumbledore was seen grinning and whistling. No one of the Gryff’s dared to ask what happened after they went back to bed. Honestly, they didn’t even want to think about it.

Lessons, on the other hand, went on as always. Potions was a nightmare, Transfiguration somewhat hard if you hadn’t Loki as help, Charms was mostly taking notes, DADA pure torture thanks to a stuttering Quirrell, Astronomy kind of useless since nobody knew what that was for, Herbology somehow quite exciting and Loki continued teaching History but that brought up a whole new problem. It was two weeks before Halloween. Loki was about two thirds through the History stuff
he had to teach for this year.

Up to now nearly everyone in the school heard what went on in the first years Gryffindor/Ravenclaw class and they all wanted similar lessons. Loki’s only comment about it was that they should talk to McGonagall and they did.

The poor woman didn’t know what was coming when suddenly every single prefect from every house, except Slytherin because they would never ask such a thing as being taught by a Gryffindor firsty…pride is a bitch, and the head boy and girl stood in front of her. They asked (read: demanded) that Loki should also teach the other History classes. She had hoped that letting Laufeyson teach would change Dumbledores mind about Binns but that she would never have dreamt of. Unfortunately, she had to disappoint them because not only was Laufeyson on probation for now concerning teaching he also was first and foremost a student himself and therefore had to attend his classes.

It was two days after that and Loki was bored, not only Loki but Harry and Neville too. Sundays were the most boring days after all especially when you had nothing more to do, and every homework finished. So the three decided to explore the school some further. They now roamed it for about one and a half hour when they suddenly found themselves in the forbidden corridor on the third floor.

“I wonder what painful death is awaiting us behind that door” Loki mused remembering the words Dumbledore used on their first day.

“Are you nuts? Dumbledore especially warned everyone about that corridor” Neville was slightly panicking the well-known Gryffindor bravery nowhere seen.

“Possibly” he replied with a big grin on his face while walking up to the door.

“C’mon Neville, what could happen? We have Loki with us” Harry also was curious what all this fuss was about.

“Fine if you want to get killed…without me!” Neville retorted before turning around and walking away.

“Coward…”

“Leave him be; it’s his decision. We’ll see him later in the common room anyway. So now want to have a look?” Loki had an expectant look on his face.

“Sure.”

Loki opened the door, and they both went in only to face a huge three-headed dog. It took a few seconds before the dog completely woke up and instantly started to growl and snap at them. Harry jumped back in shock while Loki, on the other hand, was quite unimpressed and quickly stared the dog into submission. He had met more dangerous things than that – cough, Winchester brothers, cough. Not that they were overly hazardous themselves, but they had that unnatural talent to turn any situation infinitely worse in the shortest amount of time.
“What the hell is a hellhound of the Cerberus breed doing in a school full of children?” Harry asked after the first shock wore off. He remembered what it was from one of the many lessons Loki held.

“Don’t know…but one thing’s for sure…he is only a pup. They are normally at least the size of a small house, and he seems to be a guard dog for something” he pointed at the trapdoor beneath the Cerberus.

“Huh, would like to know for what but not now. Can I pat him?” Harry was an avid dog lover despite being chased several times by the one of his aunt Marge, the bigger, the better.

“Sure, I made certain he won’t attack us again.”

Harry went over to the dog and started to scratch the left and the middle head. The two heads sounded like a purring cat while the third one grew envious and glared at him until Loki went to it and started to scratch it too.

“Once you get over the shock and him to not see you as an enemy he is quite cuddly” Harry laughed when suddenly the dog licked him from bottom to top before rolling on his back to get his belly rubbed. They complied and rubbed it what let the dogs left rear leg go nuts.

The two stayed a bit longer and played with the dog until it was time for lunch. On the way out Loki conjured up three dinosaur sized bones, for each head one and they promised to come back soon what commented the dog by barking loudly. Then they walked down to the great hall.

There at the Gryffindor table was waiting an obviously worried Neville.

“Thank Merlin you’re alright. I was so worried when you didn’t come back after an hour. What was now that ominous deadly threat?”

“Oh, only a Cerberus pup. Quite adorable once you get on its good side and very cuddly. You should come with us the next time” Harry explained while piling food on his plate.

“You're crazy…both of you…”

“Maybe” was all that Loki answered with a big grin that promised nothing good.

“Lo, you're creeping me out. Why do you grin like mad?”

“No idea, perhaps because of that?” the friends only heard the snapping of his fingers when suddenly every single piece of food in the entire hall jumped up and started to dance.

It was a complete mess when the crushed tomatoes tried themselves in a tango with the steaks while the roasted potatoes and the chicken wings danced a slow waltz and all of them left behind a trail of sauce all over the tables.

Quite a few of the student yelped when their food started to move, but soon everyone stared at Loki. Harry, Neville and the twins couldn’t help it but started to laugh especially when two carrots tried a pirouette in front of them, slipped on some sauce the steak had left earlier and tumbled over the table dousing everyone in range with several different substances.

McGonagall who didn’t even look the slightest bit amused walked over to them.

“Mr Laufeyson would you mind explaining what all this mess is about?”

Loki leaned back to look at her.
“I don’t know but it’s fun and why do you assume it was me?” he said with an innocent smile that fooled no one.

“Because first everyone looked at YOU though I don’t know why and second your face is telling me everything I need to know. Detention, and you’ll clean up the entire mess.”

“Aww but I’m completely innocent Professor” now he tried the puppy dog eyes since his smile hadn’t helped. The friends even laughed harder.

“Stop that nonsense at once, or I swear you I’ll give you detention until hell freezes over and now start cleaning up the mess.”

Loki secretly snapped with his fingers again. “Which mess?”

The great hall looked like nothing has happened, the food lying neatly in the bowls and on the plates and not a single stain of the sauce was out of place. McGonagall looked around before she pinched the bridge of her nose, a headache starting to rise while muttering something about not being paid enough for this.

“The detention stands, this evening with Mr Filch and don’t you dare being late,” she said with a stern glare, turned around and went back to the staff table.

“You, my friend:“

“-are absolutely the best.”

“And I think when you go on like that McGonagall will retire before Christmas, and Snape gets a coronary” added Harry with an amused glint in his eyes.

If looks could kill Loki would be long dead with how Snape looked at him, it was pure hatred. So it was no wonder that said professor suddenly sported clashing pink and green hair when Loki saw that. Snape didn’t even register the change. Unfortunately, the next lesson was double Potions.

In the potions lesson they had to brew the Forgetfulness Potion and adding to his luck Malfoy tried to sabotage Loki and Harry's Potion. But Loki was quick enough to catch the ingredient Malfoy wanted to throw into their cauldron and smuggled it into the blonde’s one without him noticing. A few seconds later and Malfoys cauldron was a bubbling mess on the floor much to Harry's and Neville's amusement which gave Snape a hand full of extra work. To Snape's annoyance the Potion they each brewed were the best in the class so he couldn’t do anything despite wanting to.

Later at evening Loki then had detention with Filch. To say he drove him up the wall was a vast understatement. The second Filch assigned him a floor to clean with mop and water, of course, he snapped his finger, and the level was cleaner than ever before. In the end, they walked through half the castle before Filch finally gave up and let him go. When McGonagall heard about that, she emptied an entire bottle of Scotch, thank Merlin for hangover remedy potions.

The next morning everyone was astonished at how clean the castle suddenly was, and the elves whined because they had less work to do.
Chapter 9: Halloween

Finally it was Halloween and Loki was eagerly awaiting the feast in the evening, but for now, they were stuck in the charms lesson with Professor Flitwick. Said Professor reminded them how important the correct pronunciation was to get the right result and not a buffalo on your chest like some idiot seemed to have done once before letting them practise the levitation spell.

Everyone tried hard to get it right, but the feather they were supposed to levitate didn’t move one inch. Loki watched Harry’s and Neville's attempts when he heard Hermione correcting Ron’s pronunciation. He mentally shook his head because this would only lead into a catastrophe but it wasn’t his problem.

A few minutes later Neville was quite frustrated and depressed. It has been ever since that his spell work was horrible and rarely worked at all. That was when Loki intervened.

“Neville might I see your wand please?” he asked.

“Sure, it isn’t that it’s working at all.”

Loki took the wand Neville held out towards him and scrutinised it before he frowned.

“Say Neville is that originally your wand?”

“Huh? No, it belonged to my father, granny said that it was a powerful wand and that I should be proud…”

“Sorry and no offence but to be honest, your granny is an idiot” he flatly stated. “Everybody knows that a wizard should never use the wand from someone else if it can be avoided. A wand and its owner form a bond so that most of the time only the original owner can use it properly. The only exception to this are elder wands, which only respond to the most powerful magical around, hence why they are so rare.”

“So you mean I only do so poorly because it’s not my wand?” Neville perked up upon hearing that.

Loki looked straight at Neville or better it was more like he looked through him. In reality, he took a good look at the boy’s soul.

“Yes and no, while that is a deciding factor there seems to be something else” he couldn’t accurately pinpoint it, but it seemed that Neville didn’t channel his magic through the wand but on an entirely different way.

“Would you mind trying something?” Loki asked, and Neville looked at him quizzically.

Loki showed him some hand movements and repeated them a few times so that he would remember them.

“Now I would ask you to imagine what you want the feather to do while you make the move with your hand, alright?” Neville nodded.
Neville took a try but nothing happened, and Loki corrected some minor mistakes. It took a few more tries, but in the end, the feather floated in front of him. Harry who also tried it out of curiosity quickly also had his feather floating.

“As I thought, you both are more proficient in hand magic than wand magic…” he explained.

“Hand magic?” Harry was confused.

Loki grinned before he started to explain. “There are three ways of channelling one's magic. Focus-based magic, hand magic and mind magic.

“Normal wand magic belongs to the first category and is the most natural and most common way nowadays. But there are not only wands but also staffs, voodoo dolls, well everything you can name to channel your magic through. The upside of it is that depending on the focus it can boost the power of the spell but should you lose your focus you have a problem.

“Then there is hand magic. It’s like you saw based on different movements of your hands. Now you might think that this form is less potent than focus magic since you have no focus to boost it but that is wrong. In this case, the movement of your hand is the focus, so the more accurate your move is, the more power has the spell. The upside is that there is no focus you could lose in the heat of a battle for example, but the problem is that this form is harder to master since you have to be far more precise and the aiming can be a bitch and a half.

“The third form is the mind magic or as most wizards would call it wandless magic. In this case, you force the effect to take place through sheer willpower, and there are very few who ever really master it. The upside is that you are only limited through your imagination, but the huge downside is that it needs a lot of concentration and willpower.

“Normally a wizard is inclined to the focus based magic and rarely comes across the other forms and if then only in very basic forms like some minor spells they can do wandlessly. But from time to time there are wizards like you two who are naturally inclined to one of the other forms and have problems with the ones they are not inclined to. Though I have to admit that you Harry perform both focus and hand magic quite well.”

Again he managed to effectively silence the entire class with his explanation before Flitwick remembered that they originally were supposed to practise the spell. So he got them back to work. Harry and Neville in the meantime continued practising with only the hand movement and without their wands. At the end of the lesson, they were quite good at it; Harry even managed to let the feather slightly dance in the air.

When the bell rang, Flitwick asked the three to stay behind.

“Mr Laufeyson might I ask from where you gained such deep knowledge?” Flitwick asked curiously.

“I’m sorry, but that will stay my secret,” Loki answered with a grin.

“You should know that I'm aware of who you really are.”

The grin on Loki’s face vanished in an instant and what was left was a shell-shocked expression.

Flitwick, on the other hand, smiled now. “There is a reason why I'm head of Ravenclaw and to be frankly speaking your name is a dead giveaway. Though I have no idea what you're doing here other than producing chaos that is.”
Loki sighed. “Okay, okay, I admit defeat. To your question about who told me about the three different types of magic channelling that was Morgana.”

“Morgana le Fay?” Neville asked quite shocked. “But she was a dark witch.”

Now Loki frowned. “Only because she used blood rituals and the like she isn’t automatically dark or evil. She was first and foremost a healer. It always depends on how you use your magic that makes you light or dark not what magic you use.”

“I have to agree. Most dark spells aren’t dark per se but a matter of how you use them. For example, a healing spell can, casted under the right circumstances, also kill a person while a Reductor Curse also can be used to destroy solid objects to bulldoze land for building purpose. It’s only because the first is a defensive and the second an offensive spell why one is considered light and the other dark.”

“Hmm, when you put it that way…” Neville mused.

“I wonder what kind of magic channelling you usually use…” Harry mused.

“Think about what I told you and how I normally perform my magic, and you get your answer” Loki replied with a grin.

Harry thought about it before his face brightened up.

“You normally only snap your finger, and things happen, but that movement is too simple for hand magic when I think about the movement we did to let the feather hover. So I think it’s only for show…mind magic.”

“Bing, Bing, Bing, the candidate wins a candy!” with that he held out one that just appeared in his hand.

Harry took it before hitting Loki on the arm.

“Ouch, what was that for?”

“For you being a jerk” he replied with a smile.

“So is there anything else to discuss because I get hungry…” Loki asked.

“No, you can go. Oh and five points for Gryffindor” Flitwick waved them out.

“Loki you are always hungry…especially when it comes to sweets” Harry said on the way to lunch while snatching away the candy cane Loki just popped up.

“Hey, you are pretty brash today, stealing other kids’ candy” he replied mock hurt.

Harry started to laugh. “You sound like you couldn’t handle it.”

“Oh, you dare” Loki snapped with his fingers, and Harry sported Slytherin colours all over.

“Nice, green fits my eyes” he walked onwards as if nothing was wrong at all.

When they entered the great hall, everyone at the Gryffindor table stared at him curiously.

“What happened to you?” Dean asked the question all of them were anticipating.

“Loki’s revenge for Harry snatching his candy” Neville supplied.
“Wait, what? Did you dare to snatch Loki’s candy? No wonder you look like that” Sean chuckled.

Yes, Loki was pretty vindictive when it came to his candy. A fact some of the fellow Gryffindors learned the hard way. Steal some, you suddenly sport some fancy new colours, temper with them in a prank…well that depends on the prank and should someone come to the idea to do something potentially harmful to them, said person should pray never to meet the trickster god again. The one and the only unforgivable thing you could do.

Harry shrugged. “I think it pretty funny, and I like green so what’s the problem?” he said with a smile.

“Dude you are sporting Slytherin colours, I’d find it embarrassing…” Dean shook his head.

The rest of the school day went by unspectacularly. Now it was evening, and the friends were anticipating the Halloween feast. So they were on the way to the great hall after they stored their bags in the dorm. When they arrived, they were astonished by the view they got. Pumpkin lanterns replaced the regular candles; life bats flew in crowds between them while animated skeletons danced everywhere. The tables bent under tons of food and candies. Even Loki was baffled, and he had seen a lot in his life.

“Wow I never thought that something could surprise me anymore, but this is fantastic” he mused.

Harry and Neville only stood there with open mouth unable to say anything.

They went to their places and started to eat when Harry asked a question.

“Hey, where is Hermione? I can't see her anywhere, and now that I think about it she hadn’t been in the afternoon classes as well.”

Lavender who heard that duck her head and looked sheepishly at her plate.

“What is it, Lavender?” Loki wanted to know.

She cringed. “Parvati told me that she is hiding in the girl’s toilet crying, why…I don’t know…” she whispered.

Now it was upon Loki to flinch.

“Want to get there and check how she is?” Harry asked in anticipation knowing Loki quite well up to now.

Loki nodded and stood up, Harry and Neville following him. Usually, he wouldn’t leave behind such a feast to look after some crying girl but he had a damned good idea about the reason and should it prove right, to say he would be pissed would be an understatement. So the friends went to the bathroom and found Hermione there as Lavender told them.

“Hermione?” Harry called out.

He could hear her gasping. “H-Harry, what are you doing here? This is a girl’s bathroom” she said
between sobs.

“We are here to see how you are and to get you down to the feast. It is wonderful; it surely will cheer you up” Loki told her.

“I-I don’t want to; please leave me alone.”

Loki sighed. “Hermione, what’s the problem? Did that Weasel insult you again?”

Hermione took another gasp, but she calmed down a bit. “H-how do you know?”

“Guessed, but it seems I’m right. I told you to come to me when it happens again…”

“I didn’t want to be a burden, and besides that, you were in a conversation with Flitwick at that time” her sobbing stopped entirely now.

“Putting bullies in their borders is never a burden. Now want to come out and down to the feast with us? You really miss something.”

Hermione took a last deep breath. “Okay, but I’d ask you to wait outside…”

“No problem.”

With that, the friends went out and leaned right next to the door.

“Ron is clearly becoming a problem” Neville mused. “Hurting a girl like that.”

“You are right, and he will have to explain himself when I get a hold on him this evening” Loki growled.

They waited a few minutes when they heard a rumbling approaching them. It was accompanied by an odd smell that grew stronger with every second passing by. When Hermione finally came out of the toilette, looking a bit red around the eyes but all in all quite good they saw it coming around the corner. A monster, as high as the corridor with thick grey leathery hide, two legs like trunks and very long and strong looking arms, walked down the hallway. Behind, it pulled a club of the size of a log.

“Is that…?” Hermione asked a bit hoarse, eyes wide in shock.

“From the look of it, must be a relative of either Crab or Goyle” Loki chuckled, and even Harry grinned while Hermione looked at him in disbelief wondering how he could make jokes about the imminent danger.

“It’s a mountain troll” Neville stated slightly shivering.

“Well yes, that too. I wonder what one is doing here though since trolls shouldn’t even be able to enter, or someone let it in.”

“Aren’t we going to do something…like running away?” now there was a slight panic in Hermione’s voice. The troll now was the halfway through the corridor and still heading their way.

“Nah, why?” Loki answered with a broad grin on his face before snapping with his fingers.

The troll now hadn’t a club anymore but an umbrella in the hand while wearing a grey suit and some hat. Adding to that sudden music started to play.

“I'm singing in the rain
Shortly after the music began, the troll started to dance through the corridor. Everyone stared at it with wide eyes.

“W-what?” Harry didn’t know what to say.

“Never heard of Gene Kelly? Oh wait for something is missing here…” he again snapped with his fingers, and in the entire corridor, it started to rain except where they were standing.

In the meantime, the troll continued his dance. It looked pretty silly that a multi-tons massive troll tried to dance gracefully, but it grew even worth when he started to tap dance. It was like thunder rolling through the halls, and the ground was shaking heavily. The entire castle must feel this.

“Let the stormy clouds chase
Everyone from the place.”

Well, the clouds wouldn’t accomplish that, but the dancing troll definitely did. Harry now was howling with laughter trying to stay on his feet because of the shaking ground while Neville didn’t have such luck and now sat next to them staring at the Troll in disbelief. Hermione, on the other hand, didn’t know what to think or do. On the one hand, she knew from books she read that mountain trolls were extremely dangerous creatures, and so her brain constantly told her to get as far away from it as possible, but on the other, the spectacle the troll made with his dancing and spinning his umbrella…it was too unique to leave and not watch. Loki smirked and swayed to the music.

It was when the troll attempted to spin on the spot that he slipped, hit his head and was knocked out cold when the teachers arrived. Loki quickly snapped his fingers to vanish the water that pooled in the floor because of the rain.

McGonagall came rushing down the corridor followed by Snape and Quirrell. Quirrell winced when he saw the troll while Snape just sneered. McGonagall looked like she swallowed an especially sour lemon drop when she approached the four children.

“What on earth were you doing here? And why aren’t you in your common room as ordered?” she demanded to know.

“First of all, we didn’t know we were supposed to return to our common room since we weren’t even at the great hall at that time, to begin with. We were looking for Hermione who didn’t feel well before the feast and went to the toilette. The entire time we have been here until the big fella over there appeared and blocked our way. We then had a bit of fun with it, and that was it” Loki explained because Harry and Neville were still unable to speak because of their giggling and yes they were giggling like girls.

“Is that correct Miss Granger?”

Hermione just nodded glad that Loki found an explanation without giving away why she really was here.

“Okay,” McGonagall said when her brain caught up with what Loki just said. “Wait, did you say you had some fun with the troll? A full-grown mountain troll none the less?”

“Tap dancing trolls are a hilarious sight” he just grinned.

Snape took a sharp gasp before turning around and looking at the troll. McGonagall’s eyes in the
meantime went wide before she pinched the bridge of her nose swearing under her breath in a way a seasoned sailor would blush upon.

“So I assume that this was what let the entire castle shake? Okay, okay, I don’t really want to know. Five points for each of you three for helping a fellow student and now go to your common room. Mr Laufeyson, you I want to meet me in my office.”

With that, they all were dismissed.
Chapter 10: Quidditch

A few minutes later Loki sat in Professor McGonagall's office looking at said woman expectantly.

“Mr Laufeyson, who in Merlin’s name are you? You're definitely not a normal first-year student” she asked him.

“Interesting that you didn’t find out by yourself up to now” he started to muse but only earned a daring glare from McGonagall. “Okay…okay.”

He snapped with his fingers and on McGonagall's desk appeared a copy of the book that Hermione read when she learned who he is. Right next to it a bottle of the best Scotch one could buy for the money.

“I’d suggest you read that book, then we talk again,” he said.

She took a closer look at said book when suddenly realisation hit her. In an instant, she grabbed for the bottle and poured in some into the glass that readily stood on her desk. She just wanted to drink it in one go, but when she tasted the liquid, she only took a small sip enjoying the taste.

“That explains…everything but don’t you think that you can bribe me with Scotch no matter how good” she growled, but Loki laughed.

“Didn’t want to. Let’s just call it extra payment for the headaches I gave you.”

McGonagall growled upon that. “Why are you here? What do you want? Other than giving me a coronary.”

“Rest assured that this is the very last thing I want to achieve. To be honest, I like and respect you. You’re a great woman and an excellent teacher” this wasn’t a lie, he really liked her. She was a competent and good teacher despite being biased sometimes.

“But why are you here then?”

“Well first because I was quite bored and second because of Harry. Though I have to admit that something is strange about him. I don’t know how to put it but from time to time…” he shrugged helplessly.

“James’ son I see” that also was the reason why she finally recognised Loki. She knew very well who the Marauders prayed to and thinking about it now she could bang her head against something solid for not identifying him earlier. Especially with this dead giveaway of his name.

She sighed while pinching the bridge of her nose. “Okay since I don’t doubt that getting you expelled just for who you are would initiate a riot especially within Gryffindor I won’t do anything about it, for now!”

She doubted that this would even work since he managed to get into Hogwarts once and nothing could make sure that he wouldn’t show up again.
“Don’t think though that this is a carte blanch to do as you like. Should you hurt anyone…” she started but quickly was interrupted.

“Professor, what do you assume I am? A monster? They are children for heaven’s sake. I have only two rules, and that is for once not messing with candy in harmful ways and second, hurting children. Nothing justifies this. I prank them, yes, and some pranks might be embarrassing for the receiving end, but I never would outright bully or hurt someone.”

“And what about Mr Weasley? You dumped him in a girl’s dorm in the middle of the night” she rose an eyebrow.

Loki sighed. “Did you have a look into his behaviour? I didn’t mention this earlier not to embarrass Ms Granger, but he was the reason she hid in the toilette the entire afternoon only because she wanted to help him. The night I ported him into the girl’s dorm, which by the way was an accident, he first woke up our entire dorm with his snoring and when I woke him up, he nearly attacked me. I just wanted to dump him somewhere in the Slytherin common room. That he ended up in the girl’s dorm wasn’t planned.”

McGonagall hummed hearing that. He was right she also got several other complaints about the behaviour of Ronald Weasley.

“I believe you though I don’t want to hear of another incident like that. You can go now” McGonagall dismissed Loki with a wave of her hand.

Loki waved her goodbye, and before he left her office, he conjured up a crate with three more bottles of the Scotch.

“Do you have to report me to Dumbledore?”

“As long as you don’t grow too exuberantly with your pranks I don’t see a reason to do so” with that he left.

She shook her head but smiled. For now, she would leave him be. Sure in front of the other teachers she would have to play the stern teacher but to be honest, she liked his pranks despite the headaches they gave her and it wasn’t that he didn’t clean up behind himself or bullied someone. Perhaps this could lighten up the daily life a bit.

Besides that, should her suspicions about how Harry was treated by his relatives be correct…she didn’t doubt that it would destroy the boy should he lose one of his real friends and she didn’t question that Loki was one with how he treated the boy.

A few minutes later Loki slumped very ungracefully into one of the chairs in front of the fireplace in the Gryffindor common room.

“What did McGonagall want?” Harry asked while sitting down himself.

“To know who I am” he stated dryly.
“You didn’t tell her did you?” Harry was worried that she might get Loki kicked out of school.

“She would have found out eventually, so I told her, and as long as I don’t go overboard with my pranks or hurt someone, I think she will leave me alone.”

Harry sighed in relieve. “But what was that with the troll? I mean how did he get in?”

“I don’t know but should I find the person who thought that it was a good idea he or she will wish they hadn’t done it. What would have happened hadn’t I be with you? You might be dead now… one thing’s for sure I teach you trickster magic, and we will start tomorrow. I don’t want you to get killed only because I wasn’t there in time” he growled.

Yes, what he did to the troll was funny, but he wasn’t delusional and hadn’t he been there it might have ended badly. He would make sure that they can defend themselves.

Hermione who happened to overhear that came over asking whether she could attend. Loki glanced at her before he answered.

“I’m sorry, but I doubt that you would be able to perform that branch of magic very well if at all” she gave him a questioning look. “It is because of how that magic works. Trickster magic is based on breaking out of conformities, to neglect rules and defy authorities. You are to rule and authority bound to perform this properly.”

Hermione let her head hang but Loki was right she wouldn’t be able to go against rules like he inclined would be necessary.

“Hey, Fred, George” the twins came over.

“~What can we do for you master?”

“I’ll start teaching Harry and Neville trickster magic beginning tomorrow. Want to join in?”

The unholy glee they gave him was answer enough.

The next few days followed the same routine as always only interrupted by the new trickster magic lessons with Loki. It turned out that Fred and George were quite proficient in mind magic which they eagerly trained now. They all also quickly learned why Loki always ate sweets. Trickster Magic as it seemed was very draining physically, and the sugar in the candies compensated that.

Their eagerness to learn quickly bore fruits. It wasn’t that they suddenly all were the master of pranking but they at least managed to switch the colour of things within the first week. Harry had to admit that it was kind of hilarious when you were in a conversation, and he gestured with his hands when suddenly the other sported different colours without noticing or knowing how he did it. People simply dismissed his gestures as normal gesticulations during a conversation.

They went on like that until the middle of November when the first official Quidditch match Gryffindor versus Slytherin was due.

It was the morning of the game, and they sat in the great hall at breakfast talking about it.
“I wonder what broom you'll use since you don’t have your own” Neville asked.

“Huh, I don’t know. Oliver never mentioned something about that” Harry replied when suddenly six owls swooped in with a large parcel between them.

They landed gracefully in front of him and after every one of them got a piece of bacon they left.

“Who sends you a parcel at that time?” Dean asked.

“Who I don’t know, but I think this is the solution to my problem. You weren’t the one?” Harry questioned Loki.

“Nah, I'm not into brooms though I think the note should answer your question.”

Harry opened it. It seemed that it was McGonagall who send him the broom. He quickly unpacked it and out came the coolest thing he ever saw.

“Wow, a Nimbus 2000. We surely are going to win with that” Lee Jordan commented.

“Come on I want to test it before the game” Harry exclaimed, grabbed the broom and ran out of the hall. Neville shook his head, and Loki snickered, but both followed him.

Harry was already on the pitch and in the air when they arrived. He flew one insane stunt after the other enjoying his new broom. Since it was one hour before the game would begin, he had enough time.

About half an hour later the rest of the Quidditch team arrived shaking their heads over Harry who flew upside down at the moment. Harry flew down and followed them to the meeting. Wood gave them their speech.

Now they were standing in the hallway to the pitch.

“Harry, just catch the snitch before the Slytherins do, okay?” Harry nodded.

Harry hovered over the playing field laying lazily on his stomach on the broom, head placed on his hands he folded over the broomstick while watching the play beneath him. From time to time a Bludger came flying his way, but he always hovered out of the way in time. When he heard Lee’s comment, he snickered.

“And above all, we have Harry Potter the youngest seeker in decades on his new Nimbus 2000” Lee commented. “But what is he doing? Is he sleeping?” he asked in disbelief.

Yes, Harry had to admit that from beneath it might look like he was sleeping but he only enjoyed watching the game. So he sat up slightly and with a quick movement of his hand Lee suddenly sported Slytherin colours all over. McGonagall who sat next to him to reign in his sometimes somewhat biased comments snickered.

That was when suddenly his broom started to buck beneath him. He sat up in an instant, grabbing the broomstick so that he wouldn’t fall off and trying to reign in the broom. At first, it wasn’t that hard,
but with every second that passed it got harder, and Harry knew that he would be in trouble soon. He looked through the ranks to catch Loki’s attention.

Loki who saw what happened in the meantime frantically searched the ranks to find the culprit. He knew what was wrong and what to look for.

“It is Snape; he is cursing the broom” suddenly Hermione, sitting two rows before him, exclaimed also searching the ranks with some binoculars.

Loki looked straight at the man in question, but Hermione was wrong.

“No he is not” he retorted when he found the real culprit Quirrell.

His first thought was to let an anvil fall on his head as he had seen in several cartoons, but he doubted that McGonagall would like that. So he snapped with his fingers to let the scarf from the man in front of him jump up and land straight in his face. Therefore, his eye contact was interrupted, and his work rendered void.

“I read about curses, and it says that you have to have eye contact and Snape didn’t even blink” Hermione continued.

“You're right, but that also goes for counter-curses. Snape was the one keeping Harry alive. Otherwise, he would have fallen off long ago. Quirrell was the one who cursed the broom.”

Hermione's eyes went wide. “How do you know it wasn’t the other way around?”

Loki looked at her as if that was a stupid question. “I could lip-read what they were casting.”

Thanks to the search and their conversation, they hadn’t witnessed how Harry hung from his broom one-handed before he got back onto it and now hovered over the playfield again. At least Hermione and Neville didn’t see it Loki, on the other hand, didn’t let Harry out of sight even while looking for the culprit.

Harry saw that Terence Higgs the Slytherin seeker chased the Snitch and just rounded the Gryffindor goal posts. Barely noticing the disbelieving comments about why he didn’t do anything, he readied himself when the snitch was rushing towards the middle of the field.

Harry suddenly shot forwards and down in a neck breaking speed. He came down right in front of Terence, but he didn’t stop there but rushed further barely pulling up his broom before he hit the ground. A gasping went through the students while Terence had to fly a sharp U-turn to avoid a collision. Cursing because he lost sight of the snitch, he returned to the centre to look for it again.
That was when Harry came over to him. “What are you looking for?” he asked with a grin.

The only answer Harry got was a hateful glare.

“I hope it isn’t this,” he continued while playing with the snitch he caught during his insane stunt.

Terence looked at him wide-eyed while Harry flew over to Madame Hooch with a laugh to inform her. All the other students were baffled that the match suddenly was over. Yes, they saw Harry’s stunt, but they believed that it was only to get the other seeker off the snitch because he didn’t announce the catch instantly. When Harry finally landed, he was greeted by a very agitated Wood.

“What in Merlin’s name were you thinking? Letting Higgs chase the snitch for so long…” he didn’t know what to say about that.

“You told me I should catch the snitch before the other seeker does and that’s exactly what I did. So where is the problem?”

“You…you…” he started before throwing up his hands in frustration. “We won, that’s all that matters.”

Right then the twins showed up.

“You, my friend are crazy.”

“We hope that you know that.”

“~Sleeping during a Quidditch match,” they said while draping their arm around his shoulder.

The three went into the dressing room where they got a quick shower. Harry left them with a goodbye before he went over to Neville and Loki, who were waiting for him outside the Quidditch pitch.

“Hey, guys. Had fun?”

“If you mean with fun that I will kill Quirrell for cursing your broom then yes,” Loki growled.

“He is like this ever since the incident” Neville supplied.

“Loki please, I'm alive, and that’s all that matters. Don’t do anything stupid and let it at least look like an accident. I don’t want you thrown out,” Harry replied not even the slightest little bit disturbed by his friend's announcement to kill a teacher. He knew Loki was no saint and that he killed before because he did some research on him on the internet but he couldn’t find one victim that didn’t deserve it. So should Quirrell be his next victim…he would be the last person to stop him.

Loki growled for the last time. “Okay, okay, I won’t do anything obvious. You should thank Snape though,” Harry gave him a questioning look. “He was the one who spoke the counter-curse until I could stop Quirrell and therefore prevented that you fell off completely.”

“Oh really?” Harry thought about it when an idea struck him. “I have an idea. I’ll see you later in the common room. Loki could you please bring my broom to our dorm? Thanks!” with that he darted away Loki and Neville looking after him in disbelieve.
About an hour later, Harry stood in front of Snape’s office two boxes in his hand, a huge one and a small one. He knocked and a few seconds later Snape opened.

“Potter…what gives me the honour?” he sneered, but Harry was utterly unimpressed by it.

“Sir, I wanted to thank you. Loki told me what you did during the match. As a thank-you gift, I made you something. I hope you like it,” Harry said while holding out the smaller box.

Snape, on the other hand, stood there staring at the boy in front of him as if he suddenly grew a second head before he regained his composure and he rose an eyebrow.

“Don’t worry it isn’t poisoned or something the like. Just something to express my gratitude.”

The man took the box carefully. “Thank you. Is there something else?”

“No, that was all. Thanks again for saving me,” Harry turned around and went back to the Gryffindor rooms.

Snape in the meantime went back into his office and put the box onto his desk. Before he opened it, he cast several revealing charms on it. He doubted that the boy cursed it, but he was careful never the less. One didn’t survive a war because you were careless. When he couldn’t detect anything, he opened the box. His eyes nearly fell out. In the box stood a small dark chocolate cake in the form of a cauldron filled with what seemed to be a cherry cream.

After checking it upon potions, which also came out negative, he tried the cake. When he took the first bite, he sank back in his chair. This cake was pure bliss. It seemed that the boy was a genius when it came to cooking and he didn’t doubt that Harry made it himself because he knew perfectly well what the boy was capable of in his potions class and baking wasn’t that far away from brewing.

Yes, Harry came to him in his first week claiming that he wasn’t like his father but he didn’t believe him then. He thought that it was a pretence and that in the end, he would be like James but this cake changed his mind. Sure Harry inherited the mischievous streak of his father, but he had too much of Lily’s friendly persona to become a bully as James had been. Even he had to admit that it was harmless and funny pranks Harry played.

Snape doubted that anyone else would have given it a second thought should he save him, not to mention thanking him or baking him a cake. He was the infamous bat of the dungeons after all. So it was decided, from now on he would be more civilised to the boy. If only in the hope of getting another cake from him.

Back in the Gryffindor common room, the friends and the Quidditch team enjoyed the other cake Harry baked. He was infamous for them by now.

“So you also made him a cake?” Loki asked.

“He saved me, that’s the least I could do” he replied when a thought occurred to him.
Harry sat there for a few minutes in silence not noticing that Loki called him. It took a slap in his face to get him out of his musings.

“Huh? Something wrong?” he asked.

“You were completely absentminded.”

“Oh, I was just thinking about something…” Loki rose an eyebrow. Harry sighed knowing that he wouldn’t leave it be. “You know during that incident today with my broom…I never once feared that I would fall and die. The entire time I trusted that you would be able to save me.”

“And you’re right. I would have. As well as I will do something about Quirrell. Nobody hurts a child in front of me and gets away with it especially not you” Loki answered upon which Harry blushed furiously.
Chapter 11: Merry Christmas

The result of his gift to Snape Harry got to know in the next potions class. Snape didn’t sneer at him anymore and even gave him some advice on how to do things better. After class, most of the Gryffindor half cornered him outside the classroom.

“What did you do with Snape?”

“Yes, …he was actually nice to you.”

“How did you tame him?”

Harry snorted. They let it sound like Snape was some big evil monster that was untameable.

“Woah, the only thing I did was being nice to him and thanking him for some help he gave me. It also seems to help that I'm quite good at potions” Harry replied.

Loki coughed which sounded conspicuous like ‘bribery’.

With that Harry was the new hero of Gryffindor. It spread like wildfire that he was the one and only one of them to be able getting Snape to be actually nice.

Time flew by. Days went into weeks, and soon the first snow fell.

It was the last History lesson before they had their test to see whether Loki was able to teach them properly. So Loki decided not to confuse them with more information and do something else instead…he gave them a Q&A in the last lesson to eliminate any confusion and they were prepared a good as possible. Therefore, he told everyone that they would meet on the grounds this day and that they should wear warm clothes.

“Since you're well prepared for the test on Thursday, and I don’t want to confuse you with unnecessary information I thought why not doing a practical test about what you learned,” he told them with a grin.

Some looked at him in utter confusion while others had an inkling about what was to come.

“Snowball fight! Ravenclaw vs Gryffindor. Let’s see what you remember about war tactics” with a snap of his fingers, and two snow fortresses appeared behind him.

The Gryffindors had a feral grin on their faces before they started to attack the Ravenclaws who quickly sought shelter in their fortress before starting a counter attack. A few minutes later and the
war was in full swing while Binns and Loki stood at the side watching them. This was until Harry threw a snowball straight at Loki's head who looked into another direction at that time.

“Oh attacking the judge? That calls for revenge” he said wiping the snow off his head before rapidly shooting back three snowballs at each team because some of the Ravenclaws started to attack him too.

Loki quickly conjured up a third smaller fortress for himself before starting attacks on both teams.

Half of the lesson was over, and there seemed to be no end to their little mock war. Even some of the students who had a free period joined them. That was when McGonagall who also had a free period came around to see what was going on and what that ruckus meant. She stood right next to Binns when suddenly a stray snowball, that initially was intended for Loki, hit her.

Neville, who was the one who threw it, took a sharp breath when he saw whom he hit before quickly ducking down because McGonagall shot a ball back with a flick of her wand. After that, she was fair game for everyone. Though being the transfiguration teacher she was, she neither did hide behind a fortress nor did she use ordinary snowballs. She transfigured the snow around her into different snow-animals that attacked the students from any possible angle, and when a snowball flew into her direction, she quickly transfigured it too and sent it back. Some of the students later admitted that they only threw balls at her to see what she would do with them.

Loki, on the other hand, took that as a challenge and quickly he and McGonagall found themselves in a match about who could come up with the most creative snowballs. McGonagall even transformed a snow-dragon that instead of breathing fire shot snowballs while flying over them. Loki countered that with the Balrog from the Lord of the Rings. The thing made quick work of the dragon with its whip. She snickered while transfiguring a bridge with a small Gandalf who in proper style shouted “You shall not pass” before slamming down his staff so that the bridge crumbled and he as well as the Balrog ended as a pile of snow on the ground.

They all would have missed lunch hadn’t McGonagall at some point put an end to their fight and told them that the lesson was long over. So they all went back to the castle a bit exhausted and wet to the bones but all around happy.

Loki left the fortresses be and only dismissed his which earned him a questioning look from McGonagall.

“Aren’t you going to dismiss the others too?”

“Why? They don’t bother anyone and others can use them in their free period or during breaks” he replied on which McGonagall nodded.

“I thought you were supposed to teach them history?” she continued while they walked back to the castle.

“But that was a lesson, practical usage of theoretical knowledge. I have to admit that you're a true master of your art” he said and it wasn't only sweet-talked. “Nice dragon you transfigured.”

“You're not that bad yourself. The creatures you made were quite impressive too. Though I have to admit that I didn’t recognise all of them.”

“Perhaps you should attend my lessons about supernatural beings then” Loki laughed.

He had attacked the others with the various creatures he told them about. He even let them mostly behave like the real ones, but that actually hadn’t helped the wendigo that attacked Harry… the boy
was just faster.

Loki wished her a farewell before he went to Harry and Neville.

“Mate, that was probably the best lesson we ever had” Dean commented still having a redhead from the cold.

Again Loki made it to the top topic of the day.

McGonagall later sat in her office pleased with herself and the day. The snowball fight had been a pleasant distraction, and she had to admit that Loki gave her quite a challenge. It had been a long time that she could show off like today and she liked it. Teaching was enjoyable and all but from time to time one needed the proof of their abilities and to be honest, it was fun.

This evening Neville approached Loki with a request.

“Uhm Loki…I have a question” he began but was interrupted before he could continue.

“I think I know what you want and all I can say about it is that I will have a look into it, but I cannot promise you anything.”

Three days later was the History exam everybody looked forward to and dreaded the same time. But when they got the sheets, some even banged their heads on the table. Loki had been right those questions were so easy that even a stupid idiot who didn’t pay attention could have answered them.

In the end, everybody baring one, Ron who made out of Ug the Unreliable, Ug the Reliable…got a perfect score and only to distinguish him for this one mistake Ron got an E except for the O he would have gotten even with the one mistake.

With that, the first year History class got the best scores ever recorded in Hogwarts’ history.

McGonagall would have been proud didn’t that bring the consequences that now the entire rest of the school, this time even including Slytherin, again stormed her office and demanded Loki as their teacher since he proved that he was competent.
So now on Saturday after the students who went back home left, she stood in Dumbledore's office.

“Albus we have a problem” she began.

“You're right we have a problem Minerva…how could you let that happen? Do you know how that looks in front of the School Board? A first year takes over the lessons, and in the end, the entire class gets perfect scores…” he rambled, but McGonagall only pinched the bridge of her nose.

“Are you insane? How many times did I tell you that Binns is a bad choice as a teacher? I told you again and again but did you listen to me? No! This is entirely your own fault. What should I have done in your opinion? The entire class refused to go to his lessons, and yesterday every single prefect stood in my office demanding that Mr Laufeyson teaches them. Every. Single. One!” she retorted.

“You could have talked to me. We would have found a solution.”

“Solution? You had years to find one and what did you do? Nothing” McGonagall growled.

“And what do you suggest should I do?”

“Let Mr Laufeyson teach History. He more than proved that he is competent.”

“He is a child for Merlin’s sake.”

“Then see how you clear this mess up because I’m not going to help you” she retorted before leaving Dumbledore’s office. She had to talk to Loki.

A day later she and Loki sat in her office. She told him about the problem and that Dumbledore would be more likely to bury his head in the sand than doing anything.

Loki thought about it before an idea struck him.

“I have an idea, but that would only work when Binns plays along…”

McGonagall rose an eyebrow, and so Loki explained his plan and how to arrange it best so that Dumbledore would have no other possibility.

It was Christmas morning. Harry and Neville were still sleeping while Loki raided the chocolate stocks in the common room. While usually, Neville would have gone home he decided to stay and so he told his granny that he was in a unique learning group and to study further he wanted to stay. It wasn’t a complete lie however also not entirely accurate but that, he wouldn’t tell her. His granny, who supported everything that would make her grandson the powerful wizard she hoped Neville would be, gave her permission. Would Neville have been honest he would have said that he just had
no interest in the boring social meetings over Christmas.

So they were both asleep as well as Ron who also stayed because his parents were on vacation with his sister when Loki suddenly burst into the room seemingly on a sugar high.

“Uh…Loki did you eat the entire chocolate in this castle?” Harry groaned while Neville only grunted.

“Pretty much, yea. Now come on it’s Christmas, and there are presents for you” Loki piped overly joyful.

Harry who figured that Loki wouldn’t let him sleep anymore sat up while Neville pulled his sheet over his head only to get it yanked away by the trickster.

“C’mon I wanna sleep…we’ve holidays” he mumbled.

“Grinch” Loki turned around and rushed back downstairs.

Harry looked after him shaking his head while he got up himself. He didn’t bother getting changed yet, and so he followed Loki in his pyjama. Reaching the common room he looked with huge eyes at the pile of presents.

“Woa, who got that many presents?”

“Well some of them are for you” Loki replied while tossing one of the presents at Harry who caught it out of reflex.

“I get presents? But I never get presents…” Loki gave him a bizarre look, but Harry didn’t see it because he was fully occupied with the present in his hand.

A few minutes later he sat in a small bunch of things he got from several people and had still three presents to go. He had gotten a potions book from Neville, sweets and joke articles from the twins and strangely enough another potions book from Hermione. It wasn’t that they didn’t talk to each other but to call her a friend would be too much. He would have to think about something he could get her even when she would get it after the holidays.

He was about to open one of the last three parcels when the twins came downstairs both wearing nearly identical jumpers only that one had an F and the other a G on the front.

“Oh, finally…a way to tell you two apart” Harry snickered.

“Hadn’t they swapped them” Loki commented after taking a look on the two.

“You know-“

“-we always wondered”

“~why you’re the only one able to tell us apart.”

“Believe me it took me three days to figure that one out…even your souls are identical” Loki huffed which let the twins grin broadly. “And I doubt that anyone who doesn’t know where to look would be able to tell you apart.”

“~Ah we see you got a jumper from mum to” they called out when Harry opened the parcel.

Out came a handmade jumper in emerald green with a silver H on the front.
“But I don’t even know your mum…”

“We told her about you.“

“And it seems that since we met you the complaints, she got about us decreased”

“So perhaps she thinks you're the reason and wants to thank you for making us behave.”

That earned them a laugh from Loki. “I think that is more because McGonagall uses me as an excuse to not send letters to your mum every other day by claiming that I was the culprit and not you.”

“As long as we get fewer howlers, we don’t care” they grinned.

It was right, since the start of the year they only got the number of howlers they usually got in one week, and those they still got, Loki banished quickly before they had a chance to go off. Ms Weasley will be in for a very nasty surprise when the twins go back home over summer, and she learns that they don’t even need a wand anymore to pull off their pranks. Not to mention that thanks to that, they could perform magic outside of school without getting accused of underage magic since the tracking of it went through the wand and not the spell itself.

“Though we wonder why our mother.“

“was so surprised that we befriended you.”

“and not our brother Ron.”

Harry huffed upon that. “Did she think that I would touch him even with a ten-foot pole especially after what he did on Halloween?” the twins looked at him in confusion. “He was the reason Hermione hid in the girl’s toilette the entire afternoon…”

Unfortunately for him, Ron came down from the dorms right at that moment. The twins both glared at him with narrowed eyes, and the result was that Ron suddenly looked like a rainbow. Loki doubted that he would get rid of the colouring before school continued with how much power the twins put into it. But he was proud of them never the less because they did it entirely wandlessly.

When they were finished with their brother, they left the common room probably to set up some pranks while Ron fled back to the dorms.

Harry in the meantime continued with the next present. When he opened it out came a wooden box with silver writing on the top. It read:

*Trickster apprentice equipment*

He flipped open the lid and found three items in it. A pouch, a smartphone and something that looked like a golden muggle credit card. Harry rose an eyebrow.

“Some things you will need later for your real present. It’s a mobile that you don’t need to recharge and that also works in magical areas like Hogwarts coming with free internet and calling, a bottomless pouch with a weightless charm and a credit card without limits” Loki supplied with a smile.

First Harry was confused when the realisation hit him. “You don’t mean…a vacation?”

Loki could only nod once before he was tackled with a hug from Harry.

“Thank you” he exclaimed.
Loki wondered about that reaction. When Harry reacted like that to such a simple thing as a vacation what would he say when he got to know what he really planned? There was something off with Harry and Loki was determined to find out.

Neville came down just at that moment looking strangely at Harry and Loki before diving into his own presents. He got a rare Herbology book from Harry and a bag full of sweets from Loki. They quickly found out that while Neville also played minor pranks from time to time, he was more into Herbology. Loki once gave him a cutting from a plant he grew himself, and that was a bitch and a half to cultivate as a test. Neville then asked Sprout whether he could hold it in one of the greenhouses and now about a month and a half later it was a beautiful little bush much to the surprise of Loki. So he now taught Neville also magic that was used for gardening.

After calming down again, Harry went on with his last present. It was quite a large package wrapped in simple brown paper, a simple tie around it and a small note attached to it. Harry read the letter.

“Huh, that is strange.”

“What’s the matter?” Loki asked.

“This present. It only has a handwritten note on it but no signature” Harry handed Loki the note.

_Your father left this in my possession before he died._
_It is time it was returned to you._
_Use it well._
_A very Merry Christmas to you._

“You’re right, this is strange, and it radiates Dumbledore’s magical signature. What’s in this package anyway?”

Harry untied and unfolded it and out came a silvery-grey silky piece of cloth.

“What’s that,” he asked curiously holding it up.

Loki looked at it with wide eyes. “Can I have a closer look please?”

“Sure.”

The trickster took and unfolded it completely. “That can’t be…I thought it was lost a long time ago.”

“What is it?” Harry was not only curious but also a bit cautious.

“It is Death’s cloak” Loki answered in awe, but Harry looked at him confused. “What do you know about the Peverells and the entity called Death?”

“Uhm nothing to be honest.”

“I know something about the three Peverell brothers actually” Neville spoke up having listened to their conversation. “They crossed a river most drowned in and then Death gave them three powerful items as a reward, but it was actually a trick. If I remember correctly it was a cloak, a wand and some kind of stone that could resurrect the dead. Those are also known as the Deathly Hallows. But this is a child story, isn’t it?”

“Yes and no. While the version you know is indeed only a story it is based off an incident that happened a few hundred years ago. You have to understand that Death is the ultimate neutral party. He doesn’t judge but only guides the souls of the dead to their afterlife with the help of the Reapers
“A few hundred years ago though, some mighty and dark wizard threatened to destroy the balance of the world. Said wizard developed a ritual actually to enslave Death. The Peverell brothers could stop him, and as a way of thanking them, he gave them the three items. His cloak, a very powerful wand and a stone. The stone as you said is told to resurrect the dead, but that is not true. It is only a way to communicate with them” Loki explained before giving it back to Harry.

“What I don’t know is why the cloak ended up first with your father and now as your Christmas present.”

“But it isn’t dangerous?”

“No, but I would advise you to store it in the pouch I gifted you. I tuned it to your magical core so that you are the only person to access it and should you happen to lose it just call for it and it comes back to you. This cloak is one of the most powerful objects in the world, and it would be safe in there” he could only hope that not the wrong people got to know that Harry had it or otherwise they would initiate a manhunt on him.

Harry did as Loki said and picked up the pouch finding out that it had three compartments. One stocked with clothes, one with sweets and one was empty. He placed the cloak in the empty one and his new mobile and the card in the first one before closing it, but he didn’t know where to put the pouch so that it was with him but couldn’t get lost. Loki helped him with that problem by showing him that he could wear it either around his wrist or ankle.

After Neville also finished unpacking his presents, they got changed and went down to the great hall for breakfast.
The three sat at the Gryffindor table having breakfast. Harry and Loki were chatting excitedly, but Neville looked somewhat unhappy. Not that he didn’t like or enjoy Christmas…it merely bothered him something. Harry was about to ask him what the matter was when suddenly McGonagall came rushing through the hall entrance door and walked up to them with a determined pace.

“Mr Longbottom would you please follow me?” she said before looking at Loki with an amused glint in her eyes.

Neville looked at the others in confusion but stood up never the less and followed their head of the house.

“Merry Christmas” Loki shouted after them when they were halfway back to the door.

Neville turned around and smiled at them, but it didn’t seem to reach his eyes before leaving the hall.

“Something’s wrong with Neville. I don’t know but something seems to bother him” Harry mused.

“Believe me his mood will lighten up when he gets his present” Loki replied cheerfully which earned him a confused look.

Neville followed McGonagall into her office where the woman grabbed a piece of cloth from her desk holding it out to Neville.

“This is a portkey please take a hold.”

He looked at it confused and cautious. It wasn’t that he thought that the Professor would harm him in any way but he also didn’t fancy to get lost somewhere. In the end, he decided that his trust in McGonagall was bigger than his caution and he grabbed it. McGonagall activated it, and they both were ported away.

When they landed, Neville was first a bit dizzy from the getting sucked through a tube feeling that came with Portkeys. After recovering, he took a look around and found himself in a corridor of…St. Mungo’s? Now he was utterly confused. Was something wrong with his parents? Panic started to rise within him while he followed his teacher to the place he knew his parents layed.

They both rounded a room divider, and Neville stopped dead in his track. He took a double look and even tried pinching himself thinking this was a dream.

In the beds sat both of his parents awake and fully well.

It took him two minutes to recover. He whispered a ‘thank you Loki’ which let McGonagall who
heard it snicker. But he didn’t take notice of it because he started to cry while running over to his parents and hugging them.

This was definitely the best Christmas he ever had.

At Hogwarts, Loki explained to Harry what he did.

“Though I have to admit that timing the entire thing was a bitch and a half. I contacted several seers to get it right…though what confuses and startles me is what every single one of them told me too” he mused.

“Why? What’s wrong?” Harry never saw Loki this tense before.

“One thing they all said was the same: The seals are going to break…no one can stop it. What wonders me though is why they all sounded happy about it…as if it was something good…” Loki went through his hair with his hand.

“The seals are breaking? What does that mean? What seals?” Harry was confused.

“What do you know about Lucifer?”

Harry rose an eyebrow. “Not much to be honest. Only that he is a fallen angel and that he created the demons” the first he knew through religion lessons at primary school the latter thanks to Loki.

“Sure that is true, but there is more to it. This entire thing happened a very long time ago when humanity just started. Michael and Lucifer got into a quarrel about the humans because God told them to love you more than him. I don’t know who of those two started the fight, but I think it was Michael because Lucifer began to discuss this order with their father.

You have to know that Michael was always the good little son who followed every given order to the letter while Lucifer questioned things. The only thing I know is that at some point Michael banished Lucifer from heaven and locked him up in a dimension next to purgatory because Lucifer wanted to destroy humanity.

The cage Lucifer is locked up in is locked with 666 seals. 66 of them have to be broken for him to come free, some of them in a particular order while others are entirely optional. Though the first and the last to fall are fixed. For the first, a righteous man has to go to hell, and spill blood and the final seal is killing the first demon Lilith.”

Harry looked at him shocked. “But how can that be something good?”

“To be honest…I have no freaking idea. But there is no point in musing about it now, and I think there was a vacation waiting for you” he returned to his normal jovially self. “Have you already packed your bag and with you?”

He was first a bit confused over the sudden change of topic, but finally, he nodded. “Yes while I got changed.” The only thing he had added was the laptop he got from Loki since everything else he might need was already in there.
“Good then let’s go. McGonagall already knows that we are not in the castle until school starts again” he told her about it after the discussion about the History problem and also asked her to get Neville to St. Mungo’s without telling him what was going on.

So both stood up and went to the doors when they met the twins halfway.

“Hey, you two” Loki piped. “Harry and I will be out for a few days so don’t do anything I wouldn’t do.”

“Which isn’t much” they answered with a Cheshire grin. “Have fun with whatever you’re going to do.”

Loki led Harry to an empty and unused classroom before turning around to him.

“Don’t worry I’m only going to age myself a bit. While it doesn’t matter where I’l bring you first it’ll definitely look suspicious for two children to wander around alone later” Harry nodded in understanding.

A few seconds later Loki didn’t look like eleven anymore but somewhere around thirty.

“Good that’s that. Now I’d like to ask you to put your arms around my neck and close your eyes. Whatever happens, don’t open your eyes until I say so okay?”

Harry did as he was asked and since he didn’t know why he should close his eyes, he even burrowed his head in Loki’s shoulder so that he was entirely safe.

“Perfect” with that Loki took off.

It took a few seconds in which Harry could feel wind rushing by, but he didn’t dare to open his eyes. As quickly as it started, it was over, and Loki put him down again.

“Okay, you can open your eyes again.”

Harry slowly opened them before looking around. They stood on a small footpath that leads to a small but charming house which stood in a clearing of a forest.

“Where are we?” Harry was curious and confused.

“I thought that you might also want to be with your family on Christmas” he smiled.

Harry Just wanted to turn around and tell him that his aunt and uncle wouldn’t want to see him when two persons came out of the house. One was a woman with long red hair and emerald green eyes and the other a man that looked much like he did only with brown eyes and much older. Harry’s mouth fell open, and he stared at them wide-eyed.

“You didn’t…” his voice a mere whisper.

“What? Know where the back door to heaven is and sneak us in so that you can meet your parents?” Loki said with a smile.

Harry stumbled forwards before breaking into a full run and tackling his parents with a hug, tears running down his face.

“Mum…dad…”

Loki watched the scene while leaning against a tree. He just wanted to turn around and leave to give
them some time alone when James walked up to him and draped an arm around his shoulder.

“You didn’t think we would let you leave so easily?”

“I just wanted to give you some time with your son alone…”

“Ah, rubbish. You treated our son far better than anyone else before so as far as I'm concerned you
are family.”

Loki threw the man a strange look. “What do you mean by that?”

“I fear that it isn’t upon me to answer you that” James sighed.

They together entered the house and followed the voices of the others into the kitchen.

“James, Loki, sit down you're in the way and James don’t you dare touching anything” Lily shooed
them to a round table in the corner where they sat down.

Loki shot James a questioning look upon which he snickered.

“The only place in the kitchen I'm allowed at is the table since a small incident shortly after we died
where I tried to cook some.”

“You would even manage to burn water in an attempt to make coffee” Lily glared at him before
turning back.

“Says the woman who can’t even do the laundry right” he retorted when a towel flew straight at his
head but he caught it before it could reach its target. “Throwing things at a seeker…since when has
that worked?”

What he didn’t see was that wrapped in the towel was a bird spider that now slowly crawled out.
When he saw that thing, he threw the towel away from him while screaming. Like a girl. Harry who
watched the entire thing while peeling apples cracked up. Who might have thought that his father
feared spiders or could scream like a girl as it is? Even Loki grinned.

“So you were seeker to?” Harry asked after calming down again.

“I was the best. Haven’t you seen my badge in the trophy room at Hogwarts?” Harry shook his head.
“What have you been doing that you missed this?” James said mock hurt.

“It’s true I have been a bit busy. Transforming Malfoy into a Barbie girl and letting him dance,
saving Neville from a rampaging broom and getting on the Quidditch team myself, finding and
playing with a Cerberus, a tap-dancing troll, getting hexed into Slytherin colours for snatching candy
from Loki…oh and snatching the Snitch right from under the nose of the other seeker in my first
official match.”

“Didn’t you happen to mean sleeping most of the match on your broom until you got woken up
rudely and then flying a crazy kamikaze stunt during which you happened to catch the snitch?” Loki
piped in.

“How often have I to tell you…I wasn’t sleeping…I just enjoyed the match. No one ever said I
couldn’t do this…” Harry growled while fidgeting with his hands.

Loki’s hair suddenly was striped in pink and a bilious green. James snorted.

Loki looked questioning at him when he realised the change. “Oh…ha, ha, very funny” he quickly
changed his hair back. He should really pay more attention to what Harry is doing with his hands.

“What are you two doing anyway?” he asked Lily and Harry.

“Baking, what else?” piped Harry.

Loki grunted in amusement. “I bring you to heaven so that you finally can meet your parents and you start baking. Why am I not the slightest little bit surprised?”

“Because you know me far too well” Harry laughed.

They talked further while Harry and his mother baked a cake for all of them. Harry told them what he was doing in school, how the teachers were (Loki was apparently with a huge lead the most favourite teacher) and about pranks he pulled. His parents already knew what he was doing because they could observe him from heaven but they didn’t tell him.

After that, his parents told him more about their own time at school and James gave him a good few ideas of pranks.

They spent a few days in heaven. Well, heavenly days actually since time went faster there much like in hell but not to such an extent. While the time-speed difference between earth and hell was somewhere between 1:50 up to way over 1:100 depending on the area you're in it is only about 1:10 in heaven.

So it was a few days since they arrived that James cornered Loki.

“Do you know what happened to Sirius?”

Loki looked at him questioningly. “Huh? He stopped praying after your death. I thought he simply lost faith. Why do you ask?”

“I thought as much…he didn’t lose faith” James took a step back away from Loki which earned him a curious look. “They threw him into Azkaban.”

It was a good thing that he was a step away from Loki because said pagan went from jovially to outright enrage within a split-second.

“They WHAT?” he shouted, James didn’t doubt that it was audible even three heavens over.

Harry who was outside with his mother knew that someone managed to royally piss off Loki, but he didn’t pity the person who managed to get on the wrong side of the god. It was like with Quirrell, whoever incurred Loki’s wrath upon himself deserved it at some point and from the shout Loki just gave said person made some monumental mistake, that he was sure of.

“Yes, they framed what Peter did upon him…” James sighed.

“Where is that traitor?” Loki growled.

“Not as far as you might think. He is a rat Animagus that misses a toe.”
Loki thought that through when the realization hit him, and a smile crept on his face that creeped the hell out of James. “Oh, that bastard but I know just the right punishment that would kill two birds with one stone.”

“Lo, are you planning on world domination or why are you cackling like mad?” Harry, who came in to look what was going on, asked.

“Pah, who needs world domination when one can dish out cold revenge?”

“Just tell me when to duck so that I can avoid being hit by the blast” Harry retorted when suddenly outside a man with dark hair and dopey eyes appeared. He looked a bit like a lost puppy.

It seemed that Loki's outbreak drew in some unwanted attention. Loki flinched.

“Damned. I'm sorry Harry, but we have to leave” Loki said while snapping with his fingers putting the angel outside into a time-distortion field. “We have perhaps five minutes.”

Harry made a face, but he knew that it would be bad getting caught and he didn’t want to find out what might happen then.

Lily looked outside. “Oh, this is Castiel. He comes by from time to time. Nice guy but a bit dense sometimes.”

“Never the less running into him opens a ton of questions I don’t want to deal with” Loki stated.

“Harry, I would like to ask a favour from you if that’s ok,” James asked upon which Harry nodded. He walked over to the mantelpiece and picked up two envelopes. “Would you please give those to Snape? They are from your mum and me. I know I wasn’t the nicest person to him, but it would mean a lot to me.”

“Sure” he put the two letters into the pouch he got from Loki.

After that, he said goodbye to his parents and hugged them for the last time. He held onto Loki like when they got there.

“Take good care of our son,” Lily said while wishing Loki a farewell.

Loki nodded, and with that, he took Harry back to earth and straight to America. Just in time because Castiel came out of his stasis.

“So you think he will find out about my sister?” Lily asked.

“That’s only a matter of time, but it’s her own fault for what is to come” Lily nodded before turning around to greet their guest.
Loki landed in the middle of a town in America and told Harry that he could let go now but the boy didn’t. He grabbed Loki even tighter. 

“Thank you,” he said a few tears running down his cheek. “I know how risky that was…so thank you.”

“You’re welcome, but I’m sorry that we had to leave so hastily…”

“It’s okay. I’m sure you didn’t do it on purpose, and perhaps we can return some other time” he leaned back and smiled. “So…where are we and what day have we?”

“Well we are in front of the café with the second-best chocolate cake of the world, and we have Wednesday the 27th, 10 a.m. local time” Loki replied while letting Harry down.

“Huh? Only two days passed? I could have sworn it was longer we have been away.”

Loki chuckled. “In heaven time passes quicker than on earth.”

“Cool,” he took a look around. “So let’s see. Sunny day and about 17°C. Clearly an English speaking country. Not Australia because it is summer there at the moment and much warmer. Hmmm…America I’d say. California or Florida?”

“California, Malibu to be precise” Loki smiled.

“Can we visit the beach later?” Harry asked excitedly.

“Sure why not” they entered the café to place their order before looking for a table outside. “I thought about either visiting a theme park later or taking a stroll through L.A. before making a beeline for Vegas tomorrow or so.”

“Vegas? Am I not a bit young for casinos and gambling?”

Loki laughed. “You’re right at Vegas you mostly find casinos, but there is also the ‘Rabbit Hole’ located” Harry cocked his head in confusion. “It’s a magical mall like ‘Diagon Alley’ but far larger, more modern and totally awesome. In America, it is THE location everyone magical, supernatural or otherwise connected to the supernatural goes to. The whole thing is a neutral zone where…how did one put it? Ah yes, …angels and demons go hand in hand doing their business without having to fear that the other side attacks them. Well, they would if the feather-stuffed brains from above didn’t think it beneath them coming to earth. Funny thing is the founder of that place made the entire thing as an imitation of Alice in Wonderland with all the follow the white rabbit thing to get there. They even have a guard to ensure that strict neutrality that resembles the guards from Alice in Wonderland.”

They continued talking about what they could do in L.A. all while eating the cake and drinking the hot chocolate the server just brought them.

“For a long time, I thought those cakes were simply the best humanity could come up with. I don’t
know how you do it, but yours are better…far better” Loki mused.

Harry blushed slightly before he shrugged. “As I said I only have experience.”

Loki hummed upon that. “Want some more?” he asked when they both finished.

Harry nodded, and Loki went inside to order some more. Just at that moment a black car parked on the other side of the street, a black Impala to be precise. Out came two men. A larger but younger one and a smaller one around the late twenties. They both left the car while agitatedly arguing about something before entering a shop.

Harry snickered. Loki told him about the Winchester brothers, and the two who just left resembled their description quite well. That was when an evil idea occurred him. Didn’t Loki tell him that Dean loved rock music? He made a few quick moves with his hands.

It took a few minutes before the two came back out and with one look on his car, the older man’s face darkened before he took a look around. Unfortunately, just at that moment, Loki left the café. The man spotted him and rushed over nailing the pagan to the wall next to the door.

“Loki…what did you do to my car?” he snarled while secretly holding him at gunpoint.

“Oh hello, Dean. Is that a gun or are you just happy to see me again?” Loki grinned while looking between Dean and Sam who just arrived too.

Sam only stood there not knowing what to think or do. On the one hand he would much like to shoot Loki himself for the Mystery Spot thing, but on the other hand, he wanted to see how this situation would play out. So he just settled for glaring hatefully at Loki.

“Stop joking around. What did you do to my car…?”

“Hey I didn’t even know you were in the same town as me so what are you talking about?”

“I said stop…”

That was when Harry finally cracked up. Dean looked at him in disbelieve.

“Ey kiddo, what’s so funny?”

“You because you're barking up the entirely wrong tree,” he said gasping for air while making a few more movements with his hands.

Sam and Loki snorted simultaneously because of Dean’s sudden neon green hair. He didn’t notice it.

“What?” Dean looked at the two, but they only grinned. “WHAT?” he pressed the gun even harder into Loki's side.

“Really, that’s how you thank me? I take you to your parents so that you can finally meet them and you get a gun pointed at me?” Loki huffed at Harry.

“Lo…have you taken a look at his car?” Harry replied while pointing in the direction Dean parked his car.

Loki rose an eyebrow before looking into the direction Harry pointed. His eyes went wide before he cracked up to.

“Okay, I take everything back. This is simply hilarious” Loki said which only earned him a glare
from Dean.

The initially black car wasn’t black anymore. It now was the dream of any six years old girl. The entire thing was bright pink with Hello Kitty all over it. Even the interior was pink, and the rims had the kitten face on them.

“You damned pagan…reverse it, NOW!”

“So you don’t like Hello Kitty? What a pity” Harry snickered while waiving with his hands. “Perhaps this is more your style then. Oh, and if I were you, I’d stop pointing a gun at Lo, or your car stays this way. Forever.”

“Lo?” Dean asked incredulously while taking a look on his car.

He growled. Sure it wasn’t Hello Kitty anymore, but now it sported My Little Pony all over. He sneered, put the gun down before walking up to Harry, sitting down in front of him, laying the weapon on the table and turning it so that it was pointed straight at Harry. Loki’s eyes narrowed, and he looked like he was ready to hex that man into the next week, but Harry only leaned back and shook his head.

“I get it. While I don’t know who or what you are or how you did it with my car, it was definitely you.”

“My name is Harry Potter. You know Winchester that between a full-grown mountain troll, a hellhound Cerberus pup and my potions professor at school you’re as intimidating and frightening as the blond ferret Malfoy that tries to hex me from time to time?” he snickered. “So not at all…”

“You do realise that I'm the one pointing a gun at you?”

“You're right…My Little Pony so doesn’t suit you” Harry again waved with his hands before leaning forward. “Shoot me and your car stays like this. Hurt me in any given way…you get it?”

Dean took another look at his Impala. “Who the hell is Helene Fischer?”

Harry suddenly grinned ferociously. He took out his phone did a quick web search and then played the song ‘Atemlos durch die Nacht’ from her.

“It is called ‘Schlager’ in Germany” he supplied.

Dean’s reaction was hilarious. He first went pale before looking like he wanted to vomit. Upon seeing that Loki started to laugh again.

“That is beyond evil. I like it.”

That was the last straw for Dean. He drew a knife he hid somewhere and attacked the pagan god but Loki was quicker and with a snap, he just vanished. Dean took a look around, but Loki was nowhere seen.

“Oh great you scared him off” Harry snorted.

Dean narrowed his eyes and walked up to him the knife visible in his hands. That was when Sam finally intervened. He didn’t have any problems that Dean attacked Loki but a child? No way.

“Dean, wait. You don’t really want to attack a child, do you? What is he? Nine? Ten maximum” he asked while putting a hand on his brother’s arm.
“I'm eleven, thank you very much” Harry retorted indignantly.

“Sam for all we know he could be a demon or hell knows what else.”

“Jesus Christ, you're dumb. No wonder Lo likes to mess around with you and besides that do you really think Lo would allow a demon to possess me?” Harry laughed very well knowing that his exclamation made it impossible for him to be a demon or something else from hell.

Sam looked at him, and even Dean stopped in his track.

“Then what are you?” Dean eyed him critically.

“Why should I tell you? You scared off Lo…now I have to take the bus because of you” being fed up he stood and went into the café to pay only to get to know that Loki already did.

So he went back out on the street and looked around before heading down the road.

“Where do you think are you going?” Sam hurried after him naturally worried.

“As I said, thanks to your brother I have to take a bus or a taxi. At the moment I'm looking for either to get to Vegas.”

“What do you want in Vegas?” Sam who followed him the entire time asked curiously.

“First I assume that it is where Lo will wait for me and second it is where a supernatural shopping mall is located, and I need some stuff” he reached the end of the street but nowhere was a bus station or taxi to be seen. He sighed. “Great I'm stuck because your brother is a jerk. Well, perhaps the waitress at the café can call a taxi for me.”

“Supernatural shopping mall?” Sam’s interest was piqued.

Harry looked at him in disbelieve while he turned around and went back to the café Sam following him the entire time.

“You want to tell me that you two are hunters but have no idea where to get the really good stuff?”

“Sam, would you like to explain to me what you're doing?” Dean who observed the two asked when they passed him.

“Dean, do you really think that I let an eleven years old boy run around alone? Not to mention, that he said something that sounded interesting. Did you know that there is a Supernatural shopping mall in Vegas?” Sam answered while stopping to follow Harry and walking up to his brother.

“And you trust him?”

“I didn’t say that but it sounds interesting, and it’s something I’d like to check out.”

“God Sammy, the boy could be who knows what. He could lead us right into a trap. Ever thought about that?”

“When he is so evil as you think him be wouldn’t’ it be the easiest thing to get him where he wants to instead of letting him roam freely? That way we can observe him and should your assumption prove to be true we always can stop him. You can call Bobby on the way there, perhaps he has an idea about what he is” Sam pledged. “And then there is something else. I don’t know how to put it, but I feel he can give us some answers to various questions.”
“Man dude, I don’t like this…okay I’ll do it but you drive, I have to call Bobby, and he should better return my car to normal” Dean growled.

“Thank you” Sam went into the café.

“Harry? Did you already call for a taxi?” Harry shook his head. “What would you say if we drive you?”

“Your brother wouldn’t shoot me, would he?” Harry eyed him critically.

“As long as you turn his car back to normal I think he won’t…and perhaps his hair.”

Dean still hadn’t figured out that little detail.

Harry sighed. “I think I can do this.”

He hopped from the barstool he was sitting on and followed Sam to Dean.

“You promise to not shoot me, and I turn your car back to normal. Deal?”

Dean looked at him as if he didn’t know what to think but he finally nodded. “And no fancy things am I clear?”

“Sure” he waved with his hands and the Impala looked like he was before he messed with it.

“Good. Now get in. Where are we going to?”

“Vegas. Where exactly I tell you when we reach the city” Harry climbed on the backseat.

Sam and Dean also got in, and they drove off. They were just outside Malibu when Dean took out his mobile and phoned Bobby. It took a few seconds until the man answered.

“Bobby? Dean here…no we’re not in trouble…well we had a run in with Loki…no nothing serious happened, and we are both still alive, but he had a boy with him…yes he definitely was with him…he’s with us now after Loki just left him behind…his name is Harry Potter, do you happen to know anything about him?...what the heck is a natural-born wizard?”

Harry who listened to the conversation choked in the backseat. “What? Your own brother is a natural-born, and you have no idea what this is?” he asked in disbelief.

Sam who heard that slammed on the brakes while Dean nearly dropped the phone. Luckily the street was empty and no one behind them. Both men turned around and looked at him.

“What did you just say?”

Harry looked at them like he never saw them until now before realisation hit him and he facepalmed.

“You really had no idea. Give me that man…Bobby for a second please” he held out his hand to Dean expectantly. It seemed to him that at least this man knew what he was talking about.

Dean at first didn’t react, but when someone shouted his name from the phone, he finally held it back at his ear. He nodded several times before he gave the phone to Harry.

“Hello? Harry here.”

“So you're Harry Potter? My name is Bobby Singer. I have to apologise for these two idjits. They are good hunters but sometimes not the most sensitive ones and a bit dense.”
Harry snorted. “Honestly? I ask myself how they were able to survive that long. I mean first Dean attacks a pagan trickster god with a knife which is as effective as trying to stop him from pranking people and then they don’t even know the difference between demon witches and natural-born not to mention that Sam is one.”

“Why do you think Sam is a natural-born?” came Bobby’s question over the phone.

“I can see that in his aura.”

“Aura?” not only Bobby asked but also the brothers.

Harry groaned that would be a long ride. “Something I assume that is the side-effect of Lo’s teachings because ever since he started teaching us, I can see the auras of people. For example, the one of a natural-born is some kind of beige, don’t ask me why. But Sammy here has the same beige though it seems a bit strange since it has black streaks mixed into it, not much but enough to be noticeable. Oh, and there is also a violet-brown in his aura, but I think that is because he’s a hunter since Dean has the same in his.”

He didn’t miss the strange looks Dean and Sam exchanged.

“That’s quite interesting. Would you mind meeting with me?”

“Not at all but you would have to come to Vegas. Hey Sammy, how long ’til we reach Vegas?”

“Four and a half hours at least.”

“You heard that?”

“Yes I’ll be there then, where do we meet?” Bobby asked.

“When you reach the city look for a white rabbit and follow it. Since you're a hunter to you should be able to find it. Otherwise, we will call you again after we arrived ourselves.”

“Wait you mean the ‘Rabbit Hole’? Why don’t you say so?”

“Now I'm honestly questioning the knowledge of the two muttonheads. How comes it that you know about this place, but they don’t?”

“Say what?”

“Yes, Sammy looked at me like a fish when I mentioned it.”

“Okay, they will have to explain that to me when we meet. See you there and don’t get shot.”

“Oh I think the threat of mutating the Impala back into a Helene Fischer fan car is preventing that quite effectively” Harry grinned.

“You didn’t, did you?” it seems that he knew who the woman is.

“Loki is my friend so you can bet that I did. Dean’s face when he realised what kind of music she makes…hilarious” Bobby started to laugh while Dean shot him glares that could have killed.

“That’s something I would have liked to see, what a pity. Well, I have to go now, see you in Vegas then.”

“Bye.”
Harry gave the phone back to Dean. Sam who continued driving after the shock of the revelation wore off watched him through the rear mirror.

“So you think I'm a…what did you call it? Natural-born? Would you mind explaining what that is?” he suddenly asked after a few miles of complete silence.

Harry exhaled before starting to explain. “It’s quite self-explanatory. A natural-born witch or wizard is a person born with the ability to wield magic, no demon deal involved. Did you never do anything inexplicable when under strong emotions or showed any sign of an ability you shouldn’t have as a normal person?”

Dean and Sam again looked at each other.

“Well it started some time ago now that I suddenly had premonitions, but we thought that…” he didn’t know whether he should tell this an eleven years old boy but as he told Dean earlier, he had the feeling that said boy could give them some long overdue answers, so he continued. “We got to know that some demon called Azazel fed me his blood when I was six months old.”

He carefully watched the reaction Harry would give upon this revelation, but he never would have thought about this.

Harry rose an eyebrow before starting to snicker. “That actually explains a lot.”

Sam expected something in the line of fright up to outright panic upon his revelation that some demon tainted him with his blood but not that the boy would laugh about it. He didn’t doubt that the boy knew exactly what that meant.

“You're crazy…” Dean snorted.

“Well sometimes it really helps to be crazy” Harry grinned. “Especially around Lo. But to you Sammy, Lo told me quite a lot about demons. One thing is that they seem to be able to control the magic of a witch or wizard when they feed them their blood. You know like suppressing or boosting their abilities. If you want I can ask Lo whether he can get rid of that taint.”

Sam looked at Dean not knowing what to make out of it. “I don’t know whether this is a good idea. Loki and we are not exactly on speaking terms as you might have noticed.”

“Pff, only because you can’t see it, it doesn’t mean that he doesn’t like or trust you” he shook his head while looking out of the window.

“Loki trusting us? It’s more likely that hell freezes over…” Dean snorted.

“Do you really think that I would be here otherwise?”

“Perhaps you are showing a bit too much trust in that pagan god…” Sam added.

“I really should have taken a taxi” Harry muttered. “Do you remember what Lo said about me meeting with my parents for the first time?” Dean and Sam nodded. “They are dead…”

Harry really started to question Sam’s ability to drive after the second full stop of the day.

“Damned Sammy can’t you drive properly?” Harry exclaimed.

“Say what?” Sam looked at him incredulously.

“You're driving like a madman…”
“That’s not what I meant. What was that about your parents?”

“They are dead for over ten years now, you can ask Bobby if you don’t believe me, and yes Lo and I actually broke into heaven to meet them. On top of that Lo saved my life three times in the last four months so do you still think that I’m overly trustful?” Harry shot them a glare that clearly told them what he thought about that matter.
Chapter 14: Down the Rabbit Hole

The rest of the drive was quite uneventful. Sam asked Harry several more questions about natural-born. When Harry mentioned Hogwarts Sam asked even more questions. Dean in the meantime slept in his seat.

“Wait, did you just say that Loki is teaching?” Sam asked in absolute disbelief.

“Sure, he is one of the best teachers. The entire class had top marks in the test before the Christmas holidays and that even though he only had half the time to teach us everything. On top of that, he also uses the time to teach us about the supernatural all over the world. If he didn’t teach us we would be taught by the most boring ghost in existence” Harry huffed.

“A ghost…? As a teacher?” Sam didn’t know what to think anymore. This whole new world turned his upside down.

“Yes, ghost. We have quite a few ghosts at Hogwarts, and no they don’t go insane. This was actually how Loki became our teacher in the first place after mourning about the fact that he couldn’t prank Binns…our former teacher” he added after seeing the questioning look on Sam.

After that Harry explained to Sam what Loki told him in the first history class. The entire time it took to get to Vegas they talked about several things regarding magic. Finally, they reached the city, and as if he knew it Dean woke up.

“So we are in Vegas now. Where to?” Sam asked while Harry looked out of the window and for any sign of white rabbits.

When he finally spotted one he answered. “Can you see that white rabbit graffiti over there?”

“Yes.”

“Follow it.”

Sam did as he was said and a short time later they stood in some deserted area. It was a factory complex that looked like it was abandoned a long time ago. Only a few cars parked there which seemed a bit odd. Especially the five hundred thousand dollars Porsche looked out of place.

“Are you sure that we are right here?” Dean asked sceptically.

“Quite. I can see the magic radiating from that door over there” Harry said while he got out of the car. He walked up to said door when he noticed that the Winchesters weren’t following him but instead rumoured in the rear trunk of the car. So he turned around and walked up to them instead. Both were sorting some weapons and put them in a large bag.

“You don’t need them. As far as I understood Lo you wouldn’t even be able to take the guns with you.”

“Say what? I'm not going into some unknown building filled with supernatural beings unarmed”
Dean got her up.

“Then take some knives with you. Guns are not allowed, only wands and knives.”

The brothers started to repack their bag. Harry shrugged while walking back to the door. He didn’t want to know what they packed. By warning them, he did his duty, and in the end, it wasn’t his problem should they bring guns with them. He waited a few minutes until Sam and Dean were finished and walked up to him. Together they walked into the building.

They all stopped dead in their track. Inside it was much different than what it looked from the outside. Though Harry shouldn’t be so surprised with knowing Diagon Alley. However, this was entirely different. He now knew what Loki meant with modern and totally awesome.

They stood in the entrance of a vast building. It was brightly lit, and the floors and walls were in a mixture of beige and deep red. In front of them was a security point and behind that, they could see many shops along a hallway which seemed to lead to a round central plaza. It was much like those modern shopping malls. The shops all had large glass fronts behind which they showed their best products. It seemed that they stood in the section for sports.

The three went to the security checkpoint and had their luggage checked. It seemed that the Winchesters took his advice to heart and only took knives with them.

“Welcome to the Rabbit Hole. Fights are not allowed in here. Should you want to fight or duel someone, please use the facilities in the basement. Any violation of this rule ends in harsh punishment and being expelled from here. I wish you a nice day,” the security officer told them.

Harry nodded as well as Sam. Only Dean looked a bit sour. They walked further into the mall when suddenly Sam shouted.

“Bobby, nice to see you. Strange I didn’t see your car outside. How did you get here?” Sam rambled excitedly.

Bobby grunted. “I didn’t get here from Vegas but from Milwaukee. Was much closer to where I was.”

That was when Harry face-palmed. “I should have known. This entire thing is in a pocket-dimension connected to several cities through portals.”

Bobby looked at him astonished. “You know a lot, boy. Harry Potter, I assume? I’m Robert Singer, but everyone just calls me Bobby.”

“Yes sir, nice to meet you” he shook his hand. “And to what I know…let’s just say that Lo is a never-ending well of knowledge. He told me that he created a pocket dimension where he has his house after I caught him disappearing one night. I assumed that this here is much the same.”

“We should talk later more, lad, but I assume you want to do shopping first” Bobby laughed upon seeing the excitement in Harry.

They all walked to the plaza in the centre where they got to see the full extension of the building. It was a four-story building plus the basement the security officer mentioned.

On the ground floor reached four hallways from the central plaza connected with two more concentric corridors along which the shops where located. Each quarter was dedicated to another field of shops so you could find here next to sports also weapons (wands and other foci included), clothes and everyday stuff.
The first-floor layout was much the same. Located here were potions and rituals, magical amulets and jewels, electronics (yes the assumption that electronics don’t work in heavily warded areas is nonsense if you knew how to enchant them) and furniture.

On the second floor was one huge bookshop. When Sam saw that he nearly bolted for the next elevator to get there much to Harry’s amusement.

The third and last floor was some kind of botanic garden where you could buy any plant you could think of. This was a floor Harry would definitely visit later to see whether he could find something for Neville.

Above that all spread a glass dome behind which an artificial sun shone, at least Harry assumed that it was fake.

The basement though seemed to hold many different areas for sports and other activities according to an information panel next to the elevators.

“I know where I want to go first” Harry exclaimed before walking down one of the hallways straight to the weapon shops.

“Weapons? Aren’t you a bit young, Harry?” Sam asked with concern in his voice.

“Sammy, Sammy, Sammy, I wield a weapon far more dangerous than any gun or knife for about four months now, and you think me too young?” Harry laughed. “Besides that, I'm not looking for a gun but magical foci and perhaps a few knives.”

With that, he walked to a large shop that sold right what he wanted, wands and other foci. Sam followed him out of curiosity.

Dean was more interested in the shop opposite of that they entered which sold guns and other fire weapons. “You two have fun with your hocus pocus. I go where the real weapons are” with that he entered the gun shop. Bobby chuckled and went with Dean.

“Good day and welcome to Greywood’s Magical Emporium, I'm Ms Greywood. How may I help you?” the woman behind the desk greeted upon their entering.

“Hello, he here needs a wand and perhaps a focus. Is there a way to find out to which way of focusing his magic he is inclined to?”

“Sure we have a way to test that. If you would follow me please” the woman turned around and went through a door on the side.

Sam looked a bit helpless at Harry. “Wand? Focus? The way of focusing magic? he didn’t know what he wanted to know first.

“Come on” Harry dragged him through the door. “There are three different methods of focusing magic. Through a focus like a wand, hand magic which I used to colour you brother’s car and mind magic which is purely through intention. We need to know which you are inclined to.”

Sam’s head was buzzing, but he did as he was asked. This day couldn’t become crazier than it already was. Not only did he learn that he was a natural-born wizard instead of some kind of abomination but now an eleven years old boy dragged him around to find out how to harness this ability.

When they stepped through the door, they found themselves in a small room with a workbench and
lots of tools. The woman grabbed a sphere and turned back around to them.

“This sphere will scan your magical core and then shine in a colour which indicates how you best focus your magic. Please just hold it.”

Sam took the sphere. For a few seconds nothing happened, but then suddenly it glowed in a mixture of green and blue.

“What do these colours mean?” Sam looked at the sphere in open curiosity.

“Green is the colour for Focus based channelling while blue stands for mind based channelling. It is quite rare that someone is naturally inclined to two forms” the employee explained.

“Would you mind if I try it too?” Harry asked upon which she shook her head. So he took the sphere from Sam. First, nothing happened but suddenly it glowed in three different colours, blue and green like Sam’s but added to it was also red. The woman looked at him with wide eyes.

“Okay, this is rare. To be honest, I don’t know any other human which is inclined to all three forms.”

“Being the only one with doing something impossible seems to be my thing” Harry growled. Both adults looked at him confused. “I survived something that is deemed to be not survivable.”

Upon that the eyes of the woman went wide. “Harry Potter?” she asked astonished.

“It seems that I’m not only known in Britain” he had hoped that at least here he would have peace from all the fans. “But we are here for business. As I said he’ll need a wand and are there perhaps foci to support hand and mind magic?”

“Sure, sure” she was back to her original composure and walked back to the counter in the shop. Rummaging in it she produced two tablets, one with different woods while the other hold different materials suitable for wand cores. “For the wand, we need to determine which wood and core suit you the best. Just hold out your hand over them and pick the one that draws you to it.”

Sam did as he was told and scanned first the wood and then the core materials. In the meantime, the employee explained about supporting foci.

“For hand magic, most people prefer either a ring or a bracelet. For this various metals and gems can be used. For mind magic, on the other hand, you can use either a necklace or a tiara. The same materials apply.”

In the meantime, Sam was finished with the selection for his wand. He ended up with Holly as wood and hellhound fur and the feather of a heavenly owl for the core.

“Okay, now it is official. You two were my most unconventional customers. I never had to fashion a wand with a core so oppositional like yours. It will be quite a challenge” Greywood said with a smile.

Sam, on the other hand, was quite troubled. Hellhound fur he could explain through the demon taint but the feather of a heavenly owl?

“What is a heavenly owl anyway, I never heard of it” he enquired.

“A heavenly owl is quite rare, and I can only offer them as a core material because I know someone who owns them. They are pure white and are said to be the familiars of angels, though this is unconfirmed. What is confirmed is that they are even purer than phoenixes and unicorns. Because of
that, it is so unusual that your second core material is hellhound fur. I never thought that those two would ever come together in one wand.”

“Aaaand another thing I have to ask Lo. The list is getting quite long” Harry mourned while picking up one of the wand woods the woman offered. Greywood rose an eyebrow.

“That is an unusual wood you picked there. Dogwood, it is mostly found around people with a trickster nature. I assume you already own a wand, may I ask with which properties?”

“Holly and phoenix feather but I don’t think it is that good a match. You know I'm from England and the only wandmaker Ollivander uses only so much woods and three cores. Here see for yourself” he grabbed into his bag and pulled out his wand before giving it to her.

She looked at it from every angle before putting it on her counter. “You're right this is a bad suit for you. Do you perhaps want a new one too?”

Harry thought about it. Ever since he started learning from Loki, he used hand magic but on the other side who knew when a wand might come in handy and better be equipped with one that suited him than that thing he got from Ollivander. So he nodded.

Since he already had his wand wood, he only needed the core. It took him about three more minutes to find it, Thestral hair, Demiguise fur and Pixie hair.

“Quite the trickster are you?” Greywood laughed. The dogwood and Pixie hair stood for mischief while the Demiguise would make sure that no one other than the owner could see the wand. There was a reason that said fur was also used to craft invisibility cloaks.

“Don’t ask” Sam growled while Harry mustered his best innocence face.

“Before we get distracted any further. Foci for the mind and hand magic” he piped.

Greywood nodded while putting the wand materials away before producing two new tablets with metals and gems. “Same procedure like with the wands.”

In the end, Sam got a necklace of silver with a chalcedony pendant, and Harry had a platinum ring with heliotropes around it.

“Okay so now that we have the materials for your foci is there anything else you need?”

“He will also need a wand holster” Harry pointed at Sam.

“Which material?”

“Dragonhide, Antipodean Opaleye if possible.”

“Sure, will be done. I would ask you to come back in about an hour. Everything should be ready by then” Harry didn’t even ask what all that would cost he had the credit card from Loki and when the pagan said it was one without limits he didn’t doubt that it was.

Sam and Harry nodded and went out of the shop to see what Dean and Bobby were up to. On their way, Harry groaned. The entire ordeal took nearly one hour.

“I have one question” Sam suddenly asked. He continued upon Harry's questioning gaze. “If I understood you correctly you need for focus based magic something like a wand, a focus. But if you get a focus for hand magic, for example, doesn’t it become focus based magic then?” this was
something that buggered him ever since Harry mentioned the different methods.

Harry shook his head. “I can only repeat what Lo told me in that regard, but I understood it the way that with focus based magic the focus is mandatory and you can’t perform magic otherwise. But a focus for hand magic has only a supporting function, like adding more strength to your spell other than that it has no purpose and you could do as well without it. It is I think like when you perform a ritual as a wand using wizard. You have added foci in this case like rune stones, but the primary focus is what you normally use, your wand. I hope you understand what I mean otherwise you have to ask Lo I fear.”

“I think I understand, but perhaps they have some books on that matter here” Sam didn’t like the thought of asking Loki for anything. It was enough that Harry planned on asking him about the demon taint of his magical core. Blimey, now he admitted to himself that he inherited magic. What comes next? Lucifer dancing in a tutu in front of him? Had he known that this thought might come true in not too distant future…

They together entered the shop Dean went in earlier only to be greeted by a Dean who looked like Christmas came early.

“Sam look. They have weapons enchanted so that they reload themselves automatically. You just put the ammo you want to use into the pouch that comes with them, and you never have to worry about missing a beat again because you have to reload.”

“Fifteen thousand Dollars? Heaven, they are expensive” Sam exclaimed incredulously upon seeing the price tag.

“Probably because of the enchantments” Harry mused while looking around. There was even an enhanced version with a pouch that could hold three different types of ammo in separate compartments. You then could choose at the weapon from which section you want to draw the ammo. This weapon cost twenty-five thousand Dollars. That was when he got an evil idea which not only would test whether the credit card was indeed without limits but also was a perfect way for him to get back at Loki for dropping him so unceremoniously with those two jerks.

“Hey you two idiots, why don’t you choose two weapons each you want to have. I pay” he said with a devilish grin that let the others shiver.

“And an eleven years old boy carries around enough money to not only buy one of those” Dean said pointing at the gun before him. “But four?”

“I got a credit card without limits from Lo for Christmas so technically he is paying” Harry shrugged. Hearing that the brothers had no more restrictions. In the end, they both chose a shotgun each and Dean a pistol while Sam wanted an MP that could switch between single shot and fully automatic. All weapons had the improved self-reloading charm as well as self-cleaning and anti-jamming spells. Together with ammo that would last more than a lifetime: silver bullets, rock salt, demon killing bullets (yes it seems that the infamous colt wasn’t what made it demon killing but the ammo)…you can name it, Harry had to pay over one hundred thousand dollars, but he didn’t care.

The vendor packed everything up in a box and sealed it.

“Since guns are not allowed in the Rabbit Hole I have to seal this crate. The seal will automatically come off once you leave or enter the shooting range in the basement” he explained, but the brothers didn’t really care. They were over the moon about the new weapons even if they couldn’t use them immediately.
Now that they were finished they all went into another shop that sold closed combat weapons. Here mostly Harry bought things. He got five throwing knives despite not knowing how to use them, but that would change soon, as well as two daggers all enchanted to stay sharp and able to kill everything including demons. Sam and Dean also got some new knives again on Loki's expense.

After that, they shortly went back to the wand shop to fetch their stuff, and now they sat at a café on the central plaza.

“I think I saw a hotel on the information panel. Perhaps I should rent a room there for the rest of my holidays” Harry mused.

“Then we will stay with you” Sam stated matter-of-factly which earned him a confused look from Dean. “I'm not leaving him here alone and see it that way, free holidays.”

Sam had him with the free holiday statement. Dean wasn’t one to discard something free. Bobby, however, had to leave them since work was calling.
Chapter 15: Winchester Luck

True to their word they booked a room in the hotel, however, calling it a apartment would be distracting from what it really was, a house on a small island with palm trees and all. Upon Dean’s shocked question about how that was possible, the receptionist explained that every “room” they have is, in reality, a pocket dimension each with a different setting from old castles to even one simulating the moon. Hearing that Dean wanted to get that room but Harry couldn’t be convinced and so he had to accept the beach house. On the other hand, this wasn’t that bad either because right at the moment he was lying on an air mattress sleeping and bobbing up and down in the waves. Sam and Harry were contently sitting under the palm trees reading books, Sam a book with useful spells and Harry a novel.

It had been five days now that they were at the Rabbit Hole and all three were quite content with how life was at the moment. The first day they didn’t do much more than relaxing as well as the next day. After that, they did some more shopping mainly for books. Harry also went to the fourth floor where they sold the plants where he found a very rare one for Neville and let it be delivered to him directly. Would he have to take care for it…let’s just say it wouldn’t have survived the first day.

Harry also started to teach Sam some magic however it was only some easy stuff like the levitation charm or minor hexes because he didn’t know much more. That brought up a question from Sam.

“I wonder, this ball at the wand shop showed that you could also use mind magic” Sam still couldn’t believe that he talked about magic without the need to kill some demon, as it was normally the case. “Why didn’t you get a focus for that too?”

“Because I rarely use it. Sure, I also train it so that I can use it in case of an emergency but other than that, it is much too exhausting in my opinion. To use it you need an extreme amount of concentration, and for the everyday use it is too much for my liking. I stay with hand magic” he shrugged.

They also made a tour to the basement of the Rabbit Hole to see what could be found there. The entire thing was like a giant adventure park with different zones for different activities. You could find there everything from a shooting ranch, where Dean instantly went to test their new weapons, to a vast area for something akin to paintball.

Though there you not only could use shooting weapons but also knives or wands. The entire equipment was enchanted that for example if you used a wand, not the real spell you cast would be used but converted into a painting spell that indicated the severity of the spell. So in case you would use the killing curse for example, not the real curse would leave the wand but a charm that would paint the target red if hit, indicating that the other would be dead.

Besides that, they also had things like broom racing which Harry instantly tried out. He only came out third, but for his first try, it was quite good.

The holidays couldn’t have been any better though Harry quickly got to know why Loki always whined about the “Winchester luck” as he called it. There were only three days left, and Loki didn’t show up yet, but Harry wasn’t overly concerned about it. The pagan god would show up soon
enough. Harry was just getting ready in his room to swim some when suddenly the door to his room opened, and a blond woman entered.

“Oh, wrong room,” she said and was just to leave the room when she became aware of who was the occupant of the room. In an instant, she was across the room and pinning Harry to the wall a knife at his throat. “Harry Potter, I would never have dreamt to see you here in America. You know there are quite a few demons or others who would pay a nice price to get you in their hands,” she said with a malicious grin. “First and foremost Lilith. You know she loves to possess children.”

Loki just ported from America all the way back to Hogwarts and into the first year Gryffindor dorms. Walking over to the bed of that redhead, he found the individual he was looking for sleeping at the end of the bed. Quickly placing a stunner on it, he picked it up and ported over to the Ministry of Magic. There he went to the head of the DMLE after giving the receptionist in the entrance hall a near panic attack. Was it his fault that they assumed the wrong reason for him coming to them?

Now he was entering the office of Amelia Bones, head of the DMLE.

“Loki, what do you want here? If you're here to produce chaos I have to tell you that the Unspeakables always look for new…test subjects for their developments,” she said without a greeting observing him. However, she was confused as to why he was carrying a rat.

It seemed that she got warned by the reception. “As much as I would like to play with your Department of Mysteries I'm not here for that” with that, he dropped the rat unceremoniously on the floor before snapping with his finger. In front of them, the rat transformed back into a man. “I got to know that your predecessor imprisoned one of my followers without any proof not to mention a trial.”

“Is that…” she looked at the man on the floor in disbelieve.

“Peter Pettigrew aka Wormtail, betrayer of the Potter family, the murder of twelve non-magicals and unregistered Animagus” he waved his hand towards said man to lift the stunner.

Pettigrew instantly started to look around confused, but once he recognised his surrounding, he paled drastically. “How? Why?” he stammered.

“Because you pissed off the wrong person, traitor” Loki growled.

Wormtail’s head snapped towards Loki before he tried to transform back into a rat to get out of there. Loki, on the other hand, was utterly unimpressed by that and snapped with his fingers. That let the Animagus panic entirely because he couldn’t transform anymore.

“What did you do?” he squeaked.

“I blocked your magic. Wouldn’t want you to escape” Loki snickered with a malicious glee in his eyes.

“W-who are you?” in a panic he looked around trying to find another way out.
“Loki.”

Pettigrew gulped visibly knowing that he was screwed. He knew very well about the pagan god since his “friends” were devoted followers of him. Bones watched this entire thing with much interest.

“I would never have thought that one day one of your kind would walk into my office like that and deliver me the proof to the innocence of an Azkaban prisoner” she chuckled. The Ministry was well aware that the pagan gods were real since they had to deal with them from time to time. However lately confrontations between them became quite rare, at least in Europe.

“Would it have been any other deity or not concerned one of my followers you would be right,” Loki simply replied

“But why after all this time? I mean the whole thing happened over ten years ago,” she inquired trying to get as many information about Loki's motives as possible.

Loki sighed. “I got to know about all this only recently and only out of sheer luck or believe me I would have shown up much earlier” hadn’t he broken into heaven with Harry he perhaps never would have gotten to know about it.

“I'll get Sirius Black retrieved from Azkaban immediately and set up a trial. However the trial might take a few days since many things have to be prepared for it,” Bones explained.

“As long as you get him out of that hell hole as quickly as possible…” he knew very well what those soul-sucking demons were capable of. It was laughable that the Brits thought they could control them but that wasn’t his problem. He only cared about Black, and that would be taken care of soon.

It was a few days later, and the trial of Sirius Black just finished. Loki who followed the entire thing with interest to make sure that everything went as it should, now leaned against the wall right next to the door to courtroom number ten where the trial took place. He waited for Black finally to come out. A few minutes later said man walked through the door.

“Thank Loki that I'm finally free,” he sighed in relieve.

Loki chuckled. “You're right, you should thank me. I got you out after all.”

Sirius spun on the spot so quickly that he got dizzy and had to take a few seconds to see clearly again before eying the man in front of him critically. “Loki?” he questioned carefully.

“In flesh and blood”Sirius' eyes widened comically upon that, and he looked like a fish out of the water with how he opened and closed his mouth. “Though I have to apologise to you.”

“Why? What for?” Sirius was baffled. Why would the deity have to apologise to him?

“I should have known…should have checked you're alright” he shook his head.

“How could you have known? I mean even you can’t know everything” his confusion only grew.
“True. However I claim to care for my followers and then I don’t even check on you after what happened. No, what happened to you is at least partly my fault” Loki sighed. “But that is the past, and I assume that you very much would like to catch up with the present. What do you think about a good meal while we talk?”

“I could kill for a good meal,” Sirius moaned.

Just at that moment, Bones left the courtroom. “Ah Loki, good that I caught you before you left. I wanted to ask you whether you intend to stay longer in Britain or not” she enquired.

“At the moment I’m staying at Hogwarts though this shan’t be of your concern and if you worry about the children I think that Professor McGonagall can confirm you that I behave myself…mostly” he replied with a snicker. “As I already told her I’m not a monster and I would never hurt children.”

“Should I get to hear anything happening at Hogwarts…as I mentioned a few days ago the Unspeakables always look for new test subjects” bones gave him a stern glare.

Loki laughed before taking Sirius’ hand and teleporting them to a restaurant he knew served excellent meals.

“Where are we?” Sirius asked confused looking around.

“France, Côte d’Azur to be precise. They have this little restaurant here…you’ll love it” with that Loki set into motion and walked over to a small house that had tables outside at one he sat down with a nice view over the bay the village was located at. Since it was a nice and relatively warm day, it was possible to sit outside. “So ask your questions.”

“Where is Harry? Is he okay?” Sirius blurted out the first of the thousand questions he had in mind.

“Don’t worry he is in good hands. At the moment he is on holiday in America and staying with two friends of mine. If you want we can visit them tomorrow,” Loki replied.

“Why tomorrow and not today?” right now Sirius looked a bit like a beaten puppy.

“Sirius, you need a good night of sleep as well as a few new clothes first not to mention a proper bath or do you want to scare off your godson?” Loki snickered. It wasn’t that Sirius was dirty anymore or looked like wearing rags, but he also was far from looking like an average person. Only Loki’s illusions kept the peasants from giving him a wide berth.

Sirius blushed upon that lowering his head knowing perfectly well that Loki was right. He was released from prison only a few hours ago after all.

“So you accompany my godson?” he inquired.

“Yes, I attend school together with him all the while giving the teachers some headache.”

After that, he told Sirius all about what happened the last months, what they did and whom they pranked. Sirius found it hilarious how they pranked the little blond ponce Malfoy but on the other hand was quite worried how a full-grown mountain troll could get into the school. Therefore, he was glad that Loki took it upon himself to teach Harry how to defend himself in case something like that happened again. All the while, they enjoyed the fabulous meal the waiter served some time ago. Loki was quite content answering every question Sirius had not knowing that quite soon the infamous Winchester Luck would strike again.
Chapter 16: The Rise and Fall of Demon Bitches

For Loki and Sirius, it was the next day, Loki had to say that after a long bath and a good night’s sleep Sirius looked completely different. Sure, he was still far too thin but he wasn’t as pale anymore, and he looked more like the Lord of Black he was than some homeless stray. Nonetheless, they would have to go buying a new wardrobe for the man since he had nothing to wear than what Loki conjured up for him.

They were just enjoying breakfast or more lunch since Sirius slept until one in the afternoon when Loki suddenly felt that Harry was in danger.

“Is something wrong?” Sirius asked in concern upon seeing Loki’s strange expression and tensing up. “Is Harry alright?”

“I don’t know, but I have to go. Don’t worry I’ll be right back” Loki answered absently.

Without waiting for a reply, he teleported straight into the room he knew was Harry's and hid in a corner concealing himself to assess the situation first. He didn’t want to make the situation worse after all. Standing in the shadows, he observed what happened in the room.

A blond woman who was apparently a demon pressed Harry against the wall. Harry stood there the knife pressed against his throat unpleasantly but not hard enough that it actually cut into his skin and drew blood. It was to his own curiosity that he kept his calm the entire time, neither fear nor panic raising its ugly head.

“You're making a big mistake,” Harry drawled out.

“Ah yes? You don’t seem to know who I am human…what I am and what I am capable of” the blond woman said in a taunting voice her eyes flashing black before she laughed sadistically.

“Some demon obviously but you know what,” he said making a few movements with his hand unknown by the woman when she suddenly had a surprised expression on her face before sinking motionless to the floor. “I have a knife able to kill your kind,” Harry added absently rubbing his throat where only seconds earlier the knife had been. He had levitated one of the knives he bought on his first day at the Rabbit Hole which now lay on the table in his room and with a flick of his hand rammed it straight into the neck of the demon killing her instantly. Right now, he was glad that he bought them.

Just at that moment, Sam came rushing into his room concern written all over his face.

“Ruby…Harry, what happened here?” he asked with a gaze on the dead demon who had a knife sticking in her neck blood slowly dripping off the wound and pooling beneath her. “Are you alright?”

“Yes…” but he suddenly started to tremble and would have fallen onto the floor if not for Sam’s
quick reaction. Sam guided him carefully to the bed where they both sat down. It seems that now that
the danger was over he started to realise fully what happened and what he did. Sam knew from his
own experience that the first time you took someone’s life as dangerous as said person might be…it
changed you, especially at such an age.

“What happened here? Did you kill Ruby?” he asked cautiously.

“I just wanted to get changed for some swimming when she suddenly burst into my room. She just
wanted to leave again when she attacked me and pinned me to the wall,” he said with a shaking
voice. “She bragged that there are demons who would like to get me in their hands especially Lilith”
he shuddered upon the thought of what the woman…Ruby said that other demon would do to him.
“She…I…” his voice failed.

Sam placed an arm around Harry and pulled him towards him so that the boy leaned comfortably
against his side. “It is okay” he started so rub soothingly over his back when he felt it. “Harry…
where did you get those scars from?” he asked slowly.

Harry instantly stiffened and with one smooth move got as far away from Sam as possible without
actually standing up from the bed. Thanks to the entire thing with Ruby, he completely forgot that he
had no shirt on. He looked at Sam panic rising within him.

“Harry…” Sam said in a soothing tone wanting to take the boys hand, but he only jumped up and
sped over to his shirt before quickly donning it.

“P-please…don’t tell Loki about it” his voice now trembled, even more, panic tainting it.

“Tell me what?” Loki finally stepped out of the shadow he stood in for the last ten minutes. “That
you were abused?” he growled lowly, but it made matters only worse.

Harry stared at him wide-eyed assuming that the growling was directed at him before turning around,
running into the bathroom and shutting the door behind him. There he sank to the floor the head on
the knees and started to cry. It was just too much for him at the moment. Loki finally saw how weak
he in reality was and that the strength and fearlessness he displayed was only a façade. Now he
would leave and together with him then the twins, Neville, hell even Sam and Dean. He would be
alone…again. Especially the twins would never forgive him that Loki left because he wasn’t strong
enough.

Outside in the bedroom, Sam threw Loki a look that said more than a thousand words. “If you don’t
sort this out I swear to god…” Loki rolled his eyes upon Sam’s choice of words but had to admit that
he was right. He had to get that right and quickly.

So he walked over to the bathroom door. “Harry?” he asked in a soothing tone, but all that he could
hear was Harry’s sobbing. With a sigh he teleported into the bathroom seeing Harry sitting at the
door he crouched down opposite of him.

“Go away. You don’t like me anymore anyway” he said between sobs.

“Harry…why would I not like you?” he enquired.

“Because I’m weak. I’m not the strong boy everyone expects me to be…”

Loki sighed. “You are far from weak, never ever think that. Just a few minutes ago, you defeated a
demon singlehandedly where seasoned hunters would have failed. Then there is the instance where
you saved your friend’s…Neville’s life by risking your own health.”
Now Harry looked at him blinking owlishly.

“I assume that you didn’t know any other life than that with those who did this to you before you came to Hogwarts?” Harry nodded. “How were you supposed to do anything against it? You’re eleven Harry. Even adults would be unable to do anything after having to live such a life for so long. There is nothing wrong with it” he tried to explain. He didn’t know much about human psychology but one thing he knew, the fault might lay with everyone else especially his tormentors but definitely not with Harry.

“But I could…I should…” he didn’t know what to say.

“Harry, come here” Loki held out his arms expectantly. Harry blinked a few times before throwing himself at Loki, which let them both land on the floor upon which Loki chuckled lowly. Loki placed his arms around Harry, and they both lay there not moving for a few minutes until Harry calmed down completely. It seemed that Harry needed this having been denied it for so long…too long.

“You should get to know that I knew about it ever since the very first time I saw you, or at least I had my suspicion.”

He went with his right hand under Harry’s shirt and pushed his magic into it healing the scars while continuing to talk. Harry smiled feeling the warm and soothing magic doing its work.

“The only reason why I didn’t say anything was in respect of your privacy and in the hope that you would come to me on your own.”

“So you don’t leave?” Harry asked with so much hope in his voice that it hurt Loki hearing it.

“No, I won’t leave and don’t worry you don’t have to be strong all the time. Just be yourself no matter what others think or expect of you and whatever problem you might have I will always have an open ear for you. Now do you want to tell me who did this to you or do I have to find out for myself?”

“You won’t leave it alone, would you?”

“No” Harry sighed. “Harry, this is nothing that is in any way excusable. Actually, I can’t understand how a family can treat each other in such a way…the family should love and help each other and not fight or torture…” now his voice was tainted with so much hurt that Harry asked himself what happened.

“You're talking out of experience,” it wasn’t a question but a statement.

“My brothers…I left home because they blew a minor disagreement out of proportion,” Loki shook his head to ban those thoughts. “However that’s of no concern right now. What is it? Do you tell me?”

After taking another deep breath, Harry started to talk. “It was my aunt, uncle and cousin but mostly my uncle and aunt. Every time I did something, not the way they wanted, not fast enough or just because of some unknown reason they beat me,” Loki growled hearing that. “They live in Privet Drive No. 4, Little Whinging” Harry knew very well that it didn’t matter whether he told Loki or not. He would find them either way.

“Where am I supposed to go when you're through with them?” it was strange for him but telling Loki about what happened and knowing that he would do something about his relatives helped. It let him see what they really were…monsters, which was also a reason he told him where to find them. Nevertheless, it was the only place he knew, since he couldn’t stay at Hogwarts all year. He asked
Dumbledore about it at the beginning of the year, but the man outright declined his request.

Upon that, Loki chuckled lowly. “Do you really think there is no one out there who would offer you a place to stay or that I would leave you without a home for that matter? Even if I would, which is not the case by the way; there are always Neville and the twins. Heaven, I think even Hermione would let you stay with her should you ask, not to mention Sam and Dean.”

“I doubt that Sam and Dean would keep up with me if I didn’t pay for their holidays,” Harry snorted.

“So Sam didn’t follow you the entire time after I left to make sure you're alright?” Loki enquired.

“Yes but only because I said something of interest to him or because I was something they didn’t understand since they never met a natural-born wizard before. They simply deemed me a threat they had to keep an eye on” he shook his head.

“His words if I remember correctly were ‘Dean, do you really think that I let an eleven years old boy run around alone?’ True, Dean deemed you a threat at first, but I highly doubt he would have attacked you. In this regard, he is all bark and no bite, I mean you never hurt anyone, and he knows that” Loki repeated in a quite convincing imitation of Sam. Now Harry who up to now lay contently on Loki’s chest sat up to look at him in disbelief. “Did you think I would just leave without making sure that you wouldn’t come to harm?”

“You're right…it’s just…”

Now Loki also sat up. “I know that with what you have been through already it is hard to trust someone but with time you’ll learn that your fears are baseless at least concerning me. Until then just keep in mind that I would never let you get hurt, okay?” Harry nodded.

“Am I a bad person?” he suddenly asked after a few seconds of silence.

Loki looked at him surprised, not having anticipated that question.

“Why? Because you killed Ruby?” he nodded. “Harry, she was a demon who threatened to do things to you worse than death. I know that you're worried about the woman she possessed, but… let’s just say that this kind of demons are not very gentle with the people they take as a host and depending on how long she was possessed it was mercy what you did,” Loki explained adamantly.

“So I'm not evil because of it?”

“Heaven no. As long as you feel remorse about what you did, you're far from evil. You should only start to worry when such a happening doesn’t concern you anymore. Until then you're perfectly fine” Loki gave him another hug to reassure him. “Are you alright?” Harry simply nodded as a reply. “Good. I think we should get out of here soon or I fear that Sam will storm in to see whether you're okay” Loki explained adamantly.

With that, they both got up and left the bathroom. Sam instantly came over worried about Harry. Once back in the bedroom Loki gave him a reassuring smile. “I'll be back soon; there are a few things I have to take care of, as well as a surprise for you. You two muttonheads take care of him and make sure he is safe,” he added with a glare at Sam and Dean.

He just wanted to leave the bedroom through the door when he was stopped by Dean who stood in the doorframe having been filled in by Sam.

“Give them hell,” Dean stated with a glare that told Loki how serious he was. He looked him straight into the eyes before nodding and vanishing. There might be only a very few things over which the
Winchester brothers would agree with Loki, but that child abuse was inexcusable was one of them.

Shortly after that, the security personnel of the Rabbit Hole came to investigate what happened. They also took a copy of Harry's memories of the attack before giving him his knife back and closing the case as self-defence. He even received compensation of one hundred Galleons. Though Harry thought that it was more a bribe, to keep him quiet since an attack would be bad publicity but Harry didn’t mind. The entire time Sam stayed at his side reassuring him and making sure that he was alright.

Since Harry entered their life, Sam saw in him a little brother he would protect especially since it was his fault that Ruby was there, to begin with. It still irked him that he had trusted that…bitch but once Harry told him how she talked about Lilith not to mention seeing the memories he asked himself how he could have been so blind…so stupid.

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**At Privet Drive**

Loki stood on the opposite side of the street from Privet Drive No. 4 glaring at the house in question with a gaze that could only be described as unadulterated hate. He stood there for about five minutes when suddenly another man appeared next to him. Said man was a bit shorter than Loki with raven black hair and wearing a black made-to-measure suit with a blood-red tie.

“Crowley” Loki drawled out.

“Loki…what do you want? Why did you drag me to this all the same looking and sickeningly boring suburban hell?” Crowley snarled.

“The inhabitants of house No. 4. I want you to make a deal with them. Over what I don’t care as long as it doesn’t involve their nephew” Loki said without any explanation. He didn’t care that he asked a favour of a demon.

Crowley looked at him in surprise. Sure, they met a few times before and also did some small favours for each other if someone pissed them off enough, but Loki never asked something like THAT of him. He was about to condemn two souls to eternal torture.

“What do I get out of that deal?” he asked, always the businessman. “Other than two souls…the boy is too young.”

Loki had to agree with that. The boy was only eleven…a mere child and perhaps he would change once he got out of his parent's influence.

“Let’s just say that I would look the completely other direction should you happen to snatch a few more contracts from the neighbours and I would make sure that the Dursleys suffer from an unfortunate accident in the not too distant future” Loki grinned vindictively. Nothing in the standard Demon Contracts said that the contractors would live the entire ten years those contracts gave them before hellhounds would be sent after them. His grin would scare the living daylight out of a lower demon, and it reminded Crowley why he would never want to get on the wrong side of the pagan
god. He had gotten a taste of what Loki was capable of when really pissed of a few centuries ago and it had impressed him.

This request, however, piqued Crowley’s interest. Not only wanted Loki to make sure that those individuals went to hell he even wanted to speed things up. This was highly unusual for the usually annoyingly jovial trickster god. Not only that, but he also didn’t care if even more people would end up in hell.

“Okay, but I want to know what they did to piss you off so much that you would go such length to ensure that they end up in hell” he fished for information. This entire deal would prove to be very productive. In neighbourhoods like the one they were right at the moment, many people were open to the prospect of getting a tremendous amount of money or other things to make their otherwise dull lives more interesting over which they would make a deal.

“They hurt someone under my protection” was the curt answer. Not only the Dursleys but also the neighbours who all looked away and did nothing.

“The nephew I assume” one could say many things about Crowley, but he wasn’t stupid. Loki simply nodded. “How quickly will they suffer an accident?”

“Inform me once they made the deal, and within a month they will be where they belong” Loki looked at him expectantly.

After a moment, Crowley nodded and extended his hand towards Loki who instantly took it to seal the deal.

“I wonder what kind of accident they will suffer” Crowley mused.

“You know how creative I can get when it comes to that,” Loki laughed before he vanished.

Crowley, on the other hand, turned back towards Privet Drive No. 4. He had a few deals to make.

Once Loki was done at Privet Drive, he instantly went back to Sirius who was worried beyond comprehension about his godson. At the moment the man was pacing his kitchen at Grimmauld Place. Thankfully Loki had cleaned the house with a snap of his fingers and made it inhabitable again, but that was the last thing Sirius worried about at the moment. He sighed in relieve when Loki appeared but instantly tensed again when he saw his dark face.

“Loki, is everything okay? How is my godson? Is he hurt?” he blurted out the questions in rapid succession that it was questionable that Loki understood even one.

“Calm down. Your godson is not hurt or something. At least not anymore…”

“What do you mean not anymore?” Sirius inquired daring Loki not to answer.

“He had to stay with Lily’s sister ever since his parents’ death,” Loki replied as an explanation.

Oh, and what an explanation it was. Sirius would never have thought that seven little words could tell you everything and even more than you would have wanted to know. He knew Lily’s sister
Petunia perfectly well and her opinion about anything magical. To say he was angry would be an understatement he was outright furious, and Loki didn’t doubt that hadn’t he grabbed the other man’s arm he would have apparated straight to Privet Drive to kill them.

“Sirius, seriously…calm down! They are taken care of,” at least Sirius didn’t try to get away anymore.

“How?”

“Demon deal paired with an unfortunate accident within the next weeks.”

Now Sirius smiled viciously. Thanks to his family and their dark nature, he knew very well what a demon deal included. It served them right and if Loki speeded things up a bit, who was he to complain?

“I see we understand each other,” Loki also grinned. “What do you think? Want to meet your godson?”
Chapter 17: Throwing a Wrench in the Works

It was lunchtime at Hogwarts. The teachers and a hand full of students sat together at one table eating when the post owls swooped in delivering letters, packages and newspapers. Dumbledore took the paper and skimmed the front page for anything interesting only to stop at the very first article. It told about the innocence of Sirius Black.

“Say, Minerva, do you know where Harry is?” Dumbledore inquired after reading the article.

McGonagall looked at him a bit confused. “Mr Laufeyson invited him to visit his guardian, one Mr Winchester. They left on Christmas as you very well know since I told you about it” she answered.

Dumbledore hummed in agreement. This wasn’t good at all. Should Potter get to know that he had a godfather, he would insist on staying with him and not his relatives, as he wanted him to. Though it was mandatory for his plans of keeping him safe that he stayed with them over the summer holidays. He would have to talk to Black as quickly as possible.

Had he known that his plans were already laying in ruins…

Sam, Dean and Harry were sitting at the table in the main room. The investigation team just left, and Harry was glad that he had his peace again.

"Sam, how many times did I tell you that Ruby was a bad influence for you?" Dean suddenly said. Ever since they both saw the memory, he was even more pissed about the demon.

Sam sighed. "Dean I know. Do you really think that I don’t blame myself for what happened? I was the one to invite her here after all," he went with his hand through his hair. "Harry, I'm so...so sorry."

"It's okay Sammy, I'm just glad that she didn’t get to do anything serious," Harry smiled at Sam leaning against him. Sam instantly draped his arm around him protectively. Harry had to admit that he liked it. When he had started school he had hoped that he would gain some friends now that Dudley couldn’t intervene but it seemed that he got so much more, something akin of a family even if not in blood and that cared. "Dean, I have a question for you though. Your aura...why does it have so much black in it? It is like it is consuming the entire rest and it nearly succeeded."

Dean now looked worried at Sam. He knew very well what might cause the effect Harry just described, his deal. Sam and Dean seemed to have some kind of silent conversation in which Dean shook his head slightly, but Sam only gave him an intense glare.

"Harry...I don’t know how to explain it," Sam started but was interrupted by Harry himself.
"He made a deal didn’t he?" he asked looking up at him. Sam looked at him in surprise. "It is the only thing that makes sense. He is definitely not a demon who has a pitch black aura but with sulphuric yellow streaks in it and what else could cause it?"

"Yes, it is true. Dean made a deal to save my life," Sam sighed looking depressed. "Otherwise...otherwise I wouldn't be here."

"When is it due?" Harry asked knowing that it was a very personal question not caring at all that Dean made a deal to save Sam.

Sam looked at Dean who merely shrugged. Harry already knew more than he was comfortable with so what did it matter if he knew that too.

"Ten days from now," Sam admitted.

Harry hummed upon that thinking about what Loki told him as well as what he learned from the Winchesters and Bobby. That was when he remembered something Loki told him before their holidays.

"It seems that there is another thing I'll have to talk with Loki about," he mused. The Winchesters looked at him strangely. "It might look that way, but I don’t know everything. Loki told me something before we went on holiday and that brought me to an idea."

"What idea?" suddenly sounded from the door.

They all looked up to see that Loki entered together with some unknown man. Said man, however, looked at Harry before bursting into a full run rushing up to him and embracing him in a hug.

"Oh Harry," he said. "I'm so sorry."

Harry though was confused. Was this the day of apologies? "Who are you?" He asked trying not to be crushed by the man.

"I'm Sirius Black, I'm your godfather," the man replied tears filling his eyes.

"Huh? I didn’t know I had one..." he knew about Sirius Black of course from his parents, but it seemed that they forgot to tell him that the man was his godfather.

"Let's just say he was incapacitated the last ten years," Loki piped in.

After that, they sat down and talked a lot. Sirius told Harry things about himself and his school life while Harry explained some of the pranks they pulled. To say that Sirius was pleased with how Harry's school days went, would be an understatement. He just loved the fact that Harry had the opportunity to learn from the infamous Loki himself while he mourned that he never had the chance. The entire time Harry leaned against Loki still fearing that he would leave him.

They talked nearly the whole day when Loki remembered that Harry hinted at something when they entered.

"Harry, you said that you had an idea about something..." He drawled out.

At first, Harry was a bit confused about the sudden switch of topics, but once he caught up, he nodded. "Yes, you're right. When Sam told me that Dean's contract was due to come to an end," upon that Sirius looked strangely at Dean. "I remembered something you told me on Christmas. You remember the thing about the righteous man?" Harry swiftly looked at Dean and back to Loki to
indicate what he meant.

It took a moment for Loki to get what he meant. “Wait…you mean…” Loki now looked fully at Dean who shifted uncomfortably under his gaze. “But it would fit. The demons, Ruby, why Sammy isn’t able to get you out of that deal…the rumours I heard as of lately.”

“What the heck are you two talking about?” Dean exclaimed having enough of the cryptic hints, the two gave.

“I think this is your turn, Lo,” Harry said.

Loki nodded and started to explain what he already told Harry on Christmas about Lucifer, his cage and the seals.

“So you want to tell me that I’ll be the one to break the first seal on Lucifer’s cage?” Dean asked incredulously. “Now I want to go to hell even less…”

Loki sighed. “Dean, it doesn’t matter whether you go to hell or not. Three independent seers told the same thing that the seals will be broken. If it isn’t you, it will be someone else…probably your father but I just had an idea,” he suddenly said with a vindictive grin. Sam rose an eyebrow. “It seems that the fall of the first seal itself can’t be influenced and is unavoidable but what we can influence is the condition under which it falls.”

They all looked a bit confused when Sirius face brightened up. “Let me guess…Petunia.”

“Together with her husband, correct.”

“Who are they?” Sam inquired.

Harry sighed and shook his head. “My relatives…”

“Oh!” Sam looked at Dean.

“They at least deserve it,” Dean replied with a malicious glee in his eyes. It seems that suddenly he couldn’t wait to get to hell and them in his hands.

“Can you ensure that they land where needed?” Sam wasn’t entirely convinced yet and in no way content with his brother having to do, what is necessary to break the seal.

“Let me think. If the power structure in hell didn’t shift lately, Alistair is still the chief torturer of hell, and I doubt that they confide the task of getting Dean breaking the first seal to anyone else. I would have to talk to Crowley, but I don’t doubt that he will be able to get them to Alistair too,” right at that moment it knocked at the door. “Talking about the devil or demon in his case.”

With a snapping of his fingers, Loki opened the door and said demon walked in. Harry however after the encounter with Ruby instantly went into defence mode meaning in his case that four of his demon killing knifes immediately floated around him a fifth slowly creeping up behind Crowley. Even Sirius made a movement to reach for his wand when he remembered that he had no time to get a new one.

“Harry, calm down…” Loki tried.

“He is a demon,” the boy snarled in return.

Crowley chuckled. “Oh, an especially observant one.”
“If I were you I’d be a bit more careful. I already killed Ruby this morning so don’t think I’d hesitate to kill you” Harry now snapped at Crowley letting the knives around him float towards the demon.

Crowley suddenly not that confident anymore eyed them warily and took a step back only to get to know that there was another one behind him. “So you’re the reason Lilith is throwing a fit because Ruby didn’t report back…interesting.”

Loki exhaled. “Harry please, he is the one helping me get rid of your relatives. I’m not saying that you should trust him but trust me when I say that he poses no imminent threat to you.”

Harry looked at Loki for a long moment before he retreated the knives, but he placed them visibly on the table so that he could act quickly if necessary. Crowley took a deep breath in relieve.

“I only came to tell you that they made the deal, but I didn’t think that I would run into a murderous teenager,” Crowley growled.

“He is not the only one not trusting you” Sam leaned back. One of the knives lying on the table flipped upwards now standing on its tip and spinning slowly. Levitating something and letting it dance in the air was the only thing Sam was able to do so far only using his mind and it took a lot out of him but that Crowley didn’t need to know.

“Since when are you magical?” Crowley asked confused and interested, but Sam only grinned.

“Okay, okay, boys…Crowley at the moment we need each other so please at least try to be civil” Loki gave Sam, Dean and Sirius a pointed look. Dean might not be magical himself, but he also looked like he was ready to murder Crowley too. “Crowley, I have another offer to make to you.”

Now Crowley perked up. He was a businessperson first and foremost even if his trading goods were souls mostly. “What kind of offer?”

“Can you ensure that the Dursleys land on Alistair’s racks once they took their one-way trip to hell?”

“Shouldn’t be too hard but why would I?” Crowley looked expectantly.

Loki grinned mischievously. “How about information no other demon has and that would help you becoming the most powerful demon in hell once certain events took place?”

“I would say that I’m very much interested but how can I be sure that you deliver what you pledge?”

“Have I ever not?”

“True” Crowley thought about it for some time until he came to the conclusion that the risk would be worth it. Even if the information might not gain him becoming king of hell as he was planning to, they might at least help him a great deal. “Okay, you give me the information, and I’ll see to it that they land with Alistair.”

Loki nodded. “Are you aware that Lucifer will rise quite soon?”

“Hardly any news since it is Lilith who orchestrates this” Crowley shrugged. “And before you start on it it’s also broadly known that it is Dean who is supposed to break the first seal.”

Now Dean groaned. “How comes it that everyone knows about this except us?”

“I don’t know” Loki shrugged. “However, I got to know that it is unavoidable that the seals are broken, and Lucifer freed. Therefore we at least want to make sure that it happens to our conditions
hence the request to redirect the Dursleys to Alistair.”

“Interesting but all that doesn’t seem to be worth the effort of redirecting the questioned souls,” Crowley muttered.

“What about the information who Lucifer’s and Michael’s hosts are?” Harry piped in.

Everyone simultaneously looked at him.

“This would be more like it,” Crowley admitted.

Harry, however, looked confused at Loki. “Don’t tell me you haven’t figured out that small tidbit yet.” He shook his head exasperatedly. “Sometimes I question what you have in your head…except pranks of course.”

“Oi,” Loki and Sirius replied in unison. “Pranks are the best thing on this planet,” Sirius added upon which Loki nodded approvingly.

“Pranks don’t solve this particular problem though” Harry smiled.

“No, but they solve a lot of things” Loki piped in.

The three bantered for a bit more. In the meantime, Dean leaned over to Crowley.

“Hey Crow, how did you get to know Loki?” he inquired. He was just curious.

Crowley who followed the bantering with barely concealed boredom looked surprised at Dean. “Quite a funny story actually. I was just new in the business and a low ranked crossroad demon then. We both hit a bar after a particularly bad day I don’t know how many centuries ago. There we got so drunk that we couldn’t see straight anymore when we started to talk to each other. You know about how bad the day was and so on. I then told about one of my contractors and how he tried to evade hell. Don’t ask me why, but Loki actually offered me to take care of the man. Not thinking that he really would do it, I gave him the man’s address. You can’t possibly fathom how surprised I was when he stood at my front door the next day saying that it was taken care of and it was. After that, we kept in touch, and every time one of us needed help with something…though Loki has his morals. He only helps when he thinks the person really deserves it,” Crowley looked at Loki thinking about something. “The thing is something like what he asked of me earlier never happened before. He never asked me to make a deal with someone. It seems that the boy means a lot to him and anyone who tries to hurt him should run as quickly as possible and pray that Loki isn’t faster.”

Both Winchesters had to admit that they agreed. Loki even went so far as to break into heaven for Harry and if that wasn’t any indication for how much he liked the boy they didn’t know what would. In the meantime, the discussion came to an end.

“And? Want to share your findings with the class, or shall I call it a day and we all go back to our own business?” Crowley asked.

“I still don’t get how you couldn’t have figured it out, Lo. You were it after all who told me about the two brothers one following orders to the dot and one to question things,” Harry snickered.

Everyone except Sam looked like he decided to grow a second head. Sam on the other hand groaned.

“Boy, what are you talking about?” Dean was completely lost.
“Us, Dean, he is talking about us…” Sam moaned. Was there something in the world that was NOT resolving around them? You usually tell people that the world didn’t centre on them, but with them, it really seemed to be the case.

“Yes and no. While the parallel was what I was hinting at I was actually talking about Michael and Lucifer.”

Loki now intensely looked first at Dean and after that at Sam before letting his head falling on the table with a loud thud. Harry patted his back in anticipation.

“You’re quite clever for your age. May I ask who you are?” Crowley was amused about the pagan’s antics.

Harry looked at Crowley contemplative. “Harry Potter,” he answered after a moment.

“Ah, the child prophesied to bring down that idiot Riddle. Though aren’t you supposed to be in England?”

“Holidays and as long as this Riddle – whoever that may be – doesn’t do anything to piss me off, prophesise my backside,” he shrugged.

“Sorry, I forgot that you only know him under the name of Voldemort. The idiot is on Hell’s most wanted list No. 1 shortly before Dumbledore,” Crowley growled.

“Wait, what?” Sirius was shocked not because of Voldemort he didn’t put it beneath the man to make a deal but Dumbledore? What would Hell possibly want from him?

“The man made a deal for power and then split his soul in the hope of evading hell…” Crowley replied.

“I meant Dumbledore, not the Dark Lord.”

“Another deal for power or how do you think he suddenly became stronger than Grindelwald? He, however, barricades himself behind anti-demon wards so as long as he isn’t killed or dies of old age…” Crowley explained. “But enough of that. I have to go…work doesn’t do itself. I will see to it that the Dursleys end up with Alistair though I want to have a part in your plans. Here is my number,” he gave Dean one of his business cards.

“You – a demon – want to help us?” Sam asked incredulously.

“I have some plans of my own, and it seems that with helping you I can advance them or did you think I want to help you because I’m a Good Samaritan?” Crowley snorted. “You should know that I don’t only make deals that involve selling your soul. Call it a little side business. Manus manum lavat,” it looked to him that working with the Winchesters and possibly getting into good graces with the Potter child would help him long term. Perhaps he could convince the boy to give him the soul pieces of Riddle; this would boost his power in hell massively. As he said, the man was Hell’s most wanted No. 1 and anyone who brought him in would advance in the ranks quite quickly.

With that, Crowley turned and just wanted to leave when he got stopped by Dean.

“Wait, is there any way to avoid the hellhounds?” he inquired.

“Only premature death I fear. Good evening,” Crowley turned and left.

Dean sighed. “Say Loki, would you perhaps look after Sam once I’m…gone?”
“Dean, I'm not a child anymore I don’t need a babysitter, and besides that, I have to find a way to get you out of hell once you broke that seal” Sam retorted.

“First I don’t think that heaven will leave him in hell for long once the seal is broken and second what about Hogwarts?” Harry suggested. “When you accompany us, you might learn more, which could be useful for your hunting business and it distracts you.”

“I thought that your school is for children. How would I fit in there?”

That question made Loki smirk, and he snapped with his fingers. Sirius and Dean instantly started to laugh their asses off. Sam, however, looked quite indignantly.

“Loki reverse that NOW!” Sam tried to growl, but since he looked like he was an eleven-year-old boy now, it didn’t sound very impressive. “I’m not leaving Dean alone…”

“Harry is right. Heaven wouldn’t leave your brother in hell. Wouldn’t do them any good when Michael’s Sword is out of their reach,” Loki interrupted him.

“Michael’s Sword?” Dean was confused.

“Fancy name for you being Michael’s true vessel,” Loki chuckled.

“Harry already hinted at it but what does it mean being the hosts for Michal and Lucifer?” Sam wanted to know distracted from being turned into an eleven-year-old for now.

Loki thought a bit about where to start. “The thing is that neither demons nor angels can interact with this plane without taking a vessel first. Though demons have one huge advantage in this regard over the angels. They simply possess people; angels have to ask for an allowance. Archangels like Michael or Lucifer, on the other hand, are a completely different class. They not only need allowance, they are also so powerful that they can’t just ask anyone. Only very few humans are strong enough to host them and as it is you both are the vessels for Lucifer and Michael,” he explained.

“For clarification…neither Michael nor Lucifer can possess us without our consent?” Sam questioned.

“Correct.”

“At least something. But that doesn’t change anything about my decision not to leave Dean alone,” he growled.

“Sam, I would feel much better if you go with Loki and Harry. They need you more than I do. I can handle myself,” Dean muttered. “Not to mention that I don’t want you to be near me when it happens.”

“But Dean…”

“Nothing but…” Sam looked like he didn’t want to give in with that but Dean stared at him who also wouldn’t change his point.

Sirius watched the entire thing for some time now and came to a decision. “What would you say if I stay with him? I might also be able to help you with the little hellhound problem.”

“How?”
“It is as Crowley said the only method to prevent them is premature death. I at least can make it quick and painless…” he told them.

Sam looked back and forth between his brother and Sirius before he sighed giving in. “Okay, okay, it seems that I’m going back to school” he shook his head.

“What settled can we stop talking about death now and simply enjoy the rest of the holidays?” Harry suddenly piped in. “Not that I want to disturb your gloomy mood,” he huffed.

Upon that, they all started to laugh.

They enjoyed the remaining two days together, Harry also buying a few more things for his friends while Sirius finally got a new wand and wardrobe. They also informed Bobby of their plans and gave him Sam’s new phone number. He got one of those phones and a new laptop that was enchanted so that it didn’t need to be recharged as well as worked in magical areas and Loki then gave him full internet access and free calling.

Soon it was time to return to Hogwarts. Sam said goodbye to Dean not wanting to let go, but he had to. Sirius promised that once he was done in America, he would come to Hogsmeade so that they could meet there then. Harry was looking forward to it. He had to admit that even after a few incidents these were the best holidays one could have. Via Loki taxi, Harry and Sam then were ported back to good old Scotland right in the evening before school would start up again.
Chapter 18: It’s Good to be Back Home Again

The three landed in some unused classroom somewhere in Hogwarts.

“Harry, you can go ahead to the common room, Sam and I need to take care of some formalities first,” Loki said.

Loki quickly deaged himself again before he created an illusion of his older self much to the surprise of Sam and Harry.

“What is that about?” Sam asked curiously.

Loki smirked. “This has two reasons. For ones I’m going to say I’m your and ‘Loki Laufeyson’s’ guardian Gabriel Winchester and second…well, you’ll have to see.”

Sam now eyed him critically. “Gabriel Winchester?”

“I need to have a name don’t I?” Gabriel snickered. “And besides that, it makes it easier that way for me to convince Dumbledore to let you attend Hogwarts.”

Sam had to admit that Loki had a point there.

“Why did just an image pop into my mind where you initiate a prank war with yourself. However have fun with Dumbles I need to go to the kitchens,” Harry piped in after taking a look at his watch. It was only five in the evening, so lots of time to do what he wanted to.

So all four set into motion. Harry went as he said to the kitchens while Gabriel, Loki and Sam went to Dumbledore’s office. Sam muttering something under his breath about not giving the trickster strange ideas.

Harry stayed in the kitchens for about an hour before he made his way to the dungeons. A few minutes later, he knocked at what he knew was Professor Snape’s quarter door having two boxes in his hand again, a large and a smaller one. It took a moment until said professor opened the door his face instantly brightening up recognising the boxes the boy was carrying.

“Ah Mr Potter, back from your holidays I assume. Come in” he said stepping aside to let Harry in. Usually, only his Slytherins got to see the living room of his quarters and just in emergencies, but Harry was an exception.

Harry walked over to the sitting area in front of the fireplace and put the boxes down on the table.
“I know Christmas is long over but since Loki kind of abducted me that day I wasn’t able to give you this then.” He shoved the smaller box with the cake over to his professor who smiled fondly at him.

“Thank you very much.”

Snape lifted the lid of the box to find not one cake but many smaller ones this time looking like ingredients glasses and bowls with different fillings. He still wasn’t used to thanking anyone for anything, but it seems that Harry inherited his mother’s ability to drag his usually well-hidden personality to the front and for once, he wasn’t overly concerned about it.

Harry chuckled lowly. “This is not all. During my holidays I found something you might find quite useful” with that, he took a large wooden box out of his pouch and shoved it also over to Snape.

The man looked at it curiously, picked it up and opened it. Once he saw what it contained his eyes nearly bulged out. The box had five rows á four compartments all filled with small glass bottles in which some of the rarest potions ingredients in the world were stored. Every compartment was labelled with small copper plates telling exactly what was stored in them.

“I…I…” Snape didn’t know what to say. In this box were ingredients worth more gold he could spend in three lifetimes and even some were priceless, so rare that he wondered where Harry got them. However, he would never sell them. He was a potions master first and foremost and when he thought about what he could do with them…this was indeed the best present anyone could have made him.

Harry snickered. “The box has a few more features. You see the carvings in the lid?” Snape nodded. “When you tip your wand at them you can change the number of compartments you have to maximum ten rows á ten compartments” he demonstrated it by first enlarging the thing and then shrinking it back to its former size. “Then the thing shrinks any bottle to the size of the compartment so that it fits. Don’t worry the magic doesn’t interfere with the ingredients” Harry added after seeing his professor’s glance. Normally any magic would ruin the ingredients making them worthless, but this box had precautions against it. “At last the plates automatically label themselves stating what is stored in the respective compartment. You can also store potions in it.”

Snape sank back into his armchair two contrary emotions raging within him. On the one hand, he was touched that Harry made him such a well-thought gift and he didn’t want to do more at the moment than going into his lab and experiment with the ingredients. On the other hand, he couldn’t accept this gift. It just was too much.

Harry who saw the conflict in his professor spoke up. “Professor, don’t worry I didn’t ruin myself with this gift. Actually, most of the ingredients came from Loki who gladly contributed them when I told him what I wanted to do. His words were when I remember correctly: ‘Even if he is a git most of the times he is a great potions master, and perhaps he can help people with these’.”

“Sounds like him,” Snape said with a smirk.

He got to know some time ago after cornering him because of one of his pranks that, while Loki wasn’t overly fond with how he treated his students, he respected him a great deal for his work as a potions master. At least they came to an understanding not to annoy each other too much. “I accept your gift…thank you. Please also send my thanks to Mr Laufeyson and tell him I will put it to good use.”

Harry nodded. “Before I leave I have something else for you.” With that, he pulled the two letters out of his pouch. “I was asked to give those to you.”
Hesitantly he handed them over fearing the professor’s reaction.

“I have no idea what they say, and I know that it is hard to believe that they are real, but they are… please keep that in mind when reading them. I think I should leave then…happy New Year.”

With that, he stood up, picked up the other box he brought with him and went to the door leaving behind a confused Snape. The man looked at the letters in his hand, which both only stated Severus Snape in curved letters on the envelope questioning why it would be so hard to believe that they are real. Lost in his thoughts, he managed just in time to wish the boy also a happy new year before opening the first letter. Shortly before closing the door behind him, Harry heard Snape taking a sharp gasp. He could only hope that his potion professor believed him and didn’t think that it was just a hoax. Slightly concerned but mostly happy that his gift was so well received he walked back to the Gryffindor common room.

Loki, Gabriel and Sam walked down the corridors of Hogwarts on their way to the office of the headmaster. About five minutes later, they stood in front of the Gargoyle where they met McGonagall and Binns who Loki informed beforehand. They then altogether entered the office.

“Good evening headmaster” McGonagall greeted Dumbledore.

“Good evening Professor, Mr Laufeyson and who are you, my boy?” the last part was addressed at Sam, completely ignoring Gabriel.

“Sam Winchester, Sir” Sam replied friendly despite being peeved about being called ‘my boy’. He was of age after all even if he didn’t look like it right now.

“Well, nice to meet Mr Winchester. May someone please explain to me what this is all about?” Dumbledore asked with a twinkle in his eyes and a grandfatherly smile.

“Headmaster, I’m here to inform you that I resign with immediate effect” Binns spoke up.

Dumbledore blinked a few times not believing what he just heard. “I beg your pardon? You can’t resign in the middle of the year. How am I supposed to find a new history teacher within twelve hours? School is starting up again tomorrow,” he answered irritated his twinkling dimming down considerably.

“That is why Mr. Gabriel Winchester is here. He is Mr Laufeyson’s guardian and the one who taught him everything about history. Since Mr Laufeyson already demonstrated his vast knowledge about history I don’t doubt that the one who taught him is more than capable of teaching history properly,” McGonagall explained.

They had planned this before the holidays. To be honest Professor Binns was glad that he finally got the option to leave. Up to now, he had been forced by Dumbledore to teach with the man stating that there was no alternative to him and that he would be banned from Hogwarts shouldn’t he oblige. Loki, however, told him that Dumbledore might be powerful but not that powerful. According to him, Hogwarts was a sentient building, and as long as Hogwarts herself didn’t ban him, Dumbledore could do nothing. With Dumbledore having no argument left to force him to teach, Binns gladly resigned to live a peaceful life as a ghost without any duty to fulfil.
“I can’t just hire anyone who says that he is proficient. What are his credentials? Has he a proper certificate?” Dumbledore couldn’t believe that this was happening. He needed Binns as a history teacher to keep the students unaware of what was happening in the world. Binns only told them about some goblin wars long ago but this Winchester might teach them about the hierarchy of the pureblood society, and that wouldn’t do. The muggle-born need to be unaware of how things worked for that they had problems integrating so that he could come and act as the great hero helping them. He very well knew that there would be more and more muggle-born and one day they would be a vast political power, so he wanted them to look up to him as their leader. However, that wouldn’t work should they suddenly get to know how things work helping them to integrate.

“Headmaster, this isn’t my problem anymore. As I said I'm out of it.”

With that Binns floated through the wall and vanished.

Dumbledore looked at the spot the ghost vanished through in disbelief. His plans seemed to come crashing down right in front of him. On top of that came the problem that he hadn’t been able to contact Black yet and should he believe Minerva, Potter stayed with the man who seemed to become the new history teacher over the holidays. He would have to get to know how much the boy learned and quickly.

“As it seems I have no other option left at the moment. Mr Winchester, it looks like you are the new History teacher at least until the summer holidays” Dumbledore rummaged in one of his drawers to pull out a contract and passed it over to Gabriel.

“Before I sign this there is something I have to address first. My son Sam needs to continue his magical education. You know we lived in America during the last years, but I couldn’t leave him alone, so I took him with me…” Gabriel explained.

That made Dumbledore curious. Minerva said that this Gabriel Winchester was Mr Laufeyson's guardian but if they really lived in America why is Mr Laufeyson then student here at Hogwarts. Something didn’t add up, but he couldn’t fully tell what it was.

“If you live in America how comes it that your warden Mr Laufeyson attends Hogwarts?” Dumbledore inquired.

Loki found it somewhat hilarious that while the entire staff worked out who he really was over the last months, Dumbledore himself still was oblivious. “When Loki came in the age to start learning magic he wanted to attend the best school in the world and therefore asked me whether he could go to Hogwarts. Sam originally also wanted to go too but was reluctant, not wanting to be so far away from home,” Gabriel explained.

Sam chuckled lowly. He had to admit that Loki was good when it came to spinning things the way he needed.

“It is true. I didn’t want to leave dad alone, so I decided to attend a small magical school near home,” Sam piped in with a small voice as if intimidated by what was going on. Okay, it sounded strange both calling Loki ‘dad’ and acting like a child when being an adult who faced the worst kind of monsters on the planet.

Dumbledore hummed upon that. “I think we will find a nice place for him in one of our houses while you teach here.”

“Cool,” Sam exclaimed excitedly. To be honest, he couldn’t wait to get started. It is funny how something that he thought made him a freak and an abomination so quickly could become something
normal and good.

Gabriel took the contract and signed it not even caring what it said. Dumbledore would have a hard
time finding him anyway should he decide to vanish and trying to pin an archangel with such a low
magical contract would be futile.

After that, Sam was sorted immediately. To his surprise, he ended up in Gryffindor and not
Ravenclaw as he initially thought. Harry had told him about the houses and with how much he read
and researched things for their hunts he would have bet that he would end up in the house of the
bookworms. Perhaps it had also to do with his stupid actions lately in hope to save his brother, who
knows. He didn’t want to ponder over it, so he left it be.

Dumbledore told Loki after the sorting that he should show Sam where the Gryffindor rooms were
and get him settled. He would have to talk to Gabriel some more, and it would be boring for the
children. So Loki dragged Sam happily out of the office and towards the common room.

Somewhere on the way, Loki suddenly turned around and faced Sam.

“Before we get started there is something Harry asked of me. The demon taint…I can’t eradicate it
completely, not since it has been there for nearly your entire life, but at least I can cut its connection.
It will still be there, but it won’t have any effect on you or your magic,” he explained.

Sam eyed Loki in contemplation. He still didn’t trust Loki fully, but the problem was that he was his
only option and he didn’t want his magic controlled by anyone. “So no one can influence it ever
again?” he asked carefully.

“No one” Loki replied, and Sam nodded.

“Then do it.”

It took only one touch, and the connection was cut. Sam suddenly felt the full power of his magical
core rushing through him. It seemed that the taint had suppressed quite a lot of it.

“Woa that was…” he didn’t know how to describe it swaying slightly because of the sudden influx
of power.

Loki just smiled before turning around and walking to the Gryffindor common room.

When they arrived, Sam was greeted heartily by everyone while Loki was crushed in a hug by
Neville who thanked him repeatedly.

“What did you do?” Sam asked curiously.

“His parents were in some kind of magical coma unable to wake up again, but I changed that as a
Christmas gift” Loki replied over Neville's head.

Instantly all of the others started to tell Sam about how great Loki is and what he did for them before
going over to what happened in general, and god knows what else. During that, they ate the
cupcakes Harry provided. Sam had to say that while he at first was overwhelmed he liked how he
was welcomed. The only one not in a good mood was Ronald Weasley who sat in a corner and
glared daggers at everyone, but no one paid him any attention.
The next morning everyone was sitting in the great hall. Usually, the students would excitedly chatter about their holidays, but today it was different. The topic of the morning was the new teacher sitting at the head table. Some rumours said that the curse on the DADA post stroke again and that it was the new teacher for this subject. This rumour, however, found an end quickly when a very alive Quirrell entered the hall looking slightly confused why everyone was staring at him. Others assumed that it perhaps was a ministry sent observant while some said that it was an apprentice to one of the teachers. The longer Dumbledore kept his silence the stranger and more incredible the rumours became even going so far as to say that he was a spy of You-know-who sent to undermine Dumbledore to orchestrate his return. One thing they however never assumed, the truth.

Finally, Dumbledore stood up and instantly the entire hall fell silent anticipating what the man would have to say.

“Good morning everyone. I hope you all had a nice and restorative Christmas holiday. Today I have to make an announcement. Professor Cuthbert Binns retired as of yesterday. Therefore, I introduce you to Professor Gabriel Winchester, the new History teacher. He is accompanied by his son Sam Winchester who is a proud new member of Gryffindor. I hope you all give them a hearty welcome.”

With that said, he sat down again.

Everyone instantly started to chatter with each other. Sure, they wanted a new history teacher, but they all wanted Loki.

Harry on the other hand suddenly sported a very mischievous smile. He took out his wand and visibly waved it in the air. A split second later large letters appeared over the entrance door reading:

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Mortal kings are ruling castles
Welcome to my world of fun
Liars settle into sockets
Flip the switch and watch them run
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Accompanied was that by the music playing precisely those lines and an oversized switch that suddenly appeared in the middle of the central corridor between the Hufflepuff and Gryffindor house tables. The twins who read the lines grinned at each other before jumping up, running over to the switch and as told flipped it. To everyone’s surprise, even Harry since he never would have thought that someone actually would do it, Dumbledore suddenly yelped, jumped up and ran around in the great hall followed by his throne-like chair that tried to bite him in his ass. The whole hall laughed about that sight, and only Sam let his head sink on the table questioning his sanity. That was when an idea stroke him and he smiled vindictively. If he had to endure this madness, he at least could enjoy himself.

After some time Flitwick finally released Dumbledore from the biting chair.

“Mr Potter, ten points from Gryffindor for…that,” he said once his breathing was normal again.

Harry merely shrugged not even attempting to tell them that he had nothing to do with the chair. However, he found this an excellent beginning of the New Year.
The next day was the first for Sam to attend classes and he was extremely excited about it. Sure, Harry and Sirius already taught him bits and pieces of magic, but this was something entirely else. The first lesson was Transfiguration, and Sam had to admit that while Professor McGonagall was a stern teacher, she was also excellent and fair. She told him that he should try to follow and not hesitate to ask questions and questions he asked, actually so many and so in depth that McGonagall at some point said that if he really wanted to know all that she would gladly answer them outside of class. Though not knowing that Sam already read the entire book for that year plus some he got while staying at the Rabbit Hole, she wondered how he knew so much.

Once Transfiguration was over Hermione came running over and started to talk with Sam over the theory behind the subject much to the amusement of Harry, Neville and Loki. The entire way to History, they discussed whether the wand movement was that important, or if the imagination of the caster was the more important part. Sam quickly gave proof to his statement that it was mostly imagination by taking out some wrapping paper he had in his pocket and transfigured it into a small, simple box by concentrating on it. Hermione’s eyes nearly bulged out by this offhanded display of wandless magic. Sam only shrugged but had to admit, that ever since Loki freed his core magic came to him much more natural than before. When he displayed his wandless magic in front of Crowley, it took a lot out of him, but now it was easier and less draining.

Shortly later, they arrived at the History classroom and watched how everyone else wondered who this Gabriel Winchester was and how his lessons would be. To their utter surprise, Loki stood up and walked to the front of the classroom.

“Where is Professor Winchester?” someone asked.

“Grading the fourth year’s homework,” Loki snickered.

Everyone bar Harry and Sam who knew what was going on looked confused. Harry slid down in his seat and tried unsuccessfully to hide his laughter upon seeing that. When Loki threw him a glare, he couldn’t hold it anymore and laughed uproariously. All the others looked at him as if he finally lost it.

“You don’t get it, do you?” he teased. “We are talking about **Loki**…”

After thinking that statement through quite a few Ravenclaws and even some of the Gryffindors let their heads sink onto the table. Loki who up to that point accusingly stared at Harry for spoiling his fun now also laughed upon that display. The only one in the end who didn’t get what was going on was Ron.

“What has that to do with Professor Winchester?” he asked dumbly, but no one thought about telling him what was going on. When he was such an idiot as not to notice the obvious, it wasn’t their problems.

This lesson Loki continued his lecture about Supernatural beings, this time lecturing about Tengu, Japanese demon spirits. Especially Sam was taking detailed notes for should they ever have the unfortunate luck of running into one.
Over lunch then he again talked with Hermione about what they learned and got into a more in-depth discussion of the difference between focus-based magic and mind magic and which of them was harder to perform.

Harry, Neville, the twins and Loki, on the other hand, talked about what they had done over the holidays. That was when Loki made a particular face that they all knew meant nothing good.

“I’m bored,” he said before his face lightened up.

“Oh no, what are you up to now?” Neville questioned with a worried face actually edging a few inches away from the trickster.

“Why do you assume I’m up to something?” Loki retorted with a devious grin before snapping with his fingers.

Suddenly every table and bench in the great hall started to float. Several people yelped in surprise before looking accusingly at Loki who was utterly unimpressed by it. With another snap of his fingers, every bench and table split up so that each student floated around separately with their part of the table in front of them while the chairs of the teachers were transfigured into bench parts too. Loki flicked with his hand, and it was as if a wind blew through the hall whirling everything before it settled again. After the last snap from Loki, all parts rearranged themselves again and got together to full benches and tables once more. Though no one sat where he or she sat before. So sat Slytherins between Gryffindors, Hufflepuffs and Ravenclaws with teachers in between. Dumbledore now sat where the former Slytherin table was next to a 6th year Hufflepuff and a 3rd year Gryffindor, while an irritated Snape sat between the Weasley twins at the Hufflepuff table. The probably worst combination, however, was Ron who had the unfortunate luck to end up opposite of Malfoy. It didn’t take long for the two to engage themselves in a shouting match before Ron left the great hall with a huff. Everyone else however quickly got over their new sitting arrangement and started to talk to those who now sat in their vicinity.

Sam who had ended up next to McGonagall to his own fortune, took this as an opportunity to ask her a few more questions while Harry instantly started to think about retaliation for being dumped between Crab and Goyle.

“I have to admit that this new sitting arrangement has merit,” Flitwick who sat opposite of Loki mused.

“You’re right; the students surely should mingle more often. All this house rivalry isn’t good for them especially the ongoing feud between Gryffindor and Slytherin. Only because of one black sheep they are labelled dark or even evil,” Loki shook his head. “As if there were no dark witches or wizards in the other houses.”

“I remember your statement on Halloween. It is nice to see someone as open-minded as you are, this is a rare occurrence nowadays.”

That made Loki snicker. “I would be a hypocrite would I judge someone over being labelled dark or light. Those who know me know that I’m no saint myself so why should I care whether someone else is?” he retorted.

“Well spoken, Mr Laufeyson,” Flitwick replied with a smile.

The rest of lunch was quite unspectacular, and soon Harry, Neville, Loki and Sam found themselves waiting in front of the potions classroom for Snape to call them in. However, as soon as the door opened and they took their usual seats it became apparent, that something was different. This became
even more prominent as the lesson went on. Snape while not outright hostile towards Harry was at least more reserved, not giving advice as usual and he also didn’t comment on his work.

“Is he always this cold?” Sam asked confused.

Harry threw Loki a wary look having a pretty good idea for why the Professor acted as he did. “Normally not, no” he drawled out. “I gave him something together with my Christmas present for him, and it seems that it wasn’t as well accepted as I hoped.”

His fear was confirmed once the Lesson finished.

“Mr Potter, stay behind,” Snape stated in a cold voice.

Harry did as he was asked and stayed behind Loki standing right next to him. Sam looked unsure about whether he should stay or not but Harry made the decision for him.

“Sam, please wait outside. This is a sensitive topic we have to discuss, and I doubt Snape will allow you to stay anyway,” Harry explained.

Sam looked back and forth between Harry, Loki and Snape but in the end came to a conclusion, that Loki would protect Harry should anything be and so he even if reluctantly left the potions classroom.

Snape looked at Loki obviously not wanting to say what he wanted in front of him but nonetheless picked up two pieces of parchment from his desk. Harry fearfully looked at the man. Snape had done precisely what he had feared, thought this was an elaborate hoax, and now he would lose him as a friend. How could he explain to the man that the letters were real? That Loki took him to see his parents?

Once the door shut firmly behind Sam and he had erected some privacy spells, he wanted to speak up but didn’t even get to it because Loki held his hand up to hinder him. He threw Loki a glare for that, but the pagan was utterly unimpressed.

Loki gave Harry a reassuring smile before he spoke up. “Sir, I’m sorry, but I didn’t stop you because I didn’t want you to say what you wanted. Well, that was only half-true, I just don’t want you to say something you would regret later because you didn’t know every fact and jumped to conclusions. When you promise me to let me explain everything to you I promise you not to stop you again,” Loki said in a tentative voice.

Snape narrowed his eyes at him but in the end, nodded curtly.

“I assume that your problem lies within the letters Harry gave you…they are real,” Loki sighed before he continued. “As a Christmas present I took Harry to see his parents,” he admitted, and he could only hope that this wouldn’t blow up in his face.

On the other hand, he wanted to protect Harry as well as making him happy, and when that meant that he had to tell the man Harry liked, about what he had done, so mote it be.

Snape eyed Loki critically trying to ascertain whether the pagan was lying or not. Knowing who and what Loki was he didn’t doubt a second that he might be able to sneak into heaven or wherever souls go to when someone dies. Then there was the fact that he didn’t peg Loki for a liar when it came to such a thing considering what a risk he would have taken to get Harry to see his parents and seeing the expression on the boy’s face…no it must be the truth. So consequently, the letters were authentic too.

He slumped against the teacher desk in front of which he stood. That the letters were real was all that
he could think about.

The letters were real!

Looking at the missives, he saw that his hand was slightly trembling. Lily truly forgave him for what he considered his biggest mistake in his life even before joining that idiot Riddle. Not only that but James Potter, the bane of his existence apologised for everything he had done to him. No wonder that he had trouble accepting that the letters were real.

The three of them stayed in silence for several minutes when Snape suddenly spoke up.

“Would it…could you…” he stuttered, and it was a contribution to how much all this affected him, that he was unable to articulate what he wanted. In the end, he shook his head and looked at the letters again.

“What is it, Severus?” Loki asked in a soft voice having an inkling about what the man wanted, but he needed to be sure.

“No, it is too much to ask,” Snape replied again shaking his head.

“Please leave it to me to decide whether your request is too much or not,” Loki said with a smile.

Snape looked up and straight at Loki. He swallowed before he spoke up again.

“Could you bring me to them?” he finally asked.

The smile of Loki broadened. “See, wasn’t so hard was it?”

He didn’t do this to taunt the man but to show him that there was nothing wrong in asking for things.

“I can bring you to them, but unfortunately we’ll have to wait for a month or two because our little visit at Christmas didn’t go unnoticed and I want things to settle down before I go there again. On my honour as the trickster god Loki I swear that I’ll take you as soon as possible,” a golden hue engulfed Loki and settled down sealing his oath.

Snape stared at him in open disbelief not trusting his ears. Loki honestly would take him to visit Lily? He would be able to tell the woman he had loved – and still loved would he be truthful – that he was genuinely sorry for what had happened between them.

“Thank you,” was all Snape could say to that.

“Very well, we’ll leave you to it then because it is time for dinner. I’ll let you know when it will be safe to visit them,” Loki replied with another smile before turning towards Harry. “Come on, let’s go! I’m quite hungry.”

That made Harry who up to now had watched the conversation between Snape and Loki with fear at first and interest later, laugh.

“You’re always hungry…especially when it is for sweets,” he snickered. “Professor,” he added dipping his head in respect.

They both turned and walked towards the door when Snape spoke up.

“Mr Potter, please accept my sincere apology,” the man said with a slightly pained look in his eyes.

“Professor, you don’t have to apologise. It was only natural to think that the letters were faked. I
mean even I couldn’t believe it at first, and I have been there,” Harry replied with a soft smile before turning around again and finally leaving the potions classroom.

Outside they found a worried Sam leaning against the wall opposite the classroom door. He was apparently concerned about why they had taken so long.

“Thank god, I was worried that you were in trouble. Is everything alright?” he questioned pushing off the wall and walking over to them.

“Everything’s all right,” Harry replied without elaborating what had happened in the potions classroom. He would never betray Snape’s feelings and trust by telling anyone private things about him.

“If you’re sure…let’s go to the great hall, dinner started already and shouldn’t we get there soon I fear we’ll don’t get anything to eat.”

Together they went to dinner talking about the day now. After dinner they made themselves comfortable in the common room, Harry and Neville engaging themselves in a game of chess in which Neville bet Harry. Sam sat in an armchair in front of the fire reading while the twins and surprisingly Hermione were suspiciously absent. It was some time after ten o’clock that they stopped for the day and went to sleep. Sam was content with how his first day at Hogwarts had gone by, eagerly awaiting the next day.
The next few days went by without much happening. Sam eagerly absorbed every piece of information he could get his hands on, wanting to learn as much as possible as for as long as he would be staying at Hogwarts. He also found a kindred spirit in Hermione, and they were often seen together in the library reading and studying magic.

Neville though spent most of the time in the greenhouses tending to the plants that Sprout had allowed him to grow there. Harry occasionally helped him, and Loki gave him a few tips on what the plants needed; though he wasn't a specialist and therefore he was limited in what he knew.

It was the twins though, that had the staff especially worried because they had become very quiet all of a sudden and it had everyone wondering what they were up to. They vanished right after the lessons finished and only reappeared shortly before curfew in the common room, even Loki had no idea what the two were planning. Though what he noticed was that Hermione from time to time vanished too when she wasn't either learning or discussing something with Sam.

What made Loki smirk while Harry and Sam smiled like the cat that caught the canary was the muggle newspaper that was delivered to Loki on Thursday. It was the Little Whinging Post, and the article on the front-page was highly enjoyable.

The article reported about the misfortune of a particular highly esteemed family from Privet Drive that was haunted by strange accidents. So, it was that the male adult of the family who worked as the Director of Grunnings had a deadly accident when inspecting the newest drills his company was producing. During said inspection, the drill bit broke and shot right through his head killing him in an instant.

What was even more mysterious was the death of Petunia Dursley not even half a day later. After receiving the message of her husband's unfortunate passing, she seemed to have a mental breakdown. Neighbours reported that she was seen running through the street shouting that THEY are coming and asking for help to keep the FREAKS away though no one else was seen in the road at that time. About five minutes later and shortly before the police arrived, her heart gave out, and she died.

At least their son was well off despite that tragedy because the same day the family had won 2 million £ in the lottery, and the boy was to be placed with his aunt.

It was about a week after the holidays and Sam's arrival at Hogwarts that things got darker. It was Tuesday during breakfast when a large black dog trotted into the great hall and went straight over to where Harry, Sam, and Loki where sitting. The teachers who weren't in the know looked at it curiously wondering whose dog it was; the three friends, however, knew precisely who it was, Sirius, or in this form Padfoot; and that could only mean one thing, Dean Winchester was dead. Padfoot walked over to Sam let out a low whine with a drooping head and a sad expression. Sam went entirely still his face one of pain and grief, a lone tear rolling down his cheek.

Harry seeing that, stood up and walked over to Sam, but not before ruffling his godfather's fur with a pained smile, he then turned to Sam.
"Come on let's get out of here," he said with a low voice laying a hand on the other boy's shoulder in a show of comfort.

Sam nodded slowly before he stood up and went with Harry who draped an arm around him, they both left the great hall and went to the Gryffindor common room and their dorms to be alone, not even thinking about going to lessons.

Loki watched them leaving and knew that it was highly doubtful that the two would attend any classes that day, so he also stood up and walked to the head table and Professor McGonagall to explain her the situation. McGonagall nodded gravely agreeing that it would be the best for the two children to take the day off, Harry less because he was the one who lost his brother but because it was better for Sam to have someone to stay with him and comfort him, which seemed to be Harry. Though she would certainly look in on the two after lunch and before the afternoon classes would start to ensure that they were alright.

In the meantime, Padfoot ambled over to Snape and poked him with his paw to get the Potion Master's attention. Once the man looked at him with a scowl, he motioned him to follow him to the side chamber of the great hall. Snape gracefully stood up and quickly followed the dog but not without looking at it in disdain.

"Black, what do you want?" he sneered once the door closed shut close and they were alone.

Sirius, who just shifted back from his Animagus form, flinched upon the vitriol that dripped from Snape's words.

"I know that what I did to you is inexcusable, and I won't even try asking you for forgiveness, but I want you to know that I'm truly sorry for what happened even if you don't accept it. However, that wasn't what I wanted to talk to you about. Harry told me how much he likes you as a teacher and, as much as it pains me to admit this, as a friend. I'm not saying this because of our past but as Harry's godfather, should you hurt him in any given way, believe me you'll face something far worse than a werewolf on a full moon, me, am I clear?" he told the other man with a face that told him how serious he was, no pun intended.

"Draw a number, Black," Snape sneered. "You're not the only one who cares for the boy and believe me or not, this includes me too."

Sirius looked at the other man for a few more seconds before nodding solemnly. "Very well, I know we'll never like each other, but for my godson's sake I propose a truce between us, I think that is the least we can do...for Harry," he finally said holding out a hand.

"As long as you behave yourself I see no reason why not," Snape firmly shook Sirius' hand.

"Good, I'll be off now, I'm going to looking in on Harry, have a good morning," Sirius replied before changing back into Padfoot and trotting out into the great hall while Snape held the door open for him.

He rushed through the halls of Hogwarts taking a few shortcuts to Gryffindor Tower where he came to a halt in front of the picture of the Fat Lady, where he turned back into a human.

"Hey, could you please let me in? I want to check on my godson and his friend," he asked the Fat Lady.

"If this isn't Sirius Black," she replied. "You know that I can't let you in without the password."

"Come on, please..." he just wanted to beg her to let him in when he heard someone approaching;
he turned around to find McGonagall walking towards him at a brisk pace.

"You can let him in whenever he wants," she told the Fat Lady who nodded before she turned around to Sirius. "Sirius, here for your godson I assume? This month's password is Calla Palustris."

"Thank you, Minerva," he said before entering the Gryffindor common room followed by McGonagall. "I'll probably stay with them the entire day in my Animagus form if that's okay with you."

"I have no objections as long as you leave before the rest of their dorm mates return," she said in a low voice. "I think it would be good for them to have some silent company."

They had both reached the boys’ dorm and silently opened the door, they saw that Harry and Sam were laying together on Sam's bed, Sam was hugging Harry closely but not in a sexual fashion. It seemed that Harry was like a big teddy bear for Sam at the moment, one that provided comfort. From the looks of it, they were both sleeping.

"Sure, I'll be out by this evening, don't want to be branded as a pervert you know," Sirius snickered lowly.

"Very well, I expect you to inform me should anything happen, and I'll come by after lunch again," McGonagall said with a smile before she turned around and left.

Sirius in the meantime turned back into Padfoot before trotting over to the bed and in a swift motion jumped onto it laying down in front of Harry who because of the movement of the bed woke from his light slumber and with a smile curled an arm around the massive black dog.

They slept until late in the afternoon in that fashion and didn't even noticed McGonagall who again looked after them. She also ordered a house-elf to bring them lunch and keep it under charms so that it would stay fresh and hot until they would eventually wake up.

It was when Seamus and Dean – the Hogwarts one – came in animatedly talking, that the three finally woke up.

"Uh, how late is it?" Harry mumbled from under the blanket stretching lazily.

"Five in the afternoon, don't tell me you slept the entire day?" Seamus asked incredulously.

Harry groaned, not really giving an answer to the question, which Seamus returned with a shrug before the two left again, he turned around to Sam worriedly.

"Are you alright?" he asked carefully.

"My brother is dead and in hell right now, what do you think," Sam grumbled hiding his face in Harry's shoulder sniffing slightly. "If it weren't because of you and Loki I would surely be trying to move heaven and hell now to get him back," he sighed deeply. "I don't know what's worse, knowing that it needs to be the way it is right now and not doing anything, or not knowing and desperately trying to get him back without success."

"Don't worry, you'll have him back in no time off that I'm sure," Harry replied draping an arm over Sam before he chuckled lowly. "I have the feeling that your brother and Alistair will get on like a house on fire and my relatives will be right in the middle of it."
In hell at the VIP racks

Dean groaned when he returned to conscious after Sirius had killed him, at least it was painless. It was boiling hot, and he was currently strapped to a rack obviously in preparation for being tortured. He groaned again trying to get some of the kinks out of his neck because his position was quite uncomfortable. That was when a demon approached him with a devious grin.

"Well, well, well, if it isn't Dean Winchester, you know I waited for quite some time now to get to meet you," the demon said his grin becoming even broader while he fingered a quite large knife. "And you know what? You're lucky because you can choose! Torture or get tortured."

Now it was Deans turn to smirk deviously. "Likewise Alastair," he greeted the demon much to his surprise. "As to your offer...I have it on good authority that you have a certain couple here, the Dursleys, and I have been dying to meet them, so if you lead me to them, I can give them a piece of my mind for what they did."

Alastair narrowed his eyes at Dean in surprise and suspicion especially when Dean started to laugh.

"Okay, let's cut this short because it is getting extremely uncomfortable here," Dean snickered. "I know why I'm here, what you're ordered to do and what is behind all that...breaking the first seal on Lucifer's cage," now Alastair's eyes widened in shock and even more surprise. "Yes, I know that your job is it to break me into torturing others, and you know what? Give me the Dursleys, and I'll gladly comply," Dean's smile spoke of nothing good.

Alastair rose an eyebrow upon that. "Why them?" he questioned while he with a flick of his hand, set Dean free not doubting the man's eagerness for one second, he knew that glint in Deans eyes only too well.

Dean looked at Alastair rubbing his wrists where they had been strapped to the rack. "What is your opinion on child abuse? And I'm not only talking about a beating here and there...."

"That actually explains a lot in regards to why they took the fast way down here. Also why they landed on my racks, as well why you're so eager to get to them," Alastair clenched his hands into tight fists, a malicious glint entered the demon's eyes hearing that.

To Dean, it seemed that they were on the same page with that.

Most demons actually resented harming, torturing or possessing children mostly because children tended to whine, complain or outright cry all the time but also because children rarely did anything to deserve such a treatment. The only one who had a fetish for children was Lilith, but she would soon be taken care of, as it seemed.

"See? So where is the fun waiting?" Dean piped up in a jovial tone that stood in stark contrast to the expression on his face that promised pain for those receiving end.

"I like you," Alastair suddenly said leading Dean to the racks where the Dursleys were waiting for their treatment; and he really meant it. Sure, he did his job, but mostly it was quite dull since it was the same screaming and begging with everyone, but Dean was refreshingly different. "You're different than everyone assumes you to be."
"Give me the right…incentive and I can get very vindictive," Dean snickered.

"I see we'll have a lot of fun," Alastair laughed, his life suddenly has become much more entertaining. He had thought it enjoyable to torture Dean, but it seemed that there was a hidden side to the man and that was far more amusing than he would have assumed.

Sirius had hopped out of bed, and after having transformed back, he now sat at the end, leaning against one of the pillars of the bed eating the lunch, or more like dinner now, the elf had brought them while they had been sleeping. Harry and Sam were sitting leaning against the headboard, their own plates in their hands.

"I hope Dean is alright," Sam muttered picking at his food barely eating anything.

"Sam, I got to know your brother a bit while I stayed with him and I don't doubt that he'll manage to avoid being tortured at all. His body, in the meantime, I brought here to Hogsmeade where I own a small house and placed it (and the house) under a stasis and every protective ward that I know, so that's covered as well. Nothing hints that anything didn't go as planned," Sirius explained with a small smile.

"I know…I know…but he's my brother…" Sam sighed.

Right at that moment, Loki walked in grinning.

"I just received word from Crowley, he said everything went as planned. Dean currently is with Alastair and…I'm quoting here directly…they work alarmingly well together, and the seal soon will fall," the pagan shook his head over the demon's wording.

Sam let out a breath he didn't know he had held and some of the tension left him. However, he still didn't relax completely. That was when he caught up with what Loki just said.

"Great," he scoffed. "I hope that idiot knows what he's doing, and I hope that Alistair has no interest in hurting Harry," he added with a worried look towards said boy because he had a feeling that they would meet Alastair sometime soon, and not as an enemy.

He still was peeved that he had been so idiotic as to trust Ruby and he only had a resemblance of trust towards Crowley because Loki vouched for him. The demon seemed more interested in working together with Harry than trying to capture or worse kill him. However, should Dean really have befriended Alastair as Loki just hinted at…it was as he had said, hopefully, Dean knew what he was doing.

They sat there and continued talking until half-past ten when Neville was the first to return to go to sleep. Sirius, as he had promised McGonagall, bid them goodbye telling them that he would be living in Hogsmeade, the small village fifteen minutes away from Hogwarts, and that he would come in an instant should anything be the matter, before he turned into a dog and left.

Sam and Harry then went into the bathroom to get ready for bed themselves. It was about half an hour later that they finally went to sleep while Loki vanished Merlin knows where.
They lay there until Harry saw that it was well past midnight and that Sam still was wide-awake and worried. He stood up and walked over to the man that was currently a boy and sat down next to him.

"Still worried?" he asked in a low voice as to not wake up the others.

"Don't worry, I'm okay, I'm used to staying up overnight, and I slept a lot today," Sam replied softly, but Harry shook his head and pulled him up before walking over to his trunk and pulling out a robe he donned over the pyjamas he was wearing.

"Come on I know just the right thing to do," he said with a smile throwing Sam his own robe to wear. "What do you think of dogs?"

Sam raised an eyebrow but put on the robe. "I love dogs, why do you ask?"

"Well then, you'll love where we're going," Harry added with a smirk before pulling Sam after him once he made sure that the pouch with his invisibility cloak was tied securely around his wrist.
Chapter 21: Mirror, mirror

They carefully walked through the halls of Hogwarts to make sure that they weren’t caught by a professor, no matter how unlikely it would be to meet a teacher in the middle of the night in such a giant castle. It took them about ten minutes before they were standing in front of an ordinary wooden door on the third floor. Sam looked at Harry confused, but the boy only smirked and opened the door before he entered the room behind it. Even more confused but also curious Sam followed and was surprised by the sight of a massive three-headed black dog that was currently sleeping but naturally quickly waking up. At first, the dog snarled at them threateningly, but when it caught the scent of Harry, it transformed into a playful puppy rapidly so that Sam could only stare at it. Harry walked over and started to scratch two of the heads while the third eyed Sam critically but didn’t attack.

"Sam, meet Cerb. Loki, and I found him on one of our strolls, but we have no idea how he got here or why he’s even here," Harry explained. "He looks intimidating at first, but once you get into his good graces, he is quite cuddly, and playful too."

"Cerb?" Sam asked while he slowly approached the third head that sniffed at him before he licked Sam from bottom to top covering him in slobber much to Harry's amusement.

"He likes you," he laughed before vanishing the slobber Sam now was covered in. "We called him Cerb since we don’t know what his name is and since he is a Cerberus pup we shortened it to Cerb."

"What in the name of sanity is a hellhound of this size doing in a school? I mean what if some other student walks in here and gets attacked?" Sam shook his head in disbelief but dutifully started to scratch the third head behind the ear when it began to whine pitifully.

"We have no idea, but we think it is guarding something," Harry replied. "See the trapdoor?"

Sam nodded obviously thinking about what the secret was that the Cerberus was guarding, but he didn't want to explore it further, at least not now. Who knew what other dangers might lurk beyond the trapdoor. He didn't have his equipment with him right now, and he wasn't proficient enough in magic to risk it.

They were contently entertaining the puppy by scratching and rubbing certain spots when it seemed that the dog had enough and wanted to play instead. With a few movements of his hand, Harry had conjured a sizeable red ball and with a push of his magic sent it flying throughout the room. Luckily, Loki had enlarged the room enough so that they could play with the pup properly and not have to fear that it would crash into a wall every so often.

The next hour was spent playing with the dog and having much fun on both their parts, especially Harry who watched with satisfaction that Sam also had fun and wasn't burdened with the knowledge that his brother was in hell for at least a few hours.

"Thank you," Sam said when they finally left the puppy behind and were on their way back to the dorms. It was three in the morning, and they were both exhausted from playing with the dog so much.
"You're welcome, what kind of friend would I be if I didn't help and stay with you in a time of need?" Harry snickered lowly.

They walked in silence, each of them lost in their own thought when they became aware of the fact that they had gotten lost and weren't on their way to the dorm anymore. Ending up in front of yet another door, they looked at each other before shrugging simultaneously, they both were curious what was behind it and decided to go in. Harry carefully pushed open the door only to find an empty and abandoned classroom. A bit disappointed about it he took a further step into the room closely followed by Sam when they became aware that the room wasn't as empty as they had first thought. In the middle of the room stood a large ornate mirror.

"What is a mirror doing in an abandoned classroom?" Harry asked confusedly stepping in front of said object.

"Perhaps someone stored it here and forgot about it," Sam mused standing next to Harry.

They looked in the mirror, their confusion rising with every passing second when Sam suddenly drew a sharp breath.

"What is it? Is something wrong?" Harry asked him in concern.

Sam, on the other hand, could only stare at the mirror his eyes wide. "Dean?!" he finally rasped out.

"Huh?" Harry looked back and forth between the mirror and Sam having deducted that Sam obviously saw his brother in the mirror. That was when he saw the inscription in the frame.

"Erised stra ehru oyt ube cafru oyt on wohsi? What the heck is that supposed to mean?"

This finally brought Sam out of his staring. "What?" he asked before he looked at the inscription himself wondering what irked him about it after having read it. "Wait, I know what that is. You have to read it backwards and rearrange the spaces.

"I show you not your face but your heart's desire," he recited showing just how much he was used to deciphering strange languages during their hunts.

"So that is why you see your brother. You miss him and want him here, so the mirror shows you your desire – him," Harry muttered. "But why do I see nothing in it?"

"Perhaps you do not desire anything at the moment, I mean you met your parents, you have friends who care about you, and you will never have to return to your…the Dursleys," Sam couldn't bring himself calling them family because they most certainly were not.

"Maybe you're right," Harry agreed when right at that moment in the mirror suddenly a girl his age with honey-blond hair and ice blue eyes appeared wearing a light blue summer dress and coming to stand next to him before she snuck an arm around his waist leaning against him. "Er… what?" was his very eloquent reaction to that.

"What is it, what happened?" now it was Sam's turn to be concerned.

"A girl I don't recognise suddenly appeared and snuggled against me," Harry said his eyebrows furrowed in confusion.

That made Sam snicker. "It seems that the only thing left for you to desire is a girlfriend to love. But I have to say that you can wait for a few more years for that kind of desire," he started to laugh upon seeing Harry's indignant look.
"Agreed," Harry retorted before he turned away from the mirror. "However, I am tired so let's get back to bed."

"That I can agree with," Sam laughed lowly.

They both set off towards the dorms enjoying the silent castle at night but turning one corner Harry suddenly stopped Sam, quickly dug into his pouch pulled out his invisibility cloak and threw it over Sam and himself just in time because right at that moment two people rounded a corner down the corridor – Snape and Quirrell.

"You don't want me as your enemy Quirrell," Snape threatened the other professor, pushing him against a pillar.

Harry and Sam looked at each other in confusion, wondering what was going on though Harry refused to jump to conclusions concerning Snape since by now he knew the man quite well and liked him so he would always try to give him the benefit of the doubt.

"I-I don't know what you –" Quirrell replied with his usual stuttering.

Snape obviously just wanted to reply something when his head snapped towards where Harry and Sam were standing under the invisibility cloak, but he surely couldn't see them, could he? Ah, he probably had heard them breathing or a ruffling of their clothes. Well, to Harry it looked as if they would serve detention with the man not that he was overly concerned about it.

"Very well," Snape told Quirrell having turned back towards the man. "We'll have another little chat soon when you've had time to think things over and decided where your loyalties lie."

Quirrell shakily nodded before he skittered down the corridor and out of sight. Once Snape was sure that the other professor wouldn't return he turned back to where the two were hiding under the cloak.

"Mr Potter, listening in into other peoples' conversations isn't a very endearing trait as is being out of bed after curfew," Snape told him but without any bite to his voice.

Harry sighed and stepped out from under the cloak becoming visible for the man. "Professor Snape, I'm sorry I didn't mean to listen into your conversation, but I didn't want to give myself away to Quirrell, I don't trust him," he replied not even trying to excuse himself for being out after curfew. Knowing that it was against the school rules, he didn't try to get out of any punishment the man would give him for it.

Snape rose an eyebrow. "May you perhaps tell me why you don't trust him?" he inquired.

"Didn't I mention it before? He was the one to curse my broom during the Quidditch match," Harry replied a bit confused, he thought he had told the man, but obviously, he hadn't. "It is a wonder that Loki hasn't done anything yet, but he probably hadn't the time to do anything," he wasn't concerned that Snape would hold that information against Loki since he wanted something from the pagan and calling him out on that would ruin his possibility to meet Lily again.

Snape's eyebrow rose even further. It was really a wonder that Quirrell was still alive with how protective the pagan god was of the boy though perhaps…quite a few ways of getting rid of the man that were untraceable flittered through his mind. It seemed that the man's days were numbered and should Loki take any longer he surely would act, lest the man got another chance to hurt Harry.

"Indeed. Though, that doesn't give you the right to be out after curfew. I think…," he said, but Sam interrupted him deciding that it was time to intervene before Harry was punished for something that wasn't entirely his misdeed, taking down the cloak.
"Professor, it was my fault that he was out after curfew," he told the man. "I had problems sleeping, and he thought that a walk through the castle might help."

"Alas, you two were out after curfew so you both will serve detention with me tomorrow evening," Snape replied with a small smile.

It seemed that Sam wanted to protest about it, but Harry placed a hand on his arm and shook his head.

"It's okay; we broke the rules, so we have to bear the consequences," Harry said more for Sam's sake. "At what time shall we be at your classroom?"

"Right after dinner," Snape stated. "Now move along and see to it that you stay in bed for the rest of the night."

Harry and Sam nodded, and Snape watched them leave, a smile gracing his face, would anyone see him like that he didn't doubt that they would suffer a heart attack over it. That was when he remembered something.

"Mr Potter," he called after them before they could round a corner. "Five points to Gryffindor for looking out for one of your classmates."

Harry loosely saluted him with a smile before they vanished out of the Potions Master's view heading back to bed. Snape shook his head before he also took off down towards the dungeons and his own bed. It had already been late when he had confronted Quirrell, but now it was far past his shift for patrolling the corridors, and he was tired.

The next morning they told Loki about what they had found on their little tour through Hogwarts the night before, but even the pagan had no idea on who the girl was that Harry had seen. So the day went by without any further incident, and in the evening Harry and Sam found themselves in detention with Snape. However, they only had to help him prepare ingredients for a potion the man had to brew for the infirmary, so it wasn't that bad. Harry actually had fun learning new things about potions as did Sam who filed away the information for later use.

Afterwards, Harry didn't return directly to the common room, he instead went back to the mirror and the girl it showed. Actually, he spent the next four evenings analysing, inspecting and sitting in front of the mirror trying to find out what it meant with what it showed him. One evening, he even made a sketch of the girl to show Loki, but the pagan still had no idea who the girl might be.

It was on the fifth evening that he finally had enough and resigned.

"That stupid thing must be broken," he muttered to the empty room about to leave it behind.

"So back again, Harry?" a voice behind him asked causing him to jump about a foot into the air.

Harry turned around only to find Dumbledore standing a few feet away from him.

"Professor, I would ask you to not sneak up at me in such a way," he told the man.
Dumbledore snickered lowly. "I must apologise; it wasn't my intention to frighten you, my boy. So you, like hundreds before you, have discovered the delights of the Mirror of Erised," the man said while stepping in front of the mirror gazing at it.

"Well, if you call it that way, though I think the thing is broken, Sir," Harry replied not even put out that he had been caught while staring at it not that he thought that it was forbidden.

"Can you think of what the Mirror of Erised shows us all?" Dumbledore inquired with a smile gracing his features and eyes twinkling merrily.

"It shows us our heart's desire, Sir," Harry said confusion showing on his face.

"Indeed, my boy. The happiest man on earth could use the mirror as such, a mirror; it would show him exactly as he is. You on the other hand who have never met your parents would see them standing around you while Mr Winchester who recently lost his brother would see him at his side," Dumbledore explained, assuming that it was his parents Harry was seeing. "However, the mirror neither gives us knowledge nor shows it the truth. Men have wasted away in front of it, entranced by what they saw or even driven mad by it not able to discern what is real and what not anymore."

That rose Harry's confusion even further. His parents? That was when he remembered that Dumbledore didn't know that he, in fact, HAD seen his real parents during the holidays.

"But Professor, what's confusing me is that I do not see any of that," Harry said exasperatedly frustrated that he couldn't find out what it was precisely that the mirror was trying to tell him.

That had Dumbledore dumbfounded. Harry didn't see his parents? That was strange indeed.

"Might I ask what you see instead?" he questioned.

Harry looked at the older man contemplating whether he should reveal what he saw or not. In the end, he decided that it wouldn't hurt to tell the man.

"At first I didn't see anything at all except my mirror image, but after a while, suddenly a girl appeared whom I didn't even know or recognise. That is why I think that the thing is broken," Harry revealed.

Dumbledore blinked a few times stroking his beard while musing about what he just heard. It was fascinating what the boy reported to him. However, it was getting late, Harry surely should be back in his dorm now, and he could always muse about it in his own office. So he decided to send the boy back to his dorm.

"Harry my boy, as of tomorrow I will have the mirror moved from here, and I have to ask you to not go looking for it again, it doesn't do good lingering after dreams and forget to live," he said with a grandfatherly smile.

Harry, on the other hand, looked at him as if he had gone nuts throughout their conversation.

"Professor, why would I want to search for a mirror that obviously is not working correctly?" he asked cocking his head in bewilderment.

"Very well, my boy. However, you should hurry along before Professor McGonagall catches us and deducts house points from us for being out after curfew," Dumbledore state looking over his half-moon glasses with twinkling eyes.

Harry laughed lowly before he nodded and with a "Good night," he raced from the room and back to
the Gryffindor dorms. However, when he lay in his bed sleep just didn't want to come to him. Instead, he was lying there musing about what Dumbledore had told him about the mirror and the girl he saw in it.

Who was she?
Chapter 22: My Little Unicorn

The next days and weeks went by, and Sam slowly but surely got over the fact that his brother was in hell. When Harry one day commented that in the worst case he would go down to hell himself to get him back and that he would do it without hesitation – though Loki made it clear that he won't let him go alone – Sam finally understood that there was no need to worry. He would get his brother back one way or another.

Loki then joked that they could make a school excursion to hell but was quickly hexed by Sam for that idea, children definitely did NOT belong in hell. However, when Loki suggested that he should imagine the expressions of the demons when suddenly a horde of children walked past them commenting on what they saw he had to admit that the thought was quite amusing, but nevertheless he would never go through with it and take children to hell.

"And here to your left, you see the equipment of eternal torment belonging to Alistair, the chief torturer of hell, being put to work by him and his apprentice Dean Winchester. If you would follow me please, our next stop is the pits of hell," Harry commented in his best tour guide voice before breaking out laughing. Luckily no one had been around them, except their friends whom they had let in on the secret, because otherwise people definitely would have questioned their sanity.

What was unfortunate though, was that one evening McGonagall busted Harry, Loki and Sam while trying to sneak into the third-floor corridor to play with the Cerberus. Their punishment was to accompany Hagrid the next day into the forbidden forest because something was hurting and killing unicorns much to the three children's ire. Especially Loki, he was angered about that because according to him there was nothing purer and more innocent than a unicorn, and even hurting one was a sin in his opinion.

So the next evening the three of them together with Hagrid went into the dark forest trying to find the injured unicorn. To Loki's dismay they split up, and Loki went with Hagrid while Sam and Harry went together with Hagrid's dog Fang though Sam had to swear to Loki that he would protect Harry no matter what. Luckily in preparation for their trip into the forest, Sam had taken his new enchanted weapons with him while Harry also carried his knives, not wanting to rely only on magic alone.

Walking through the forest Sam and Harry soon found some of the blood the unicorn had lost due to its wound, and so they followed the trail. Soon though Harry suddenly took a sharp breath and clutched his hand over the lightning bolt scar on his forehead. Sam worried that something might be wrong instantly drew his pistol, looking around trying to find out what was going on.

"What's wrong," he asked Harry as soon as he made sure that nothing was lurking between the trees and waiting to attack them.

"My scar…it's hurting…I don't know why…" Harry ground out between clenched teeth.

"Come on, perhaps it'll stop when we get away from here," Sam pointed out.

They slowly went onwards, but Sam noticed that the pain in Harry's scar only seemed to intensify, that was until they reached a small clearing where they saw the unicorn lying on the ground and a
shadow lurking over its neck obviously drinking the unicorn's blood. Harry screamed when the shadow rose its head and looked at them. Sam instinctively took aim with his pistol and shot a round straight at the shadow with anti-demon ammunition, but to his dismay, it just went straight through the spectre or whatever it was that they were facing. Hoping that this time it would work, he switched to iron ammunition layered in salt. It didn't have the intended effect in dissipating the thing, but at least it fled with a high pitched shriek.

Once he was sure that the threat was gone Sam instantly turned around to Harry who was on the ground from the pain now. However, Harry quickly recovered from it sitting up.

"Go look after the unicorn I'm okay," he told Sam who didn't move though. "Go! I don't need you right now, but the unicorn certainly does."

With one last concerned look towards Harry, Sam hurried over to the unicorn kneeling beside it and trying to assess what was necessary to help it. To his relief, the unicorn was still alive but only just, and if he didn't do anything soon it surely would die, but the problem was that he had no idea what he should do. So, for now, he merely put pressure on the still bleeding wound. That was when Harry finally also came over, having fully recovered from whatever made his scar hurt.

"I don't know what to do," Sam said with a slight panic in his voice.

Harry looked at the unicorn and made a decision. "I want to try something, but I don't know whether it will work," he said holding his hands over Sam's.

He closed his eyes and started to concentrate wishing with all his might to heal the creature while reaching out for his magic. It took a moment, but then he felt his magic flowing into his arms and hands and from there to the wound on the unicorn's neck. Harry could feel every torn muscle and every severed vein. Concentrating he started to mend the damage done to the poor creature as he healed it slowly going layer by layer to ensure it was done correctly. The entire thing took him a few minutes and a lot of power, but in the end, he succeeded before collapsing from the strain.

"It's done," he said his breathing laboured.

Right at that moment, Loki burst through the underbrush having been attracted by the shots, a fearful look on his face which instantly faded into a relieved one when he saw that neither Harry nor Sam were hurt, though it became quickly worried when he saw how exhausted Harry was.

"What happened?" he asked once he knelt next to Harry supporting him by leaning him against his side.

"We found a trail of unicorn blood and followed it, but when we reached this clearing, Harry suddenly went down from pain in the scar on his forehead. When I searched for the origin of it, I saw a shadow leaning over this unicorn's neck and drinking its blood. Thinking that it must be the reason for Harry's pain I shot it first with anti-demon ammunition and when that didn't work I switched to salt covered iron. That seemed to work since the thing fled. Harry then urged me to help the unicorn saying that he was okay," Sam explained while stroking the still weak unicorn to keep it calm. "I did as he said but didn't know how to help it when Harry came over. He said that he wanted to try something and I only could feel how the muscles mended beneath my hand where I put pressure on the wound to keep it from bleeding out. It seems that Harry healed it but as you can see it took a lot from him."

"Oh Harry, why haven't you waited for me? Healing someone…not to mention a unicorn without any knowledge of healing…you nearly depleted your magical core," Loki sighed while holding out his hand over the unicorn to see whether it needed further healing or not but while it seemed to be
weak because of the blood loss it would be fine so he pushed a bit magic into it to speed up the process of blood formation.

"I didn't know whether or not you would get here in time and I couldn't let it die…it's so beautiful…I couldn't…," Harry mumbled having a hard time not falling asleep.

Loki sighed. "Sleep Harry, and don't worry I'll get you back to the castle," he told the boy rubbing his back soothingly.

The unicorn in the meantime having recovered enough, slowly stood up before it turned to Harry and touched him with its horn. Harry briefly glowed golden before it vanished again.

"Thank you," Loki told it with a smile upon which the unicorn bowed its head before it turned around and vanished between the trees.

"What was that?" Sam asked confused.

"Unicorns have strong healing magic, and it healed Harry a bit it as thanks for him healing it to help him recover," Loki snickered while standing up and picking up Harry. "We should go and find Hagrid."

As if by command said half-giant came through the trees followed by Fang who seemingly ran to him at some point, wearing an anxious expression. When he saw that everyone was alright, he sighed in relief.

"You can't just run 'way like that," he scolded Loki when he saw Sam's hands covered in unicorn blood and even Harry had some stains of it on his clothes not to mention that said boy was deep asleep. "What happened?"

"We found the unicorn severely injured and Harry went to heal it while I prevented it from bleeding out hence the blood," Sam told him the short version leaving out their encounter with the shade.

"It took a lot out of him but he will be okay after a good night of sleep and a few days of not casting too much magic," Loki explained. "The unicorn is also recovering and just left."

"Madame Pomfrey will have to check him thou'," Hagrid told them with what was supposed to be a stern glare but only came over as a concerned look.

With that Hagrid turned around and led them out of the forest and back to the castle where he walked them straight to the infirmary where Madame Pomfrey instantly started to bustle around them assessing what happened and who was in need of treatment. In the end, she only gave all three a Pepper-Up potion to prevent them from catching a cold thanks to running around in the forbidden forest almost all evening, and Harry was to take it lightly for the next few days so that his core could replenish adequately. Other than that, they were all free to leave, and they gladly went back to their common room and their beds Loki again carrying Harry who still was asleep.

Loki didn't leave the entire night, making sure that both Harry and Sam were alright and got the sleep they certainly needed. But he swore that he would make sure that whatever they encountered in the forest would never get near them again. Little did he know that the reason for the hurt unicorn soon would reveal itself to him.

After that memorable excursion into the forbidden forest lessons went on, as usual, the only thing that stood out was that Quirrell one day suddenly disappeared never to be seen again. When Harry questioned Loki about that, knowing that he must have something to do with it because of what the professor had done to him during his first Quidditch match, the pagan only said that Snape and he
took care of a problem.

What disturbed not only him but also Snape though, was the fact that when they dealt with the idiot, they also found something else, namely that fool Riddle possessing the professor which was also the answer to the question who or what had injured the unicorn and drunk its blood. That had been the shade of said idiot in a bid for him to stay alive.

Snape though asked Loki why he hadn't sensed the possession the pagan looked even more shocked because he hadn't been able to detect the second entity and he had no bloody idea why. That bore a massive problem because he could not guarantee that he would be able to protect Harry adequately from that soul-splitting bastard, despite this piece now being safely stored within a pendant Loki had conjured and now wore around his neck, the problem was that there were more pieces of the man's soul out there.

Later he would inconspicuously ask Harry whether he had seen something abnormal in Quirrell's aura knowing that he could see them, but Harry only replied that Quirrell had quite a bit of black in it, but he had thought that it was a black like Snape had in his aura, a hidden darker side. Unfortunately, that didn't help his dilemma about not being able to sense or locate the soul-pieces in the slightest.

The same evening however as soon as Harry and Sam were sleeping he went to a meeting with Crowley, wanting to know whether or not the demon knew how it was possible that no one could sense the soul-shards. Unfortunately, even Crowley had no idea why they couldn't detect them, which Hell was quite peeved over because otherwise Hell would have long since dragged the man down to where he belonged, but he brought up a good point with the pagan.

What if one of the soul pieces decided to possess Harry? The very next day Loki asked Harry whether he was okay with a tattoo that would prevent possession of any kind, even demons and the like.

Harry quickly agreed to that, going by the motto "safety first.". While he knew that Loki would always protect him, he would do everything he could to be able to defend himself if only so that something like what happened in the forest or like what the Dursleys did to him would never happen again. Or in case that Loki couldn't be there in time. He wouldn't make the mistake of becoming reliant on the pagan that only cried for problems.

So not even a minute later Harry had a beautiful new tattoo on his left shoulder blade in the form of a kitsune with Enochian glyphs invisible to the naked eye woven into it that protected him. Harry decided on that design because the kitsune not only stood for the nature of a trickster but also for being protective of those they trusted, and being vindictive towards those who crossed them.

The problem with this, or better yet with what happened once the tattoo unfolded its entire power shocked everyone to the core. As soon as the glyphs settled Harry suddenly started to scream in agony while pitch black smoke poured out from the scar on his forehead screeching extremely loud.

Loki, however, was quick to come out of his shock-induced stupor and quickly captured the soul-piece that had evidently resided in Harry. Once it was also safely stored within the pendant, he instantly made sure that Harry was alright and not hurt in any way. To his relief Harry was only a bit tired after that ordeal but all in all unharmed. Infuriated by this it just reinforced the pagan's desire to find a way of locating those blasted soul-pieces.

Sam hearing and seeing that was quick to ask Loki whether he could make him his own tattoo. In the end, he had a picture of a three-headed dog on his chest over his heart, having taken a liking in the Cerberus here at school. Even the twins and Neville wanted such a tattoo, not wanting to run the risk
that anything or anyone could possess them too. Not much later the twins both had the Ying-Yang symbol on their left and right hands respectively as it was a symbol that stood for them as twins. Neville though decided on a rose vine growing up his left arm before blossoming on his shoulder.

Everyone was happy with their tattoo until the twins received a howler two days later from their mother shouting through the entire great hall demanding to know where they got the tattoos from and telling them how disappointed she was. Apparently, it was either Percy, who was quick to deny having anything to do with it after seeing their gaze, or the more likely candidate, Ron, who told their mother that they had new tattoos. Loki was utterly unimpressed by it and took even the smallest opportunity to prank the boy with pranks that were a bit more vicious. Luckily for the boy, he didn't end up in one of the female dorms again, and that Loki had to stop after three days only because the idiot had gone whining to McGonagall about it after having been dumped in the Black Lake.

Despite that little hiccup life went on, and soon at the end of February the second Quidditch match for Gryffindor that season came together with the worst weather possible. Sam was quite excited to watch his first match, but Harry quickly got him off it by stating that it wouldn't be worth coming out to the pitch in that weather. It was Harry's discussion with Wood that finally convinced Sam that if he wanted to watch a Quidditch match, he should wait until summer when the game against Ravenclaw was due with the hopefully better weather.

"Oliver…all you need on the pitch today is you and me. Do you really want the entire team to risk catching a cold only because you force them out there for the not even five minutes it will take me to catch the Snitch? I doubt that even one team will be able to score a goal before that happens," he exclaimed for the nth time.

"Hey, what about a bet? You do as Harry says and if he shouldn't deliver on what he says and catches the snitch within five minutes…" Loki exclaimed, tired of the discussion looking at Harry who nodded. "He pays…I don't know…ten galleons to each member of Gryffindor."

Harry considered what the pagan just said before he nodded. "Yep should be doable, but should I deliver the snitch within five minutes every one of you pays me one galleon, and hey, to up the ante a bit should I manage to catch the snitch within two minutes it goes up to five Galleons," he replied with a smirk.

All the Gryffindors who were so sure that it would be impossible for him to catch the snitch within five, not to mention two minutes, agreed to his conditions. To their utter surprise Harry, Oliver, and those very few who decided to watch the match returned after only twenty minutes followed by a soaking wet black dog who also chose to watch his godson play. The result? 150:10 because Oliver had missed one toss.

"Mr Potter this is absolutely impossible. How were you able to catch the snitch in 1 minute and 49 seconds? This is the quickest catch in the history of Quidditch in Hogwarts, and at that in such weather," McGonagall who before the match was shocked speechless by the fact that only Harry and Oliver showed up, now rambled.

"Professor, do you really think that I like flying in such weather? I just wanted to be back in the common room as soon as possible, so I caught the Snitch as quickly as possible," Harry retorted. "Besides that, nowhere in the rules is it stated that the entire team has to be on the pitch. You wanted me as the seeker of Gryffindor so please don't complain about my methods now."

McGonagall looked heavenwards before she shook her head and went back down the corridor muttering under her breath about impossible brats, which made Harry snicker and think about Snape. She was just glad that it hadn't been the game against Slytherin, because then she would have never heard the end of it from Severus, he would constantly be complaining that Harry was a cheater.
Harry though, once he entered the common room turned towards Loki who looked at him expectantly.

"And?" he asked after Harry just grinned at him.

"One minute and forty-nine seconds…I think I'm rich," he laughed before he walked up the stairs to their dorm to get out of his wet clothes and under a hot shower leaving behind an entire house stunned to silence.

Only Sam who had no idea what was so special about Quidditch after all went after him, followed closely by the big black dog who trotted after him.

"Let me guess that Snitch thing you had to catch has a magical aura that against that weather was like a beacon light guiding you," he said once he closed the door to their dorm behind him.

"Yep," Harry replied popping the p while starting to undress. "Was as bright as a lit candle in the dark, and it only took me so long to catch that damned Snitch because of the wind…it's really hard to manoeuvre when you have to fight against crosswinds."

"Don't let the other teams hear that. They probably would throw you from the team because they think it cheating," Sirius who had turned back into a human snickered before sitting down on Harry's bed watching him. "It was one hell of a prank though, I'm proud of you."

"It was McGonagall who wanted me on the team. As I already told her, she shouldn't complain about my methods then, and besides that, I gained the ability to see auras because of Loki's teachings so blame him," Harry muttered. "Now if you'll excuse me, I'm freezing and in dire need of a hot shower."

Both males watched Harry vanish into the bathroom, waiting a few minutes before they heard the water running.

In the meantime, a commotion had broken out in the common room. No one could believe that they just lost their bet with Harry, bar those who hadn't taken up the gamble in the first place such as Neville or the twins who knew that Harry would deliver, or those who were not into betting. The loudest to complain however was Ron.

"I'm telling you that boy is dark! He probably used some kind of dark spell to catch the Snitch that fast!" he exclaimed quite loudly. "There's no other way!"

"Ronald Weasley! Only because you don't know what he did, it doesn't automatically mean that he is dark," came the retort from the probably most unlikely source, Hermione.

Though everyone who knew that the girl spent quite some time around the group of friends wasn't all that surprised. Actually, the girl had changed quite a lot since that incident at Halloween. Gone was the girl who took everything she read in a book or heard from someone in a position of authority at face value. Now there was a girl who still wanted to learn everything and be the best in class, but she didn't lecture everyone around her anymore and also lost her bossy know-it-all attitude. It was Sam and Neville, especially, who had helped her in that regard, stopping her before she could get into a
"Ah, and you would know that you buck-toothed know-it-all?" Ron snapped back. "I wonder how anyone can stand to be near you. You run around and show everyone how much better you are, but you know what...you're just an insufferable Mudblood."

Had he said that at the beginning of the school year Hermione probably would have run up to her dorm crying but not now. Now she merely stared at the redhead raising an eyebrow, not even deeming him worthy of a reply knowing that she had friends in Sam and Neville, and even the twins, Loki, and Harry.

Who deemed him worthy of a reply, however, were three other persons currently standing with Hermione. Namely Fred, George and Loki who all looked livid upon hearing that insult.

"Ronald Bilius Weasley," Fred said.

"This was certainly your," George continued before both spoke unison.

"Last mistake!"

"What do you want to do, eh? I tell you what...nothing or you'll be expelled," Ron shouted. "Standing up for that..." he said but didn't get any further because Loki interrupted him by sealing his mouth shut.

"You'll listen closely now...I'm fed up with your attitude, you insult good people who never did anything except maybe cracking open a book which would surely do you some good too. Should you not change your attitude soon believe me you'll get to see a side of me you certainly do NOT want to see," Loki growled stepping towards the redhead until he was mere inches away from him.

"Do you really want to be expelled?" Ron questioned him. "Because you will be as soon as McGonagall learns about this."

"Oh, believe me, I won't be expelled but you on the other hand..." now Loki smirked tapping the boy on his forehead. "I hope you like your punishment."

With that Loki turned around and walked over to the sitting area in front of the fire before he sat down closely followed by Hermione and the twins.

"What did you do to him?" Hermione questioned once the rest of the students had dissipated and they could be reasonably sure that no one would listen in.

Loki snickered lowly. "Not going to tell," he replied. "But you'll see soon."

True to his words the next few days became highly interesting when concerning the stupid redhead. Not only did he seemingly sleep very poorly during the night, having nightmares, but he was also obviously forced to speak what he thought, and truthfully at that. To say that he got into trouble more often than not because of it would be a massive understatement. Just for his comment on Snape alone; which was highly inappropriate to say within the hearing range of not only the Professor
himself but also quite a few first-year students, he got two weeks' worth of detention, and that didn't even factor in the detentions he got from the other teachers.

When cornered by Snape, Loki confessed that he placed a spell on Weasley that forced him to honestly say what he thought, which apparently was even fouler than the pagan had expected, after he profoundly insulted Hermione. However, instead of giving him problems as Loki thought Snape congratulated him for this fascinating approach on punishing a student; even if he could have done without the comment.

Even with the students, Ron was quickly losing what remaining respect he had. Harry especially became increasingly irritated and angry with the boy when he continued to target both Hermione and the twins. One memorable day Harry's patience with the idiot snapped, and he forced him to wear some outfit that would probably have fitted a Japanese Lolita fashion shop more than Hogwarts by transfiguring his robes. To Ron's horror, there seemed to be quite a few fangirls of that particular fashion who hunted him for the entire day. Harry found it hilarious how the girls cooed over the idiot's forced cuteness...nobody liked him, but everybody found him cute.

Despite that...inconvenience, life went on. Lessons continued with DADA getting a new teacher after Quirrell's surprise vanishing act, and peace reigned in Hogwarts...well, until Loki got bored...extremely bored....
The new DADA teacher they had was very good – better than Quirrell anyway. He was funny and had a refreshing way to teach his subject even going so far as to bring the creatures he was teaching about into class as long as they posed no danger to the students. Everyone loved him, but they also all knew that the teacher would leave again once the school year was over. When the students asked him why he wouldn’t stay, he only answered that he had other work to do and that he was just here on Dumbledore’s request to bridge the time until the summer holidays.

Harry and the others though were happy with their new teacher, even if they only had him for a few months.

What disturbed the peace at Hogwarts though was when one day Loki got bored…extremely bored…so bored that he turned Hogwarts upside down – literally.

It was going towards the end of March and Harry was currently lying in his bed wondering where Loki had vanished to since the pagan god was still missing and it was nearly time for breakfast. Usually, Loki was back before any of them were awake, but today it was different.

That was when Sam started to stir in the bed next to him.

“Good morning, Harry,” Sam muttered looking over at him, not even surprised that Harry was already awake, the boy was an early riser. “What time is it?”

“Half past seven, there’s still a lot of time,” Harry replied with a knowing smirk.

Sometimes Sam could be such a bloody mother hen with how he behaved around Harry, making sure that he ate enough, that they weren’t too late for lessons or that he was dressed warm enough. Harry though found it amusing and thought that this is what it must feel like to have a family who cared. Unbeknownst to Harry, Sam had already claimed him as his brother and even thought of Loki as family, they were keeping him sane while Dean was in hell.

“I’m going to take a shower,” Sam said while standing up and walking over to his trunk to grab the necessary things. “I wonder where Loki vanished to.”

“Probably preparing some prank,” came the sleepy mumbling from Neville.

“As long as he doesn’t level Hogwarts to the ground I don’t care,” Harry snickered watching Sam leave to the bathroom.
“Hopefully not,” Neville said.

They both also got up and went to get a shower before all three boys emerged back from the bathroom. All three got dressed when suddenly a much too hyper Loki appeared in the middle of the room.

“Hey girls, missed me?” Loki whom Harry thought was on a sugar high piped up.

“Go back to where you came from, I want to sleep,” Dean, who was woken by Loki’s exclamation, grumbled.

“Why? It is such a nice sunny day, the birds are doing whatever birds are doing when…” Loki chirruped but was interrupted by Harry.

“That is something I certainly do NOT want to know,” he exclaimed effectively waking up the rest of the dorm. “What did you smoke anyway that you’re so hyper?”

“Oh nothing, I’m just happy,” Loki grinned.

Harry looked at him blinking a few times before he groaned, he remembered that Loki had claimed to be bored the day before and he had a sinking feeling that this day would be full of surprises.

“What did you do?” he groaned.

“Why do you think that I did anything?” Loki retorted with an angelic smile which Harry definitely didn’t believe for one second.

“Because you’re Loki, the epitome of chaos if bored and I know that you were bored,” Harry said glaring at the pagan.

Loki on the other hand only shrugged and with a grin turned around and left the dorm. Harry stared after him but couldn’t bring himself to be angered knowing that whatever Loki had done would be funny and would never hurt anyone. So with that in mind, he finished dressing and after waited for Neville and Sam to finish too before they all left the dorm to find Loki waiting in the common room. The three soon were joined by the twins who were their usual joyful selves, and once Hermione joined them they all set into motion and went down to the great hall for breakfast.

Luckily for everyone, it was Friday, and soon they could relax over the weekend. Harry though sat there wondering what Loki had done that he was so hyper which even the teachers saw and caused a spark of wariness in them. That was until Neville saw it.

“Harry, stop worrying, I doubt that you’d be able to do anything against what Loki did anyway,” the boy muttered low enough so that they weren’t overheard.

“I know, but I have that sinking feeling that this day will be utter chaos,” Harry replied with a tense smile.

Neville shrugged and turned back to Sam who was currently in discussion with the twins as to whether it would be possible for a werewolf to obtain an Animagus form.

It was at the end of breakfast and when they went to their classes that Harry was correct with his assessment that something was terribly wrong. None of the corridors and stairs in the castle led to their original destination anymore.

So what if that one staircase that initially led to the second floor suddenly ended in front of the
potions classroom while the corridor to the dungeons ended up on the seventh floor. The problem though was that the layout of the castle continuously shifted. One hallway that at that moment led to the Gryffindor common room the next moment would lead to the Infirmary,

That wasn't even the most prominent thing yet.

The entire castle had been turned into something a muggle would refer to as a theme park. Something akin to a tunnel of horror found its way into the dungeons while the seventh floor was besieged by comic characters much to the amusement and delight of the Muggle-born. Pokémon invaded the entire castle, and the Avengers duelled the Justice League through the corridors leaving stunned students in their wake while others cheered them on.

To sum it up in four words: It was utter chaos.

While the Muggle-born and those who knew enough about the Muggle world to get the references thought that it was the best thing Loki could have done and lingered in those corridors that suited their tastes the most, the pure-bloods were confused as to what all this mess was about. That was until those who knew what was going on took pity on them explaining what the references were.

It became even more chaotic when they found out that they could interact with everything realistically and soon students were found stalking certain areas trying to catch their favourite Pokémon or fighting along Batman against Iron Man who was equally supported by others.

However, none of the students showed up for classes that day much to the disgruntlement of the teachers.

The teachers looked at the ongoing chaos with mixed feelings, on the one hand, they didn’t like it that no one showed up for lessons, but on the other, most of them thought it a nice distraction. Since it was Friday, they didn’t complain overly much and stuck to keeping the children from going overboard once they became aware that everything was harmless.

“Loki, what did you do?” Harry tried to sound stern, but the amusement was clearly audible.

“What? I was bored,” Loki said shrugging.

“Remind me that next time you say you’re bored to prepare myself,” Sam muttered ducking an energy beam Iron Man shot at Green Arrow that missed.

“You’re not going to carry a gun around at school,” Loki retorted making a face that he would gladly confiscate any weapon he knew Sam owned.

Sam though gave him a deadpan look telling the pagan that he wasn’t stupid. “What I meant was that I’d stock up on food and hole myself up until your prank is over,” he said still glaring at Loki.

“Oi,” Loki exclaimed. “What’s so bad with what I did?”

“Nothing, it’s brilliant,” Harry spoke up, watching how a Pikachu ran up to him and hid behind his leg before peaking around it electric sparks flying from its cheeks, it glared at Iron Man who had nearly hit it with one of his beams. Having seen parts of the Pokémon series while cleaning when he had been younger and Dudley claimed the TV in the kitchen to watch it, Harry made a moment’s decision. “Pikachu, Thunder Shock,” he called out. To his utter surprise, the Pikachu charged from its hiding place and ran towards Iron Man releasing an arc of electricity on the man in the iron suit frying the circuits much to the man’s surprise.

That made the friends laugh.
“Never judge something by its size,” Neville wisely commented watching the Pikachu who now sported a smug look before it turned around and climbed onto Harry's shoulder.

Neville had no idea what those Pokémon were, but he found them funny especially when he saw an Oddish hiding in a flower pot with a plant Harry had gifted him and that currently stood in the dorm on the windowsill. The Oddish shocked the hell out of him when he wanted to water the plant later that day, and the Pokémon jumped out.

All in all, everyone had a lot of fun that day though Loki was a bit peeved about the ever-shifting corridors since even he didn’t know where each passage led.

“How did you do it with the corridors?” Sam questioned after having tried to find the transfiguration corridor for the 6th time.

Loki chuckled lowly. “You see Hogwarts is a sentient building and I simply talked with her, and she found it an excellent idea,” he explained. “Though I have no idea why I’m not able to work out the pattern.”

That was when a feeling of amusement washed over the friends. They knew that it was Hogwarts’ doing so that even Loki wouldn’t be able to find his way, she could be quite devious when she wanted to be. The only time someone would instantly find his or her way was when said person was hungry and on the way to the great hall, neither Loki nor Hogwarts wanted to deprive the children of the needed food.

However, soon the day came to an end, and everything went back to normal. Not everyone was happy about it; especially the Muggle-born and even a few purebloods were sad that the “assets” Loki had conjured vanished. Loki, in the end, conceded that they might have special days in the future where he would entertain them with certain themes the students could decide beforehand.

Routine set in again, and March bled into April who in turn gave way to May.

Loki held the first theme day under the headline X-men and even managed to get in lessons about meditation, morals and also focussing magic without a wand. The teachers had to admit that it was a fascinating way to teach the children. They never saw the students who attended paying so much attention in their own classes.

Another thing was that one weekend Loki finally deemed it safe enough to bring Severus to Lily. Loki actually had never seen the Potions Master so anxious before than when he told him that he would take him the next weekend. Even the other Professors could tell that the man was restless and wondered what was going on.

It was Friday evening after dinner then that Loki went to Severus' quarters, wanting to give him as much time with Lily as possible so he would take him as early as possible and return him as late as possible so probably on Monday shortly before breakfast.

The two landed between the trees that surrounded the little cottage James and Lily lived in, Loki looking around to assure that their arrival went unnoticed. Severus also looked around fascinated on how their heaven looked like.
That was when Lily became aware of their arrival and instantly came running out of the house and without pausing she flung her arms around Severus' neck hugging him close before kissing him full stop. Severus tensed up at first before he returned the kiss tentatively.

“I’ve missed you, Severus,” Lily said once she pulled back.

“Lily…I’m so sorry,” Severus replied with a pained expression.

Lily, on the other hand, placed her finger over Severus' mouth. “Even if I didn’t like that you did what you did, I forgave you a long time ago,” she said with a smile before kissing him again.

That was when James came walking out of the cottage snickering when he saw his wife and Severus which made said man tense up again before pulling away from Lily and looking at him pensively which resulted in James laughing.

“Don’t worry,” James spoke up. “I have been a complete arse to you in the past, and it took my…our deaths to grow up and see the truth for what it was, but I changed. Lily loves me, which I know, but that doesn’t mean that there isn’t enough space in her heart for her to also love another man. Because of our past, I doubt that we’d ever become friends, but I’m more than willing to at least be civil.”

Severus could only stare at James. The man had profoundly apologised in his letter but never in a million years would Severus have ever expected this, so it was no wonder that he was speechless.

James couldn’t help but laugh at the dumbfound expression Severus sported. “Come on, let’s get inside and talk there. I think Lily made a really nice apple tart,” he told him while waving for him to follow them.

At first, Severus could only stare after them, but soon he came out of his stupor. He turned around to thank Loki for bringing him here only to find that the pagan had long left. So he could only follow James and Lily into the cottage.

As promised, Loki then returned Monday morning which was much longer for Severus though thanks to the difference in the speed of time. To Loki, it seemed that James and Severus came to an understanding. As James said they probably would never become good friends, but at least they now were friendly acquaintances.

“Severus, stop longing after me, it won’t do you any good,” Lily told Severus with a smile when it was time for him to leave. “Go out, find yourself someone to love and be happy and stop wasting your life.”

Severus swallowed not knowing what to reply to that, so he merely nodded, knowing that Lily was right. What they had was a platonic love, but it was something that nothing would come ever out of, not that it would work anyway.

“I love you and always will but I’m dead and you’re very much alive. I’d hate to see you become an old, lonely, bitter man.” Lily cupped his cheek with her hand.

A lone tear rolled down Severus' cheek. In reply, he leaned down and kissed Lily. “I promise,” he
said, his voice wavering slightly.

“Good!” her smile broadened while she took a step back.

“I think you have to leave, stay any longer, and you’ll be late,” James spoke up. “Greet my son from me, will you?”

Severus grabbed James’ hand that was held out toward him and firmly shook it. “I will,” he said with a curt nod.

After that, he turned around and walked over to Loki who was patiently waiting for him. With a last smile towards the couple standing a few feet away from them, Severus and Loki were gone, only to reappear in the man’s personal quarters.

Loki went to leave while Severus took a deep breath before speaking up.

“Thank you,” he whispered.

Loki smiled at the man even if he didn’t see it. “You’re welcome, I’ll see you at breakfast in an hour,” he said before finally leaving the room.

The effects that Severus’ visit in heaven had on the man became obvious two days later when said man appeared at Lunch wearing dark green robes instead of his normal black ones. To Severus, it looked like he had fallen into a deep depression when Lily died. The visit lifted a weight from him he never realised he carried around. Though now he had finally gotten over his friend’s death and after all that time was now finally able to live his life again.

The students, on the other hand, were shocked to the core that their usually dour Potions Professor suddenly had a slight shift in his personality. Not that he suddenly ran around all happy and humming like the headmaster, but he became less snappish and sarcastic. Instead, he was more inclined to explain mistakes that should be avoided and help his students more instead of just snapping at them and vanishing their potion. However, he was still strict when it came to brewing and didn’t tolerate messing around.

What happened in the middle of May though was the most interesting for the group of friends around Loki. It was on a Tuesday during lunch that an overly excited Padfoot came trotting into the great hall. Up ‘till now nearly everyone knew who he really was but Sirius didn’t care, he liked to show up that way and since no one commented on it…. Though he usually only visited during the weekends because McGonagall would have revoked any right for him to visit his godson because he distracted him too much. Since she bent some of the school rules for him, claiming that it was so that Harry could acclimate to being his godson because he just met him and he was his magical guardian now, he was very much inclined to respect her terms as long as he could meet with Harry and his friends.

Today, however, Sirius was on a mission, and everyone could see that with how determined but also excitedly trod over to where the group of friends was sitting enjoying their meal.

Sam, when he saw the black hound coming over, looked concerned.

“Something has happened,” he muttered so that only those in his close vicinity could hear him. “Padfoot never comes in during the week.”

Loki who was also confused, looked over to Sirius when his face lit up. “Dean,” was all he said.

Sam instantly tensed up fearing the worst until Sirius reached him, grabbed his sleeve with his
muzzle and urgently pulled at him. That was when Sam finally understood what Sirius was trying to tell him, Dean has returned.

A range of emotions flittered over Sam’s face ranging from shock to surprise and undiluted happiness. It took him only mere seconds to jump up and run after a pretty quick Sirius through the front doors and across the Hogwarts lands towards Hogsmeade. Harry who saw that was quick to follow them, leaving behind stunned friends. Again it fell to Loki to explain the situation to the teachers who were also stunned by that behaviour.

Sam, Harry and Sirius rushed through the small village of Hogsmeade until they reached a small house that was large enough to live comfortably and where Sirius finally turned back. They entered the house together, Sirius leading them through to the kitchen where Dean was sitting at the counter nursing a glass of beer and an opulent meal.

Though when Harry’s gaze fell on the man, he stopped dead in his track. This was something he definitely had *NOT* anticipated!
Chapter 24: Shocks, Surprises and Demons In-between

When Harry saw Dean, or better yet his aura, he didn’t know whether to smack himself on the forehead, Dean over the head, or start laughing uproariously. He watched how Sam ran over to his brother and embraced him in a hug – thankfully Dean was sitting, or it would have been hard with Sam being a child at the moment – without making sure that it was even his brother when Harry couldn’t keep it to himself anymore and started to snicker.

“Jesus Christ, you don’t do things half-heartedly, do you Dean?” he laughed.

This earned him a snicker from Sirius who now stood in the kitchen leaning against the counter watching everything, and a glare from Dean over his brother’s shoulder. The man’s eyes were completely black.

“Dean, it is so good to have you back,” Sam muttered into Dean’s shoulder before he drew back again. “How are you? Are you alright? How was your stay in hell? What…” he started to question his brother but was quickly interrupted by an amused Dean.

“Sam. SAM! Calm down, I’m not going anywhere anytime soon,” he laughed. “I’m well but…there are a few things we have to discuss.”

Raising an eyebrow, Sam looked at Dean now, worried because his brother had tensed up.

“What is it? What’s wrong?” he asked, sitting down on the chair next to Dean. “Your stay in hell…our plan worked, didn’t it?”

“Yes, everything went according to the plan, but um…,” he started helplessly looking at Harry, but the boy only smirked at him, telling him that this was his brother and his job to tell him. “I don’t know how to tell you this…but….”

“Merlin, Dean…tell me already! It’s not like you suddenly decided to say yes to Michael, have you?” Sam was increasingly frustrated now, but Dean quickly denied that.

“No that’s not it…it's just…” Dean sighed deeply before looked Sam straight into the eyes, his eyes flashing black before returning back to normal.

Sam though, to Dean’s utter surprise just stared blankly at him as if nothing had happened at all.

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“Sam?” Dean asked after a few minutes of utter silence, no one daring to say anything.

“I'm only surprised that it took you that long,” was Sam’s only deadpan answer.

Dean started to splutter. “You…WHAT?”

“Dean seriously, I’m not stupid. When Loki informed me that Crowley told him that you and Alastair work alarmingly well together, I already suspected that something like that might happen.
The next day then I took Loki aside, and he explained to me a few things about demons. You’re a
demon? So what? As long as you don’t start to hunt down and torture innocents there are worse
things that could have happened,” he explained with a smile, his talk with Loki about demons really
had been an eye-opener.

~ Flashback ~

“But what if Dean becomes a demon?” Sam nearly whined, he didn’t know how else he could tell
Loki that he feared what might happen if that was the case.

“Sam, do you know how many demons live on earth? Demons you’d never even suspect of being
such because they live a normal life blending in and never doing anything to show up on a hunter’s
radar?!” Loki asked Sam in disbelief. “There are so many demons or other supernatural beings out
there you’d be shocked if you knew. I won’t say that those demons are saints, far from it, but most of
them found their own little way to let out their darker nature, but they are mostly harmless. Like me
when I teach some idiot who deserves it a lesson, they have their own ways to torture people without
even breaking the law. I know for a fact that stockbroker is one of their favoured jobs or also lawyer.
Bloody hell! There’s even an entire demon race called Vengeance Demons that live off of making
the lives of those who wronged someone a living hell. Sam, stop seeing the world in black and
white, there is so much more to this world than only those two colours.”

Sam at that point of their conversation looked towards the floor, he knew what the pagan was talking
about. Ever since Harry and consequently also Loki had stumbled into their lives shortly after
Christmas, he had started to see that there was more to this world than he thought. Sure, he already
knew that not every “monster” they hunted was inherently evil and not every human a saint but that
there was an entire society besides their own? No, he certainly hadn’t known that until just then. The
first thing to open his eyes had been the Rabbit Hole. Seeing first-hand how werewolves, vampires
and whatever else peacefully attended to their businesses had been a shock at first.

However, now Sam could see what Loki meant and when he thought about it, how ruthless some
banker could be or how a lawyer sometimes ripped into people destroying their lives with it, yes he
could believe that they were demons who had found a way to let their darker desires out without
alerting certain individuals. It’s not that he thought it was okay, but he also knew that this was
nothing he would be able to do anything against, it was just how life was.

In the end, he sighed deeply. “You’re right, but up until lately that was everything we knew, those
monsters were evil and we had to hunt them so that they couldn’t hurt people. We had already
learned that there was more to the world, that not every werewolf was a savage beast and that not
every vampire wants to drain people dry, but this?” he muttered and ran his hand over his face before
sighing once again. “It’s just a bit much to learn that everything we thought we knew about the
supernatural is mostly wrong.”

“This is why I agreed that it would be good for you to come here to Hogwarts. Believe it or not but I
like you and Dean, and I don’t want to see you get killed only because your information was
incorrect. Seriously… I think that by now my first-year class is better prepared than you two,” Loki
snickered.
So yes, Sam learned that there were far worse things that could happen to his brother than ending up as a demon.

They heard low laughter came from the adjourning living room and when they collectively turned around, they saw a brunette woman coming out of one of the other room. Sam had to admit that the woman was beautiful and could probably be the cover model on the Playboy magazine, though he somehow doubted that the woman would ever even contemplate becoming one. She was wearing skin-tight black trousers and a blood-red blouse with the first two buttons undone leading to many a grown man having plenty of inappropriate thoughts. Her eyes were a mesmerising blue, and her brown hair fell in waves down to her shoulder blades.

“Don’t worry that is highly unlikely to happen,” the woman said while walking over to them. “He became what is commonly known as a Vengeance Demon. So as long as the person didn’t do anything to deserve any punishment…” she left it at that smiling at Sam while holding out her hand. “Alastair, it is a pleasure to finally meet you, Sam, Dean told me quite a lot about you. Oh, and before you start to bitch around, I made this body myself.”

Sam looked at Alastair for a long moment before he took her hand and shook it. Once he let go the demon turned towards Harry with mild interest.

“You must be Harry Potter then. I have to admit that I’m impressed, you caused quite a stir in hell with killing Ruby,” she now laughed.

“As long as you don’t make the same mistake as she made and underestimate me, we’ll be fine,” Harry retorted fingering the hilt of one of the throwing knives he had brought with him and that was currently strapped to his forearm next to his wand, he wouldn’t make the same mistake again and underestimate a demon.

That only made Alastair chuckle though. “I like you,” she said with a bright smile while sitting down next to Dean placing a hand on the man’s thigh which made him tense. “You’re not like those normal idiots who either cower in the presence of a demon or try to get a good deal. It’s refreshing to see.”

Harry slowly lowered his hand that was upon the hilt of his knife while snickering lowly.

“You two are together, aren’t you?” Sam suddenly asked having observed Dean and Alastair for the last few minutes. It was the only conclusion he could come up with in regards to how the two behaved.

Dean shrugged somewhat helplessly. “I stayed in hell for a very long time – 47 years to be precise – …it just happened…does it bother you?” he asked a bit tentatively but was surprised when Sam started to laugh.

“Once again, I already suspected something like this could happen,” he finally said still chuckling. “And as long as she doesn’t hurt you I don’t care. But Alastair, one warning is all you get, should you hurt my brother in any way, believe me, there will be no place in heaven, hell or anywhere else
you could hide! I would find you and end you!” he said with a ferocious glare towards the female
demon that spoke volumes about how serious he was.

Alastair though wasn’t intimidated in the least but instead simply smirked at Sam. They stared at each
other not even blinking when just at that moment the front door opened and moments later Loki
walked into the room. However, when his gaze fell upon the occupants, he blinked several times,
turned around and left again only to come back a few minutes later.

“Loki? Everything alright?” Harry asked confusedly over the pagan’s antics.

“Just wanted to make sure that I’m really in the right house. I mean Dean seriously? You definitely
don’t do things half-heartedly, do you?” he asked in disbelief.

Harry, hearing that, snickered, he had asked precisely the same question.

“Problem?” Dean glared at Loki.

Loki looked at everyone in the room. When he saw that they obviously knew about Dean's new
“condition” and didn’t even bat an eye about it, he shrugged.

“No, just surprised that’s all,” he replied while walking over to the others when a thought struck him.
“Michael will be pissed when he learns about it, it really throws a spanner in heaven’s plans, and I
hope I’m there when he learns if only to see his face.”

The grin Loki now sported could only be described as utterly mischievous, it seemed that there was
no love lost between him and Michael and that he loved to mess with the archangel.

“You don’t like Michael, do you?” Sirius asked speaking up for the first time since they had arrived
in his house.

“Nah, I’m just not a fan of his fight with Lucifer. If they kill off the planet with their little war whom
am I supposed to prank?” he now laughed.

“What about your family?” Harry asked though Loki only looked a bit confused. “Thor? Odin?
Ringing any bells?”

“Do you really think that they would survive the clash between Lucifer and Michael?” Loki now
raised an eyebrow.

“That bad?” Sirius wondered.

“Worse!” Loki replied in a serious tone. “Believe me, you didn’t witness the first round between
them…the second…it would be a wonder if anything would survive.”

That sobered everyone up in an instant.

“Say, why are we helping break certain seals again? I mean if it really would be that bad we’d only
speed it up,” Sam muttered.

Loki sighed before conjuring a chair and sitting down. “I don’t honestly know, but what I know is
that as long as Michael doesn’t have a suitable vessel who says yes to him, we’re safe. Somehow I
have the feeling that there is more to the entire thing than we can see at the moment. I mean why did
three independent seers say the very same thing? That the seals will fall and they even made it sound
as if it’s something good!”
Everyone could see that this was something that was weighing heavily on the pagan’s mind. Harry had no idea what he could do to cheer Loki back up, so he did the first thing that came to his mind and wrapped an arm around his shoulder holding him close and giving him silent comfort. Loki looked up at him and smiled, slightly, thankful for it.

That was when suddenly a pillar of black smoke arose a few feet away from everyone and soon gave way to the form of Crowley. The demon quickly looked around taking in the sight before him before he chuckled lowly.

“Well that actually explains everything,” he said with amusement in his voice.

“Crowley,” Sam said tersely. “How can we help you? And what explains everything?”

“I actually came to talk to Loki about Dean vanishing from hell, but that obviously isn’t necessary anymore. What is interesting though is that there's currently an angel roaming hell frantically trying to find Dean,” he snickered.

“Well it seems you outpaced your rescuing party,” Sam laughed.

“I told you they won’t leave Dean in hell,” Loki added his mood having improved over the misfortune of the angel that was sent to rescue Dean.

Harry on the other hand outright laughed. “I wonder how long it will take for him to realise that Dean isn’t in hell anymore,” he brought out.

“From what was observed it seems to be quite a dense specimen,” Crowley said amusedly. “The demons in charge of Alastair's racks are currently having their fun with him by having him constantly turning around in a circle.”

“Don’t let it go on for too long...he might get suspicious that something is wrong,” Alastair spoke up, she had been let in on the plan by Dean right from the start.

Crowley nodded. “On an unrelated note, you might want to stock up on salt and iron. I heard that Lilith wants to break the first seal soon, the Rising of the Witnesses.”

Dean, Sam, Loki and Sirius all looked at each other sharing the same thought, this would be bad. All of them had lost one or more souls that they couldn’t save, in Dean and Sam's case, or had to kill during the war in Sirius case, or were overall worried about the students in Hogwarts like Loki.

Harry though was confused. “What does that mean, Rising of the Witnesses?” he asked.

“It means that the souls of each and every person you killed, couldn’t save or are otherwise connected to their death will come back and try to kill you,” Crowley bluntly stated earning himself a glare from Loki of which he was utterly unimpressed before he vanished to hell knows where without another word.

“What about my parents?” he now inquired anxiously.

“Harry, don’t worry,” Loki soothingly told him. “Even if they come back, always remember that they’re not themselves because of the spell behind it. Besides that, I’ll protect you!”

Harry nodded already calmer than before.

“I’ll protect you too,” Sam spoke up earning himself a curious glance from Dean. “Dean I’ll stay here until the end of the term. Better having a hunter here who knows how to deal with vengeful
ghosts in Hogwarts and it is only a bit over a month anyway. Loki do you know how to reverse that spell?” he asked Loki who only shook his head.

Dean hummed lowly. “I think I’ll go to Bobby then and see whether he knows how to end it once it’s begun,” he finally said when he remembered something and let his head fall onto the table with a low thud.

Sam wondered what Dean’s antics were about when he also remembered the problem and he began to smirk. “Have fun explaining your new…condition to him,” he said with a vindictive grin.

“Idiot,” Dean retorted with a heated glare.

“Jerk,” came the reflexive reply.

“Bitch.”

Alastair observed how the name-calling went on for several minutes before she interrupted them with a clearing of her throat.

“So Dean and I go to that Bobby to get the counter-spell while Sam stays here, correct?” she inquired.

“Yef,” Loki said around a lolly he had just conjured and was now sucking on, giving Harry, who was demandingly holding his hand out, another one.

“I know a ghost banishing spell I can teach you two,” Sirius spoke up telling Harry and Sam.

“That would be great,” Sam answered, it would also help him later with his hunter business.

“So we have a plan! Sirius teaches Sam and me that spell while Dean and Alastair go to America and find out how to stop the mess. Loki stays with us here and helps us. Did I forget anything?” he looked at everyone expectantly.

“That sums it up quite nicely,” Sam muttered while nodding.

“Good, then I’d say that everyone should get to work,” Sirius said pushing off the counter and walking over to the others.

Everyone nodded and went to work on their part to keep those vengeful ghosts from making too much a mess once they were released. Dean and Alastair vanished, headed towards America while Sirius went to teach Sam and Harry the ghost banishing spell. Loki in the meantime also left to take care of some of his own business.
Chapter 25: Castiel

Dean and Alastair landed in a junkyard outside a house that had certainly seen better days in Alastair's opinion, though she didn’t really care. She walked over to one of the broken cars close to the house’s entrance, sat upon the hood and watched how Dean walked up to the front door. To her amusement, it seemed that Dean was a bit frightened about his upcoming confrontation with his old friend.

Dean looked around for one last time hoping that Bobby wouldn’t react too violently to his new condition before he knocked sharply against the door. It was only a few minutes later that he could hear rumbling coming from inside the house and shortly after a man in his late fifties opened the door.

Said man took one look at Dean his expression quickly changing from shock and surprise to suspiciousness. In an instant, the man had a gun in his hand and pointed it at Dean.

“Hey, hey, Bobby, it's me! Dean,” Dean exclaimed, but Bobby didn’t seem to believe him.

“Prove it,” Bobby demanded.

“How am I supposed to do that?” Dean asked in disbelief.

As an answer Bobby threw a handful of salt at Dean who quickly dove out of the way, not wanting to be hit by it because it would hurt him.

“Bobby, what is that supposed to be?” he asked the older man, ignoring the low chuckling of Alastair who watched the proceedings with growing amusement.

Bobby, now even more suspicious of Dean, grabbed a bottle of holy water, opened it and flung part of the content towards Dean who had to jump to the side to avoid it. That movement, however, set off Alastair who laughed uproariously.

“You are so going to sleep on the couch tonight,” Dean snarled at the demon with a glare for merely standing there and laughing about his predicament.

“I highly doubt that!” Alastair said with a knowing smirk.

“Oh, you’ll see,” Dean snapped back diving under yet another attack with holy water.

“What’s that?” Bobby demanded, as the demon shuffled under the attacks.

“Bobby,” Dean growled, “I told you to stop!”

Bobby though set off after him, chasing Dean around the entire scrap yard, using either salt or holy water. The whole thing made Alastair, who watched the chase with flagrant glee, laugh even harder. What Dean couldn’t see in his attempt to run away and hide from his old friend was that said friend chased him with a massive smirk on his face. Also the fact that none of the attacks hit Dean was a good indicator that Bobby knew very well about Dean having become a demon and that he didn’t chase him to hurt him but for some other reason, probably to make Dean pay for something.
Alastair couldn’t help it, she found it highly amusing.

“Bobby, would you please stop and listen to me?” Dean now whined.

“So ya can tell me that you became a demon? I already know that ya idjit!” Bobby now laughed.

That actually made Dean stop and turn towards Bobby. “What?” he asked in disbelief while raising his hand to shield his face because Bobby flicked the bottle with holy water towards him again. However, since it was empty now, only a few droplets flew at Dean one hitting his hand. “Ouch,” he hissed shaking it to get the water off of it.

“Ah, stop yer whining, it’ll heal,” Bobby chuckled, shaking his head. “Come on, let’s go inside then you can tell me everything.”

“Why did you chase me around the entire junkyard if you knew?” Dean demanded while massaging his hand where the holy water had hit him and sulkily following Bobby.

“For making me worry about you, idjit!” Bobby told him, hitting Dean over the head.

“Are you two done playing tag?” Alastair asked with amusement when they reached her.

“Who’re you?” Bobby grumbled.

“Alastair, at your service,” the demon replied bowing with a flourish.

Bobby’s eyes narrowed on her, he knew very well who that demon was. “What’re yer intentions with Dean?” he eyed her suspiciously.

“Would you believe me if I told you that I wouldn’t do anything that would jeopardise our relationship?” Alastair raised an eyebrow. “Dean is the first decent person I met in aeons, I would be stupid to do anything.”

Bobby looked the demon up and down trying to gauge whether she was truthful or not but in the end he came to the conclusion that it was Dean’s problem.

“Alright, but should…,” he started, but Alastair quickly interrupted him.

“Yeah, yeah, should I hurt him…yadda yadda…save it, Sam already gave me that speech,” Alastair recited mechanically.

Bobby gave her one last look before he nodded. “Keep all demon business or torturing out of my house and we’re good,” he told her, turned around and entered the house. “Want somethin’ to drink?”

“A coffee would be nice,” Dean said, Bobby nodded.

Dean and Alastair looked at each other and followed him inside. When they reached the library, Dean gave the demon trap that was painted on the ceiling a wary glance, stepped around it, and sat down in one of the chairs, closely followed by Alastair who draped herself over his lap.

“You’re still sleeping on the couch,” Dean muttered.

“Are you sure?” Alastair asked in a seductive tone while leaning forward and nibbling at Dean’s earlobe, earning herself a low moan from Dean.

Just at that moment, Bobby entered the room with a pot of coffee and three cups. Seeing Alastair
draped all over Dean he groaned.

“Get a room you two, will ya?” he snarled.

Alastair chuckled lowly but leaned back, stopping her seduction of Dean.

“I wonder…you’re taking what I’ve become quite well,” Dean wondered.

Bobby laughed lowly. “First, Loki kept me informed about what was going on, so I’m not surprised. Second, Sam called me shortly before you showed up and told me what happened.”

“And you still had to chase me?” Dean groaned.

“A little payback,” Bobby smirked. “So, why’re ya here? I doubt that ya only came for a cup of coffee and Sam didn’t say anythin’ about why ya were gonna come.”

“Yeah…you see now that the first seal has fallen the others are soon to follow. Crowley informed us that Lilith plans to break a certain seal soon, the Rising of the Witnesses it’s called. From what Loki told us it practically means a mass break-out of the homicidal ghosts of those people we couldn’t save, killed or are otherwise connected to their death. The problem is that we don’t know how to stop it once it begins,” Dean explained.

Bobby hummed lowly. “I think I read somethin’ bout that specific seal,” he muttered. “Gimme a moment.”

He walked over to one of the many shelves in his library and looked over the spines of the different books, searching for a specific one. It took a few minutes, but finally, he found the one he was looking for, pulling it out he opened it, flicked through the pages while walking back to his chair before sitting back down. Once he found a particular page, he began to read.

“Yes, here it is. There’s a ritual to initiate the so-called Rising of the Witnesses. This book luckily contains the counter-ritual,” Bobby told them showing them the page. “I should have everything needed here so that we can end it before too much damage is done.”

Alastair looked the ritual over and nodded. “This ritual is fairly easy to perform and should be quick,” she mused when her head suddenly snapped up. “Cover your ears! NOW!” she shouted doing precisely that.

Dean looked at her a bit confused but followed through because he trusted Alastair, well mostly, but enough to heed a warning anyways. Bobby though was a bit slow, and when they all heard a high pitched shrieking that was apparently on the right frequency to shatter glass, he winced before also covering his ears. Luckily the only things that could break and were in their vicinity were the cups, so they thankfully didn’t run the risk of being injured by flying glass. The shrieking continued for about a minute before it vanished as quickly as it came.

“What in the name of sanity was that?” Bobby asked, rubbing his ears in hopes of lessening the pain and the ringing at least a bit.

Alastair made a face. “This was an angel that was so stupid as to try to talk to a human without a vessel. They have that annoying habit of breaking glass if they do, not to mention that they speak Enochian,” she explained. “I know a bit of it and what I understood is that the angel’s name is Castiel and that he wants to meet you somewhere though where, I have no idea.”

“An angel?” Dean wondered humming lowly. “The question is, should I meet with him?”
“You’d Better… I doubt that he would leave you alone should you not,” Alastair replied.

“Great,” Dean groaned. “Having to deal with a feather-brained douchebag, just what I needed.”

“Do ya really think it’s a good idea to insult the angel that wants ta meet with you?” Bobby questioned.

Dean snorted before he gave him a deadpan look. “If it’s the angel I think it is, hell managed to send him running around in circles when trying to get me out of there, only because I was already out and about. So yes, he is a douchebag.”

“What about the fact that you’re a demon?” was Bobby’s next question.

“What about it? Let them try anything. Besides that, Alastair taught me to mask it, so as long as he isn’t a high ranking angel, I doubt that he’ll even know,” Dean shrugged. “Anyway, I’d suggest that you prepare everything for the breaking of the seal, Bobby. In the meantime, Alastair and I’ll go and see whether we can meet that featherbrain somewhere.”

“Sounds like a plan,” Bobby grumbled.

With that, Alastair stood up followed by Dean, and they both vanished in a pillar of black smoke. Bobby amusedly shook his head before he went to work, preparing everything so that he could perform the counter-ritual to the Rising of the Witnesses as soon as possible after the first ritual took hold.

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**Somewhere in hell – A bit earlier**

Castiel walked through hell for heaven knows how long now, and the longer it took him, the more defeated he became. He wondered why none of the demons attacked him, or better yet why they actually helped him by pointing him in a direction. Not that this was a great help since he hadn’t found Dean yet. Slowly but surely he was beginning to doubt that he would ever find him, and that was not putting into consideration that he had a feeling that the demons were sending him running in circles. Whether it was to keep him occupied or for their own amusement, he didn’t know, although knowing demons it was probably both.

With a deep sigh, he leaned against a wall thinking through the mission he was given. Zachariah had told him that Dean was on Alastair’s racks and that he should get him out as quickly as possible. He had been at the racks already quite some time ago, but he found neither Dean there nor, to his utter surprise, Alastair. Castiel had thought that at least the demon would be there with how much he loved to torture souls, yes Alastair was even well known in Heaven. It was a mystery, and Castiel began to wonder whether heaven’s information was correct at all. What if hell decided to place Dean somewhere else? It would take aeons to search the entirety of hell. Or what if hell decided to throw Dean into purgatory? Then heaven would be screwed, Dean was Michael’s vessel and therefore needed should Lucifer get out.

Castiel was standing there and musing on how to proceed when suddenly a demon wearing a dark
suit appeared before him.

“So you’re the angel chosen by heaven to get Dean out of hell. I have to admit that I expected more,” the demon said, looking a bit disappointed.

“Who are you?” Castiel asked suspiciously. “What do you want?”

“My name’s Crowley, King of the Crossroad Demons,” Crowley introduced himself. “As to what I want…well believe it or not I’m here to help you. Dean left hell a long time ago, you won’t find him here. If my information is correct, he’s currently with an old friend of his trying to prevent the Rising of the Witnesses, or at least contain the damage.”

“What? Why would he have left hell? HOW would he have left hell?” Castiel exclaimed he was even more confused now. “And why would you tell me?”

“Angel…” Crowley started but was interrupted.

“Castiel,” the angel told him.

“Very well, Castiel. We want the same thing, stopping the seals from falling…stopping the Apocalypse. What do you think will happen with me once Lucifer gets out? He would dispose of me! So yes, I’m very much inclined to help you prevent it, and if that means that I had to let Dean go once his contract was fulfilled so mote it be,” Crowley explained to the angel.

That made Castiel think. “But our information says that he is still in hell…how could heaven have missed this?” he wondered, something wasn’t adding up, but he didn’t know what. However, even though he didn’t exactly understand why, he was inclined to believe the demon. It would certainly explain why he couldn’t find Dean. Crowley was also right with what would happen to him should Lucifer get out, the fallen angel was even less fond of demons than he was of the humans, at least to his knowledge.

“I’ll leave then, I have to contact Dean. Thank you, Crowley,” Castiel said grudgingly, he didn’t like being indebted to a demon.

“Hardly worth mentioning,” Crowley replied watching as the angel left hell.

Crowley had gained valuable knowledge thanks to this little angel. Heaven was planning something, and it must be significant if they sent an inexperienced low-ranking soldier to get Dean out of hell. He also learned that heaven was missing a bit vital information. For one thing, it was a wonder that they hadn’t caught on the fact that Dean had been out of hell for a while now, but heaven had also withheld information from the one they sent. That only made him wonder why did they send such a low-ranking angel and not a seraph in the first place. Had he and that damned pagan not agreed to help break certain seals themselves he doubted that Castiel would have been able to wander hell as freely as he had, the demons would have most likely killed him.

Shaking his head while still pondering over heaven’s motives, Crowley vanished again. He had things to prepare after all.
Chapter 26: Rising of the Witnesses

Dean and Alastair landed in front of a diner as they were quite hungry so they had decided to get something to eat. They walked into the diner and seated themselves as the sign in front had said to seat themselves instead of waiting to be seated, all the while they continued talking about how to meet the angel.

“What do you think? How can we meet that angel…Castiel was it?” Dean asked.

The pair stopped their current conversation as the waitress had come to give them the menu and ask what they wanted to drink, Alastair ordered a cup of coffee and Dean ordered a coke. As soon as the waitress left they pursued the menu for a bit deciding on what they were going to eat before putting them aside. Resuming the conversation from earlier after the waitress had come back with their drinks and they had ordered Alastair replied to Dean while taking a sip of her coffee.

“Yes, but he would need to take a vessel for him to be able to talk to us properly.”

“So he will have to convince some idiot to say yes to him,” Dean groaned, that could take ages and he didn’t want to wait that long.

Alastair nodded. “A faithful person who is willing to play host for an angel,” she replied before she snickered. “How fortunate that I don’t have to take someone by force or any other way.”

“So you don’t want to take me?” Dean told her with a lopsided grin.

“Oh you I would like to take anyplace anytime.” She snickered even more.

“You’re insatiable, I hope you know that,” Dean replied with a chuckle of his own.

They continued drinking their own drinks mulling over the fact that the Angel needed a vessel to properly speak. A short while later the waitress came back with their dinner. Both stayed silent, just enjoying the food. They were halfway through their meal when Alastair suddenly perked up.

“Cover your ears and get under the table,” she told Dean before following her own advice.

Not a moment later they heard the same high pitched shriek from the Angel trying to communicate without a vessel that burst every single window and any other glass that was in the diner, showering everyone in bits of broken glass and other things like drinks or food. Luckily the diner was relatively empty. Only three other customers and the waitress were there, so the casualties were limited.

“That son of a bitch! Hasn’t he learned that we can’t understand him from the last time?” Dean growled once the shrieking had stopped, so it was safe for him to get out from under the table now.

“Obviously he is a really dense specimen,” Alastair crawled out right after Dean and stood up before looking around and sighing.

It was fortunate that the other customers, who were currently looking around in confusion, only had scrapes and no severe injuries, though Alastair wasn’t overly concerned about them anyway.
“We need to get a hold of that idiot, and fast, before he does some serious damage,” Dean growled.

It wasn't that he was overly concerned about the damage that stupid angel could cause, but he really didn’t want to have to explain to some idiot about why that angel was following him around like a good little puppy.

Alastair nodded in agreement brushing off the dirt from her clothes and the few stray pieces of glass that were still stuck in her hair. Throwing some money for the food and the coffee on the counter, Dean and Alastair left the diner.

“How do we get that idiot to get himself a vessel before meeting with us?” Dean questioned.

“I have no idea, but I hope that he gets the hint himself,” Alastair said while shaking her head before wrapping her arms around Dean’s midsection. “In the meantime let’s get a hotel room, I can think of far more interesting things we could be doing other than waiting for him to get the hint.”

Dean agreed wholeheartedly with that statement. They soon found themselves in a motel room, finally having some time alone for the first time since they had left hell.

It was two days later that Dean and Alastair were finally able to meet the angel. To prevent any more glass from shattering, they now lingered in an abandoned warehouse waiting and hoping that the angel finally would show up, and they were not disappointed. Dean was just about to call it a day when suddenly the corrugated iron roof started to rattle as if a storm was raging outside, though they knew that this was not the case. Soon after the bulbs exploded showering them with shards of glass and sparks. Dean instinctively raised his arms to cover his face while Alastair just watched the entrance impassively.

The door of the barn burst open. A man wearing a beige trench coat entered, the man was at an average height with brown hair, blue eyes and had a dopey expression.

“Finally,” Dean said with a deep sigh. “Took you long enough to get the hint that we don’t understand a damn thing when you shriek at a frequency that’s perfect for shattering glass.”

“I am sorry,” the man replied in a tone that indicated that the man might fall asleep at any time before flaring his wings that were now visible as shadows on the wall behind him. “My name is Castiel, and I’m an angel of the Lord. Some people can understand us. I thought you were one of them, but I was obviously wrong.”

“Obviously,” Dean replied sarcastically ignoring Alastair's snickering. “What do you want?”

Castiel looked at Alastair strangely, trying to gauge who the woman that was so casually leaning against a wall observing everything was. “Who are you?” he asked.

“Her? Ignore her, she’s just my girlfriend,” Dean waved him off, but Castiel walked closer to Alastair while raising a hand as if he wanted to tap her on the forehead.

“If you touch me, angel, it will be the last thing you do,” Alastair sneered while flaring her power towards the angel without giving away who she really was.
Castiel stumbled a step back upon feeling the power of the woman. “That…how…!”

It seemed that Castiel didn’t know what to say anymore or do about the woman that now looked at him challengingly. Deciding that he would leave her alone for now, he turned back towards Dean. “I was sent to get you out of hell, but you weren’t there. How did you get out?” he asked slightly puzzled.

“How I got out of hell?” Dean laughed lowly. “That was easy…I walked out through the front door.”

That seemed to confuse the angel even more, he once again looked back and forth between Dean and Alastair.

“Through the front door?” he questioned, his disbelief quite audible in his tone.

“Yes the front door, is that so hard to believe? Now what do you want?” slowly but surely Dean grew impatient.

“God ordered me to tell you that heaven has a job for you,” Castiel replied wondering what exactly was going on here.

The longer he took for this job, the more Castiel wondered what exactly he was missing. First, he couldn’t find Dean in hell because he was already out, and now there was this woman that oozed power from every pore of her body. He didn’t know what to think anymore. Oh, then there was also the fact that Dean’s brother wasn’t anywhere near him which confused him even more. According to heaven’s information the two of them were inseparable so why was Sam not here? However, he was most likely together with that demon Ruby, he knew that Sam was drinking her blood.

“Yeah, I got that,” Dean countered. “What job exactly?”

“Help to stop the apocalypse,” Castiel said as if that was clear. “And you have to stop your brother or we will.”

“Stop my brother?” Dean inquired surprised.

“Yes, he is drinking demon blood from Ruby,” Castiel replied.

Dean blinked a few times before he started to laugh uproariously and even Alastair couldn’t hide her amusement anymore.

“Say how old is your information?” he asked once he cooled down enough. “To your information, Ruby is dead!”

“What?” was the very eloquent and startled response.

“Yes, since Christmas actually. She managed to piss off the wrong boy,” Dean snickered upon recalling the memory of how Harry, an eleven-year-old boy, killed her; though he would never have wished it upon him because something like that changed a person.

Castiel though looked at Dean as if he had suddenly decided to grow a second head, so Dean elaborated his statement.

“On Christmas or better yet a day later we, Sam and I, bumped into Loki who was accompanied by a boy called Harry Potter. We decided to chaperone them on their holiday when Ruby showed up and tried to kidnap Harry, or whatever else she wanted to do to him. Harry in retaliation killed her, so
no, Sam is not with her and certainly is not drinking her blood. As far as I know, Loki actually severed the hold the demon blood had on him, and he’s currently attending Hogwarts together with Loki and Harry,” he explained to the angel who was now even more shocked and confused.

“Harry Potter?”

Castiel, of course, knew who Harry Potter was, the one destined to vanquish that idiot Riddle, but what was he doing in America? And better yet, how had he managed to kill Ruby? Several things certainly didn’t add up that was for sure, the main thing being how heaven could have missed all of this. First Dean already being out of hell, then the fact that Ruby already was dead for over four months and now the little tidbit that Sam was currently attending Hogwarts. Since when was Sam magical anyway? All his powers came from the demon blood that was fed to him in his early years, didn’t it?

“Listen Castiel, I seriously suggest that you update your information and if you want to talk afterwards call this number.” Here Dean handed over one of his business cards with his phone number.

Castiel looked at the card before he nodded and looked straight at Dean. “Very well, Dean Winchester,” he said before he vanished without saying anything else.

Dean blinked a few times in surprise before turning around to Alastair.

“Can we keep him? I like him,” he told the demon.

Alastair walked over to Dean with a broad smirk. “It would be amusing to corrupt him,” she whispered seductively, pulling Dean in a long deep kiss.

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**Hogwarts – Two days later**

It was Wednesday, and every student and teacher was currently sitting in the great hall enjoying their lunch when suddenly a commotion at the Ravenclaw table gained the attention of the Gryffindor group. Loki was the first to look up. When he looked over to the Ravenclaw table his face became serious, which was a shock to some because Loki was never serious.

“It has begun,” he told those sitting around him.

Sam also looked over to the Ravenclaw table and saw a ghost that undoubtedly wasn’t a Hogwarts ghost due to it being in colour and not the usual silvery grey of the Hogwarts ghosts. In an instant, Sam reached into his pouch that thanks to some enchantments was bottomless and pulled out a shotgun which he with a swift movement chambered a round. Quickly walking over to the Ravenclaw table he continuously pointed the shotgun towards the ghost when suddenly other ghosts appeared.

“Would someone please tell me what is going on here?” the voice of McGonagall echoed through the hall which was well audible thanks to the silence of the students who were shocked and surprised.
“It’s complicated, I’ll explain everything as soon as this is over. I need everyone to stay calm,” Loki shouted and to the surprise of most of the teachers, the students followed his order even if some shifted nervously in their seat.

Sam though watched the ghost, that now held up his hands, critically when a hand was placed on the barrel. Instinctively Sam turned around and pointed the weapon at what he deemed a new thread only to come face to face with a woman who had flaming red hair and smiled at him.

“I’m Lily, Harry’s mother, don’t worry, magical ghosts are not as severely affected by this ritual. It is the muggle ghosts you should worry about,” she told him.

Sam narrowed his eyes but in the end, nodded at her when a scream echoed through the hall. Over at the Hufflepuff table, an older student was cornered by what seemed to be his grandfather if his pleads were anything to go by. Sam vaulted over the Ravenclaw table to get to the ghost but Harry was quicker, he shot a ghost-repelling spell at the ghost dispersing it.

“Anyone here knows the ghost repelling spell?” the boy loudly addressed the entire hall but all the students stayed silent. However, Severus, Flitwick and to their surprise Sprout stood up and walked over to him.

“What is going on?” Flitwick questioned, his worry and concern clear to everyone.

“Homicidal ghosts of those persons whose death you’re connected to in any way, magical ghost though seem harmless,” Harry explained in an abridged version.

“We need to disperse those that are violent. Salt, iron or the ghost repelling spell will work though I doubt that they’ll stay gone for long,” Sam added.

In the meantime, Sam had shot two more ghosts while more and more showed up. It seemed that the older students especially had one or more relatives that had died.

“Why are you using a gun?” Severus wondered while shooting off a spell himself.

“Better aim, I’m not as used to using a wand as I am a gun,” Sam replied when suddenly a black man appeared in front of him whom he recognised as the FBI agent from the police station where Lilith had attacked him and Dean. He made short work of the ghost knowing that otherwise he would be attacked.

Amidst chaos also appeared three persons that everyone could have done without, the Dursleys. Vernon instantly lurched at Harry shouting obscenities. Harry quickly ducked out of the way of the obese man while hexing him in the meantime.

“Care to explain that?” Severus questioned in a dangerously low voice.

Harry winced knowing that the man would want to know just why Vernon thought it apt to beat him up for his “freakishness”.

“I lived with them since my parents died?” he stated though it came out more like a question.

While Harry played tag with Vernon continually hexing him for good measure, which Severus happily joined in on after getting a glimpse of what Harry’s life must have been like for the last ten years, Lily had a few choice words with her sister Petunia. In other words, she beat her to a pulp for daring to hurt her son even if it was just complicity by not helping him. James though had some fun showing Dudley how it feels to be bullied. However, as much as they would have liked to give them a further piece of their mind they had work to do. So Harry quickly got rid of the ghosts by repelling
them before going back to hexing the other new ghosts that appeared or returned after having been dispersed already. What Harry didn’t look forward to, was the talk with Severus that would inevitably follow soon and where he would have to tell him about his previous living situation.

Luckily for everyone involved the students stayed seated or even hid under the table so that the group had a clear line of fire. In the meantime it seemed that the magical ghosts decided to stay with their relatives, using the opportunity to talk to them while crouching down so that they weren’t in danger of being hit.

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**At the head table**

Unseen by the students and the teachers, those that weren't fighting the ghosts were trying to calm down those students who were panicking or defending those who were attacked until the ghosts could be dispersed, was the fact that Dumbledore had blanched considerably and continually backed away from a ghost that relentlessly followed him. That was until he bumped into the wall behind the teachers’ table. In front of him was the ghost of a beautiful young girl he knew only too well, Ariana Dumbledore.

“You…you’re dead…how?” Dumbledore didn’t know what to say while trembling in fear, not fear of the ghost in front of him but fear of what she might reveal, fear that he was the one responsible for her death.

Ariana smiled softly at him before, with a last step, she stood as close to her brother as one could without touching each other. She raised a hand and gently cupped Dumbledore’s chin.

“It's been so long, so long since everything happened, that I died, and yet you still blame yourself for what happened,” she said in a soft voice. “Stop blaming yourself for what happened.”

“But…,” Dumbledore replied, but she silenced him by placing a finger on his lips.

“None of you three are to blame for what happened. It was something that was bound to happen sooner or later, it was my own magic that killed me. I suppressed it for so long, and the situation in itself…” Again she smiled softly at his brother. “So stop wasting time with blaming yourself. You’re old, but you still have time, make up for past regrets, apologise for mistakes made.”

For a long time, they both just stood there looking at each other before Ariana spoke up for the last time.

“I have to go, but we’ll see each other again sometime of that I’m sure.” With that Ariana faded out until she was gone completely.

Dumbledore slid down the wall until he was sitting on the ground a strange expression on his face, a mix of surprise, shock and relief, tears flowing freely down his cheeks.
In the meantime, the others continued fighting to repel the ghosts who were hostile when suddenly
every muggle ghost started to fade into nothingness.

“I think it is over,” Sam said with a deep sigh of relief.

“Yes, it is. Because we’re magical we can stay for a few more moments, but soon we also have to
go,” James, who had stayed near his son during the entire thing, explained.

“It was nice to see you again, even if it was under such circumstances,” Lily added.

“And I hope you’ll come for a visit sometime soon,” she added with a wink towards Harry and
Severus.

Severus only nodded in acknowledgement while Harry launched himself towards his mother and
embraced her in a tight hug, having found out that the ghosts were substantial enough to be
interacted with. Once he let go of his mother, he repeated the same thing with his father.

“I love you,” Harry beamed at them happily.

“We love you too,” his mother replied before turning towards Snape. “And Severus, it's nice to see
that you own clothes in colours other than black, it suits you.”

Everyone had a hard time suppressing their amusement over the slight blush that now adorned the
cheeks of the typically stoic Potions Master.

“We have to go now,” James said, and as soon as the last word fell from his mouth, they both started
to fade away.

“Are you alright, Severus?” McGonagall asked in concern as soon as they were gone.

Severus smiled slightly and nodded. “I’m alright, Minerva. What I would like to know though is
what in the name of Slytherin this was,” he said.

Loki looked around seeing that the students were mostly unscathed, only a very few having a few
scratches from when they hadn’t been fast enough to repel the ghost, but they were already tended
to. It was also good to see that the most severe thing a student was suffering from was the shock over
the entire thing, but with a bit rest, they should be fine again soon.

“I suggest you send the students to their common rooms to rest and get over the shock and we sit
down somewhere quiet. I’ll explain everything.

“Very well, we meet in an hour in the staff room,” McGonagall said stiffly before she walked over to
the Gryffindors to make sure that they were okay.

The other teachers also dispersed and walked to their houses while Sam, Harry and Loki stood there
and looked at each other. Soon the twins, Neville and Hermione also joined them.

“That was cool,” the twins said with broad grins. “But also a bit spooky.”

“Cool isn’t the word I would use,” Hermione insisted, she had been attacked by her grandfather who
had died a few years prior, and that wasn’t an experience she would like to repeat any time soon.

“Hermione, those ghosts…they weren’t themselves if they weren’t magical,” Loki told her giving her
a reassuring hug. “Whatever he said, I doubt he would have said it was he himself.”
Hermione sniffed but nodded. “Thank you,” she replied with a weak smile.

“Why don’t you all go back to the common room while I explain to the teachers what happened?”

They all nodded and left to go to the Gryffindor common room when they saw that Harry wasn’t coming with them. Turning around they looked at him inquiringly, but Harry shook his head.

“I’ll accompany Loki because I have a feeling that Snape will want to have a word with me,” he told them.

“Professor Snape,” Hermione scolded him good-naturedly with a smile.

“Only because I doubt that he would like for me to call him Severus in public,” Harry retorted with a laugh.

The others looked at him as if he had finally lost it but turned around with a shake of their heads and left Harry and Loki standing in a now empty great hall.

“That was quite a day,” Harry sighed.

“And it isn’t over yet,” Loki snickered.

“Yeah, let’s get this over with.”

Somehow Harry had the feeling that the talk with the teachers would be by far worse than their fight against the vindictive ghosts.
Chapter 27: The Aftermath

It was an hour after the chaos in the great hall. Loki and Harry were currently standing outside the teachers’ lounge waiting for them to arrive for the meeting. Flitwick was the first to arrive, but that was no surprise since the Ravenclaw common room was the closest. The small man opened the door for them and told them to come in and make themselves comfortable. Harry and Loki went over to one of the couches standing together with a few armchairs in front of a fireplace in which a fire merrily burned. Flitwick offered them something to drink while sitting down in one of the armchairs himself. Moments later each of them had a cup of tea in front of them with lemons, milk, and sugar on a small tray in the middle of the table.

Shortly after the tea was placed in front of them, McGonagall together with Sam and soon after them, Sprout also arrived followed by Snape. Surprisingly enough Dumbledore didn’t come.

“So what was all this?” McGonagall questioned the three children. “And just how is it that you can handle a gun that well?” she said with a pointed look towards Sam.

Sam looked a bit sheepish at that question before looking over to Loki, but the pagan only snickered.

“I think we should start from the beginning then everything will become clear. First, how much do you know about the Christian religion?” Loki finally replied.

McGonagall and Sprout looked a bit bewildered upon hearing that question while Snape's face stayed blank. Only Flitwick seemed to have an inkling as to what Loki’s question was about.

“All I know is that they are not that forgiving about magic,” Sprout answered with a sad face. “Many of the witch hunts centuries ago stemmed from the belief that all witchcraft is inherently evil.”

“Yes,” Loki said with a nod. “That is partly right, and it's where it gets complicated. First, you should know that the deities of any religion you can think about are in fact real, no matter if it’s the Norse pantheon, Hinduism, the old Greek gods…as long as enough people believe in them, they’re real.

“So it’s also the same thing with Christian beliefs. Hell exists, heaven exists, angels exist, and yes even the devil exists. Or as he was known before his fall, the archangel Lucifer.”

“But what does all this have to do with what happened today?!” Sprout interrupted him not getting what Loki wanted to tell them.

“If you’d let me continue, you’ll know. The thing is that two of the archangels, Lucifer and Michael, had a massive quarrel about two millennia ago, give or take before Lucifer was declared to have fallen. This quarrel got so out of hand that a war broke out in heaven; that’s where the angels usually live, and this war was so bad that it threatened all that existed. Michael, in the end, banned Lucifer from heaven, and not much later captured him in a cage in the dimension that’s called hell. He sealed
this cage with 666 seals and made it so that 66 of those seals have to be broken for Lucifer to be able to get out. Which seal needs to be broken doesn’t matter, though the first and the last are fixed.

“It seems that a few demons from hell and, I highly suspect, also a few angels from heaven, decided that it was time to get Lucifer out and let him and Michael finish what they began all that time ago.”

This time Flitwick interrupted him. “Wait do you mean to tell us that this sudden appearance of violent ghosts is connected to that?” he asked.

Loki nodded solemnly. “Yes, it is. This was actually the seal called the Rising of the Witnesses. Luckily we learned about it beforehand and could stop it before it got out of hand, but I doubt that it will be the last seal that will influence the life here at Hogwarts,” he explained with a deep sigh. “The wards around Hogwarts are strong and should protect the children against most of that will come this way, but it seems that even those wards are not going to help against everything.”

“Is there any way to keep them safe?” Sprout asked with concern in her voice.

“Unfortunately not. I already helped things by teaching about most of the supernatural things that could endanger the students but even then…they are only children.” Loki sighed again. Everyone could clearly see that the pagan god wished that there was an easy way to protect everyone, but there simply wasn’t. “All I can do is forewarn you should a seal be broken that might affect Hogwarts, but that is regrettably everything I can do.”

“I’ll have to talk to Dean, but if he’s okay with it, I’ll also stay here and help with things. Since he’s with his new girlfriend, I somehow doubt that he would have too much a problem with not having me around,” Sam spoke up with a snicker. “I have a vast knowledge and experience in how to deal with most of the supernatural stuff.”

“That makes me wonder how you gained that knowledge, not to mention the experience in the first place.” It was the first time that Snape spoke up.

Sam winced, that man could be more intimidating than a demon. “Yeah well, I’m not exactly eleven,” he replied with a sheepish smile.

“And just what is that supposed to mean?” McGonagall questioned in a clipped tone, her face pinched.

“I’m actually 24.”

Everyone looked at him disbelief, only Flitwick looked at him in contemplation.

“Am I right to assume that Loki has something to do with your sudden…rejuvenation?” he asked.

Sam nodded. “When we learned that I’m a natural wizard Harry taught me a few spells he knew, and I even learned some on my own, but it was rudimentary at best. Not much later Loki learned about it and suggested that I come back to Hogwarts with the two since my brother was about to be… indisposed for some time,” he explained.

“And may I ask what your normal occupation is Mr Winchester?” Flitwick now inquired, having an inkling as to what the answer would be, not many distinguished between natural and demon-deal magicals and also the statement that he had much experience in dealing with the supernatural was a big clue.

Here Sam looked at Loki, not knowing whether it would be a good idea to tell them but Loki nodded encouragingly.
“I’m an American hunter,” he told them, confirming Flitwick’s suspicion.

“I suspected as much,” he said thoughtfully.

“What is a hunter? I never heard of them.” McGonagall was confused.

Flitwick chuckled lowly. “That’s no surprise, especially if you’ve never travelled to America. They are what we would classify as a Hit Wizard, though they are not necessarily magicals. In America they are those who keep anything supernatural in line, like those vengeful ghosts we encountered earlier,” he explained patiently.

Now McGonagall looked at Sam shocked. “You go after dangerous things without even having magic yourself? Do you know how dangerous that is?” she asked incredulously only to receive a deadpan look from Sam.

“My brother and I have been doing this for quite some time now, so yeah we know how dangerous it is, but good preparation and knowing what you’re doing goes a long way. Even if you don’t have magic to assist you,” he told her in a cold tone.

“And here I thought your main weapon was sheer dumb luck,” Loki said with a grin earning a smirk from Snape.

“Oi,” came the indignant cry from Sam. “We always research what we’re up against and find their weaknesses.”

“And then you storm in with guns blazing and wonder why everything goes to hell in a handbasket,” the pagan retorted.

Sam though only huffed and crossed his arms over his chest which looked like a massive pout in his eleven-year-old body.

Harry, on the other hand, couldn’t keep it to himself anymore and started to laugh.

“You two married or what?” he said after some time, but neither deemed it worthy of an answer.

“I think we got vastly off the topic,” Snape interjected. “So these events will occur more regularly now?”

“Unfortunately yes. Most of those seals are localised events, but a few can affect Hogwarts. It isn’t helping that Hogwarts is a magical nexus built on two crossing Ley-lines, which for teaching purposes is ideal, but also draws in unwanted…problems.”

“Should we close Hogwarts for the time being?” McGonagall asked worriedly.

“No, no, that won’t be necessary. As I said, most of the seals won’t affect Hogwarts and those that do I hope we’ll be warned beforehand,” Loki shook his head.

“Then why didn’t you warn us about the ghosts?” Snape questioned, one of his eyebrows raised.

Loki sighed deeply. “I have to apologise for that, but I didn’t think it would reach to Hogwarts. The next time should there even be the faintest possibility that it might reach here, I promise you, I’ll inform you.”

“See that you’ll do, that could have seriously harmed the students,” McGonagall replied, but she could see that it weighed heavily upon the pagan’s consciousness. “Very well, it is getting late, and I
think you should get back to the common room.”

The three children nodded and were just about to stand up to leave when Snape spoke up. “Mr Potter would you please stay for a moment, I have something I'd like to discuss with you,” he said.

Harry once again nodded and stayed behind while the others all stood up and went to leave.

“We’ll wait outside for you,” Sam called out before he left.

Once everyone had left, Snape leaned forward in his chair placing his elbows on his knees, obviously thinking how to broach the topic while Harry fidgeted nervously.

“Harry,” he began taking a deep breath. “I won’t ask you to tell me what happened between your relatives and you, but I want you to know that I know how it is to have a…less than ideal home life. Should you ever want to talk about it or simply need somewhere to stay over the summer…my door will be open to you. I promised your mother that I would take care of you and protect you and I won’t fail her again.”

Harry sat there stunned speechless. Sure, Snape and he got along quite well once they overcame their initial differences, but that he would offer him to stay with him over the summer hols? That he certainly hadn’t anticipated. Then there was also the comment that he knew how it was with a less than ideal home life, that made Harry curious but he knew better than to ask the man, it was up to Snape to share such things and not be pestered about it.

In the end, Harry gave him a tentative smile. “Thank you, Professor, it means a lot to me…,” he began but was interrupted.

“Please call me Severus, but only in private,” he said with a stern glare which was softened by his smile.

“Thank you, Severus,” Harry repeated. “But don’t worry, I’ll probably stay with Loki most of this summer, or Sam…I think Neville said something about meeting up during the summer too. Oh and there’s also Sirius. You see there? You really have nothing to worry about in that regard.”

“You staying with a hunter or that incompetent mutt is nothing to worry about?” Severus raised an eyebrow questioningly, though you could tell that his jab towards Sirius was without any bite in it.

“Do you really think that Loki would have left me with Sam and his brother over the winter holidays if I wouldn’t have been safe?” Harry questioned, what he would never tell the man however was about his little encounter with Ruby, he somehow doubted that Snape…Severus would let him out of his sight ever again should he learn about it.

Severus pierced him with a long look but in the end, conceded that the boy had a point. “Very well, but I will nevertheless get you an emergency portkey that will bring you to my home should something be wrong,” he told the boy in a tone that brooked no argument and so Harry could only nod. “Good, I think your friends are waiting, go on.”

“Good night, Severus,” Harry said with a smile and a small wave of his hand before he stood up and left the room, meeting Loki and Sam outside. Together they went back to the common room where they then got ready for the night.
Over in America Bobby gratefully fell into the armchair that was standing in his study. It had been one hell of a day for him even if he had been prepared. He had done the counter-ritual down in his safe room so that he wouldn’t be interrupted by some ghost, but it had been tiring nonetheless. His deceased wife, as well as every other victim he hadn’t been able to save crying bloody murder just outside the room, also hadn’t helped matters at all. Even knowing that she wasn’t herself and that what she said was thanks to the ritual hadn’t really helped, it just hurt to hear his wife blaming him for her death, which was true after all, he had killed her because at that time he hadn’t known how to deal with a demon possession correctly.

For today, however, Bobby was done, and he was glad that he could spend the evening with a cold beer and perhaps watching a nice show on the TV.
The happening with the ghosts was the main topic for the entire next week, students exchanging whom they had met and how they had been able to talk to someone long deceased. Also a theme was, how Harry, Sam and Loki had defended them. Most were of the opinion that this was precisely what a hero like Harry would do cementing his status at the Golden Boy.

Soon however the topic changed when the last Quidditch match of the year approached, Gryffindor versus Hufflepuff. After the first two Gryffindor matches in which Harry in the first one snatched the Snitch right from under the nose of the Slytherin Seeker and the second one where he set a new record for the quickest Quidditch match in Hogwarts’ history, they all wanted to see what stunt the boy would pull now. What happened though stunned them speechless.

It was a lovely Saturday, the sun was shining brightly, and it was quite warm with 25°C for the end of May. Before the game, Wood asked Harry what he had planned for that game, but Harry only shrugged and told the team captain that he would have to see what would come up.

As soon as they left through their gate and into the pitch, Harry flew up quite a bit, hovering over the centre of the pitch over everyone else. When the game began he pulled his broom parallel to the ground with a smirk. Once he was sure that his broom wouldn’t do anything unexpected, he let himself fall back so that he came to lie on the length of the handle, his head resting on the bristles. He quickly added a few padding charms to the broom so that it wouldn’t be too uncomfortable before he placed his right foot on the end of the handle and put his other leg on his knee.

Contently hovering in the air that way he let his eyes fall shut, relaxing and enjoying the sun when he remembered something. Tapping into his magic, he projected it outwardly for a few feet and gave it the purpose of repelling Bludgers that might come his way. They would fly in a curve around him before looking for a better target.

Harry was utterly relaxed and nearly falling asleep when about ten minutes later he suddenly felt a fluttering against his right cheek that startled him but luckily he could catch himself quickly enough so that he didn’t fall off the broom. Opening his eyes, he could see the Snitch hovering a few inches away from him in a way that he thought that it looked at him expectantly. The Snitch even flew away a few feet before returning to him and again hovering in front of him.

“What?” Harry asked incredulously. “You want me to catch you or what?”

The Snitch bobbed as if nodding and Harry rose an eyebrow, wondering whether something was wrong with the little golden ball.

“But I don’t want to. Let the others chase some stupid balls in this lovely weather, but I want to enjoy the sun,” he huffed before he leaned back again.

What the Snitch did next left Harry openly gaping at it. The Snitch flew down to Harry’s chest where it came to rest and lazily stretched its wings before it neatly folded it against its body.

“Having enough from being chased around?” Harry asked with a chuckle.
The Snitch in return hummed lowly content that it could just lie there and not having to escape some idiot that tried to catch it.

They both spent quite some time that way when eventually the Hufflepuff seeker wanted to check on Harry and saw the Snitch lying there while Harry was sleeping not even having noticed the small ball. The other seeker saw that as an excellent opportunity and slowly reached out for the Snitch, not wanting to alert either Harry not the ball to what he wanted to do. However, what he didn’t anticipate was that the ball came to life when his fingers were just mere inches away from it and suddenly sped off. Cursing under his breath, the boy sped after it in the direction he had seen it flying off.

Once the other seeker was far away enough though the small ball, which had hidden beneath Harry to escape the other seeker, came out of its hiding place and hovering over Harry's chest, it looked into the direction of the one who just wanted to catch it. To Harry who looked at it with open curiosity it seemed that had the little ball a tongue, it would have stuck it out after the Hufflepuff seeker in malicious glee before retaking its place on Harry's chest.

It was about two and a half hour later that Harry woke up because he was suddenly feeling a bit cold. Opening his eyes, he saw that a quite large cloud had pushed itself in front of the sun and it didn’t look like it would vanish any time soon again. With a sigh, he picked up the Snitch that was still lying on his chest so that it wouldn’t fall when he sat up.

Once he was fully awake, he looked down to see how the rest of the game was going, realising that he must have slept for quite some time. Gryffindor was falling behind a bit with 320 to the 380 points that Hufflepuff had scored. He stretched a bit, popping his joints and stifling a yawn.

“Want to end the game?” he asked the Snitch that was now laying in his open palm.

When the little ball buzzed positively, Harry smiled and angled his broom so that he flew down to where Madame Hooch was supervising the game. Once he reached her, he let the golden ball fall into her hand.

“Here, it seems the game is over,” he just told her.

Madame Hooch though stared at him as if he lost it. It took her a few moments to remember what the delivery meant, and she blew her whistle announcing that Gryffindor won the match with 480 to 400.

Harry just wanted to leave her to get back to the changing room when the Snitch again came to life and quickly trailed after him. Not knowing what that was supposed to be, he first looked questioningly at the Snitch and then to Madame Hooch, but the woman looked equally confused, she never saw a Snitch behaving that way.

“Mr Potter, what did you do with the Snitch?” she asked him sternly.

He put his hands up showing that he had no idea. “I swear that I didn’t do anything, the thing behaved strangely for the entire time.”

Hooch flew over to him and wanted to grab the Snitch to store it with the other balls but the thing shifter behind Harry, looking around his shoulders tentatively.

“This is really strange behaviour,” she said.

“It seems to me that he doesn’t want to leave my side,” Harry mused, and the golden ball nodded so rapidly that had it been a human it certainly would have gotten a whiplash. “I can’t keep you,” he
If asked, Harry would have vehemently denied that it was impossible that a small golden ball would be able to look pleadingly or sad, but this Snitch just proved him wrong. The little thing looked too sad that Harry couldn’t leave it behind.

“Madame Hooch, would it be possible that I keep it?” he asked the women. “I also will buy you a new one if necessary,” Harry added when it became apparent that Hooch wanted to deny him his request.

Hooch looked at Harry and the Snitch, which stayed close to the boy the entire time, for a long moment but in the ended nodded with a sigh.

“Very well,” she said while shaking her head.

You could tell that the Snitch was exceedingly happy with how it fluttered around Harry who couldn’t help himself and started to snicker.

“Well then, I need a shower,” he told the thing descending towards the changing rooms.

When he arrived there, he was instantly greeted by Wood who wanted to light into Harry for how he handled the game when he became aware of the Snitch that now buzzed between them agitatedly.

“What’s with that Snitch?” he asked Harry warily looking between the both of them.

“I don’t know, it doesn’t want to leave my side anymore,” Harry shrugged and walked over to where the showers were leaving behind a confused Wood.

Harry quickly took a shower and soon emerged again fully clothed in some casual clothes. Accompanied by the twins, he made his way outside and over to where Sam, Loki, Neville and Hermione were waiting, closely followed by his new little friend. The friends were excitedly chattering about the game and how again Harry was so lazy as to sleep all through it. When they became aware that Harry was coming, they greeted him with recollections about stunts and manoeuvres the player had flown. Sam especially was smitten with the sport played on brooms.

It was Fred who finally addressed Harry about the Snitch following him.

“Say, why is the Snitch following you?”

Harry looked a bit sheepish. “I have no idea, he stayed with me the entire game and didn’t want to leave me afterwards,” he told the redhead.

“Strange,” George muttered. “I never heard about them doing that.”

Loki now his attention drawn to it, looked at it, his head slightly cocked to the side. “It isn’t all that strange,” he finally said. “Snitches and Bludgers are sentient to some degree, Snitches more so than Bludgers, because otherwise, they wouldn’t be able to predict a seeker’s move and act accordingly to make it harder to catch them. Think about it like the sorting hat being able to determine where to sort a student,” he explained. “However, only you Harry would be able to draw a Snitch in with your magic.”

“What’s that supposed to mean and is it dangerous?” Harry was now weary, which seemed to affect the Snitch because it let his head hang a bit.

“Oh no, it isn’t dangerous. What my point is that you have a natural aura that calms creatures and
humans alike and draws them in to you. It’s nothing to worry about, people and creatures are more likely to be friendly towards you and trust you not to harm them. Remember the unicorn you healed? Normally that unicorn would have bolted as soon as you healed it but your aura exudes calmness and a feeling of safety as well as general friendliness.” Here Loki shrugged helplessly. “I don’t know how better to explain it, but it is also the reason that that Snitch has seemingly taken a liking to you. It is rare but not unheard of that a semi-sentient object bonded to a wizard; they are designed to imitate life after all. See it as an unusual familiar.”

Harry and the Snitch looked at each other when the Snitch briefly bumped against Harry’s cheek before fluttering around him and his friends who promptly started to snicker over his behaviour.

Agreeing that it was time to get back they set into motion and together walked back to their common room. When they reached it and entered through the portrait hole, a massive party greeted them. Whole Gryffindor was celebrating not only today’s victory but also the fact that they won the Quidditch Cup, therefore ending the winning streak of Slytherin.

The celebrations went on until far after midnight and only ended because at some point McGonagall showed up and told them that it was time for bed.

The end of term exams came and went by without a hitch. Each of the friends was quite sure that they passed them quite well. All too soon the grand last feast of this school year came with a victory of Ravenclaw closely followed by Gryffindor and Slytherin in third place, which irked said house something rotten. Hufflepuff though, even in the last spot, celebrated it as another year of success, friendship and having fun, mostly because of Loki but also in general.

Dumbledore gave them a few parting words talking about second chances and making up for mistakes. To Loki, it seemed that the encounter with the ghost of his sister had left a lasting impression.

The same evening Snape also asked Harry to meet with him in his rooms. He gave Harry not only an emergency portkey that would bring him to the man no matter where he was but also a two-way book with the request to write at least once a week to let him know that everything was alright. The care touched Harry and he promised to let him know should anything be the matter.

That night left Harry happy but also a bit sad. Glad that he wasn’t alone anymore and hadn’t to go back to his relatives, but also a bit sad because he wouldn’t be able to see his friends for quite some time. They arranged though that they would meet during the holidays and also would go shopping for their things for the next school year.

The next day they all shared one compartment in the Hogwarts Express and joked and talked for the last time before they had to part for the holidays. They all had a lot of fun and shortly before they arrived in London, Harry dug into his pouch and drew out a stack of identically looking books of which he handed one to each of his friends.

“These books are charmed so that whatever you write in yours will also appear in all the others linked to it,” he explained while handing them out. “That way we can stay in contact.”

“So it’s like an analogue chat room,” Sam joked earning a snicker from Harry and Hermione as well
as Neville who had looked over Harry’s shoulder one evening when Harry had surfed in the web on his laptop and when Harry had explained him a few things. The twins though looked at him in confusion. “A chatroom is a muggle invention where you via the computer talk to many different people all over the world no matter where they currently are,” he explained them.

“We’re slowly understanding just why our father is so enamoured with muggles,” Fred said.

“Yes it is astonishing what they are capable of,” George added.

“You have no idea,” Harry laughed.

Not much later the train pulled into the station, and they left the train. They all separated Neville and the twins walking over to their respective families while Hermione left the platform through to the muggle world to find her parents. Only Harry, Sam and Loki remained behind.

“So onto America,” he chirped.

They had agreed that they would all go to America for three weeks not only so that Sam could meet up with his brother but also for a holiday after that Loki would take Harry to his parents for a weekend before they would together visit a few different countries.

Loki quickly grabbed onto Harry and Sam, and within the blink of an eye they were gone and reappeared right in front of Bobby’s house. Harry looked around fascinated by all the junk that was lying around, while Sam whined a bit.

“Do I have to stay a child?” he asked pitifully.

Loki laughed upon that but waved his hand over Sam who promptly changed back into his 24-year-old self. Sam sighed contently, flexing and moving a bit carefully to get used to the sudden lager body.

“Thanks!” he said to Loki while walking over to the door and knocking.

It took a few moments before Bobby appeared in the doorframe and looked at each of them critically. When he finished his scrutiny, he smiled broadly and pulled Sam into a hug.

“God ta see ya, Sam. I hope ya stay at that school was uneventful,” he said before locking gaze with Loki. “Leave all ya pranks out of my house, are we clear pagan?”

Loki looked at him for a moment longer before he did the mature thing and simply stuck his tongue out at the man. Bobby snorted and shook his head.

“Harry, nice to see ya again. I hope that idjit didn’t make too much trouble,” he finally turned towards Harry with another smile.

“Nah, he knows how to behave himself,” Harry replied with a broad grin towards Loki that earned himself a light hit on the arm.

That was when the Snitch that up to then stayed in the pocket of Harry’s shirt came out and buzzed around Loki’s head for hitting Harry.

“I swear that thing gets more protective with each passing day,” Loki muttered which ended up him being hit over the head by the Snitch with one of his wings.

Sam laughed upon the indignant face of the pagan that simply looked cute in his eleven-year-old
body. That was when suddenly Harry’s stomach started to rumble loudly making Sam laugh even harder. Even Bobby chuckled lowly.

“Come on in, I’ll make you something to eat. In the meantime, you can tell me how school went and why a flying golden ball is following you around,” Bobby told them gesturing them to enter.

They all followed Bobby inside and through to the kitchen, where Sam and Loki sat down at the table while Harry went to help Bobby with their meal, for Bobby it would be lunch while for the others it would be the dinner thanks to the time difference. While they cooked the others filled the man in on what occurred during the time at Hogwarts and what they experienced. They were finished cooking and halfway through their meal, telling Bobby, who listened with amusement, all about the last Quidditch match, when suddenly Alastair appeared in the kitchen right next to them surprising the hell out of them.

“Alastair,” Bobby said in a chiding tone. “Next time use the front door,” he told the demon when he realised something. “Where is Dean?”

“That is why I came…I have no idea,” the demon answered not even acknowledging the scolding. “He suddenly vanished. I cannot find him anywhere.”
Chapter 29: The Past, the Present and the Future

Dean woke up with a splitting headache on what was apparently a bench on the street. An officer was bent over him his baton in hand.

“Come on, get up!” the man commanded, but Dean only managed to look at him confusedly. “You can’t sleep here!”

Now Dean looked even more confused and after a quick glance around he saw that he had no idea where here was anyway. The last thing he remembered was that Alastair had left after a very lovely night – which instantly caused a broad grin to appear on his face – to fetch some breakfast and that thrice-damned angel Castiel had shown up to tell him that he had to stop it, whatever it was. When the angel had tapped him on the forehead, everything had gone black. The next thing Dean knew was that he was waking up on the park bench feeling as if he had the worst hangover ever. Chuckling to himself he was thankful that he didn’t wake up in a twenty-thousand dollar a night hotel room with a tiger in the bathroom.

“Sorry officer, but it seems that I got a bit lost…where is here?” he asked rubbing at his temples in hope to lessen his headache.

The officer raised an eyebrow at him. “Must have been one hell of a night if you can’t remember where you are. We’re in Lawrence, Kansas,” he finally replied.

“You have no idea,” Dean said with a smirk.

The officer smiled but shook his head. “You can’t sleep here though.”

Dean waved at him dismissively. “Yeah, yeah, I’ll get back to my motel,” he told the man while standing up and stretching lazily. “But first I need a coffee, is there a diner somewhere?”

It didn’t seem that the man was overly confident in Dean’s ability to move on his own, but he dutifully pointed up the street.

“Three blocks in that direction,” he explained before he left. “Have a nice day.”

Dean watched the officer continue onwards on his patrol before he turned in the direction the officer had pointed him towards. Soon enough Dean found said diner. After sitting down he ordered a large cup of coffee and some pancakes, he was famished which was no wonder since he had been dumped here without having been able to enjoy a breakfast with Alastair.

This thought made him wonder what Alastair would think about the fact that he had suddenly disappeared, not to mention that today was the day when Sam was supposed to return from Hogwarts. They would probably worry themselves sick over it. So it undoubtedly would be for the best to return as quickly as possible, but first…breakfast. Teleporting over long distances with a massive headache and an empty stomach was never a good idea. Hopefully, his headache would be
gone after he ate breakfast.

That was when he saw a newspaper lying on the counter obviously abandoned by the previous owner. Dean leaned over and pulled it towards him to see whether anything unusual had been reported. He was surprised that the headline said something about Nixon accepting the resignation of someone, so his gaze fell upon the date. He inhaled sharply when he saw it; he wasn’t in his time anymore, no, it was now April 30, 1973. A low growl tore itself from his throat. What did the stupid angel do this time? The fact that he wasn’t in his own time anymore would make getting back a bit of a chore. Sighing deeply he turned towards the coffee and the pancakes the waiter had just placed in front of him, he would eat his breakfast first and then he would think about how to get back to his time.

Dean was so lost in his breakfast that it caught him completely by surprise when an older man entered the diner and called out, “Winchester!”. He looked up from his breakfast to look at the man, wondering who he was. Dean saw him walk to a young man around his age sitting right next to him and whom he hadn’t registered as being there until now.

The old man walked over to him. “Son of a bitch, I heard you were back. How are you doin’?” he asked the man sitting next to Dean.

That was when it clicked for Dean. He was sitting right next to his father.

This was so not good, he had to get out of here before he ended up changing things, changing the past. Sure it was tempting to try and change things. Especially considering Sam and his life before everything changed with the meddling of a certain pagan god. However, he had to admit that lately, everything had gone exceedingly well for the two of them. That was not something he wanted to risk only to try to get a better childhood without any guarantee that it would work in the first place.

It was funny and surprising how one little change could have such a significant effect.

True, in the beginning, they hated Loki and probably would have wanted to see him dead but now? How could they want to kill the one person that was the reason for the betterment of their life? Sure, one could argue that becoming a demon wouldn’t be desirable, but Dean wouldn’t want to change a thing. He wouldn’t dare assume that he and Alastair loved each other but they had something that was getting pretty close to it and he loved it.

Sam, on the other hand, wasn’t some abomination tainted with demon blood but a real wizard and currently even got something akin to a peaceful childhood, all while learning to control his gift and having actual fun.

Then there was Harry Potter. He hadn’t known the boy for long, but he already saw the boy as a little brother and all in all he had to admit that life couldn’t get any better at the moment. So no, he wouldn’t want to change anything, hence why he had to get the hell out of this city and back to his time preferably.

Though it seemed it wouldn’t be that easy when John Winchester caught him staring at him. “Do we know each other?” he asked Dean.

Dean blinked a few times being ripped from his thoughts and slowly shook his head. “No, guess not, you just reminded me of someone…sorry for staring,” he replied waving lazily towards him and sipping his coffee.

John looked at him for a long moment before he replied “You should take it easy,” with a smile before standing up and leaving the diner with one last look at Dean who again seemed lost in
thought.

Dean pondered for a bit what to do when he groaned, for some reason that stupid angel had brought him here and he somehow had the feeling that it was connected to his father’s younger self. Pinching the bridge of his nose he dug into his pocket and threw a ten dollar bill on the counter not even thinking about the fact that the bill wasn’t probably printed yet and therefore wasn’t legitimate, but he honestly didn’t care. He wanted to follow his father, follow but not intervene in anything.

Following John around a corner, he suddenly ran into Castiel who stood there looking at Dean with his dopey gaze.

That actually angered Dean. “What is this? Why did you bring me here? How did you bring me here? Do the angels have a DeLoreian hidden away somewhere or is it a TARDIS?” he tore into the angel.

“What is a TARDIS?” Castiel asked confusedly cocking his head slightly.

“Time and Relative…it’s a time machine…ah forget it,” Dean growled in frustration. “So how did you bring me here and why?”

“Angels can bend time if necessary, and you have to stop it,” Castiel answered.

“Stop what?” This angel could be highly irritating. “And could you please bend time back and get me back to my time?”

However, before he could get an answer, Castiel vanished into thin air leaving an extremely frustrated Dean behind.

Muttering under his breath about what a son of a bitch Castiel was he looked around trying to find his father again even though he couldn’t see him, so he began to walk into the direction he had seen him walk off in hopes of finding him.

It was a few minutes later that he spotted his father in the yard of a used car dealer looking at a VW Bulli while talking to the salesman and obviously striking a deal with him. Right next to the Bulli but entirely ignored by them stood the car that Dean knew only too well, the Chevy Impala. Dean once again pinched the bridge of his nose, this was already going completely wrong. He began to doubt that his no involvement tactic would do any good.

“Hey, Winchester…isn’t it?” he called out when the salesman finally left, leaning against the Impala. “If I were you I’d buy this car here, much more reliable.”

John raised an eyebrow upon hearing that but slowly walked over to Dean. “You’re the one who stared at me,” he exclaimed. “What? Are you following me now?”

“Nah, I just spotted you here and thought I might help you…kind of an apology for staring at you, I wasn’t fully there yet this morning,” he shrugged sheepishly.

John looked at him sceptically but thought that it was kind of nice. “John Winchester,” he said holding out his hand.

“Dean Anderson,” Dean replied while shaking his hand.

“So you know cars?” Jon questioned.

“A bit…I’m father taught me everything I know, I have an Impala myself. I can tell you that they are
extremely durable. Mine is over...ten years old and still purrs like a cat,” Dean explained after remembering that he could hardly say 30 years because the first Impala had been built in 1959 if he remembered things correctly.

“But the VW looks good too,” John muttered.

“Those cars are driven by hippies, but you don’t peg me as one. No, a real man should drive a real car,” Dean shook his head.

John looked at the car contemplatively, but soon a grin spread over his face. “You're right, this is the car for a man. Thank you!”

“No problem man but I have to go now, it was nice getting to know you,” Dean replied.

With a last shake of hands he left the yard but not without making sure that John really bought the Impala.

Taking a deep breath, Dean looked around to find a car he could hot-wire to be able to observe John. He somehow had the feeling that this wasn’t over yet. Finding some random car, he was just in time to see John drive out from the yard in his newly acquired Impala. Dean followed him around at a large enough distance so that he wouldn’t be seen. John first went back home before he later drove off somewhere different. It turned out that he had driven over to his girlfriend’s house, a girlfriend whom Dean could clearly identify as his mother, Mary.

“Damn, she’s hot!” Dean muttered when he first saw her.

He watched how they both drove off, and not much later stopped in front of a small diner. At first, Dean observed them from afar but at some point, he couldn’t help himself. So he snuck to the window next to which his mother and father were sitting. From what he could hear, they were talking about how Mary’s father didn’t approve of them being together, but Mary didn’t seem to have a problem with it. At some point in the conversation she excused herself for a moment. Once she left, John grabbed a small red box out of his pocket. Opening it, he revealed a ring with a small stone embedded in it.

Dean smiled softly, but because his attention was elsewhere. He didn’t hear someone approaching him until he was attacked and flung into the wall of the building on the other side of the small alley he was standing in. Spinning around he saw that it was his mother who had attacked him and she didn’t seem like she was going to relent any time soon since she instantly struck him again with her fists.

“Who are you and why are you following us?” she asked him while trying to land a blow but Dean was just too fast and continued to dodge all her attacks.

That was until Dean managed to stop one of her attacks by grabbing her left wrist though what he saw there made him stop. On her left wrist dangled a bracelet with several symbol charms he was only too familiar with thanks to being a hunter. His own mother was apparently a hunter. However, he let her wrist go as if he had burned himself, which would actually have happened had he the unfortunate luck to have touched one of the symbols. But luckily he hadn’t and he took a step back. Dean had a hard time reigning in his demonic side upon seeing the charms, but in the end, he succeeded.

“Are you a hunter?” he asked for confirmation, but Mary only stared at him in shock and surprise. “Okay listen, I don’t want to hurt you, and I promise you that you won’t see me again, okay?”
Mary still looked at him in shock, but finally, she nodded. Dean gave her a last glance before he turned around and walked back to the car he had borrowed. Once sitting in it he hit the steering wheel in frustration.

“Shit!” he cursed before he turned on the engine and drove off. Luckily he now knew where his mother lived so he could observe her and John from afar.

With that in mind he drove to the street she lived in and parked a few houses away but with a good view of her home. It was a few hours later that John finally brought her home and that was when Dean allowed himself some rest. His rest though was cut short because Castiel suddenly appeared in the seat next to him.

“What do you want?” Dean complained, but Castiel only looked out the front window with an expression that could be seen as bored, though Dean had the feeling that it was the angel’s default expression. “You know, I’m wondering why didn’t you bring Sam? He would have loved to see this.”

“It is something you have to do alone,” Castiel replied, quickly looking at Dean for a short moment before returning his gaze to something outside.

“You do realise that Sam’s probably tearing the future apart right now in his attempt to find me right?” Dean retorted giving the angel a glare.

“Sam’s not looking for you.”

Dean couldn’t help but snort. “Yeah sure, so what do you want? Do you want me to stop my mum from making a deal with dear ol’ Yellow-Eyes?”

Now Castiel looked at Dean with surprise.

“How do you know about it?” he asked suspiciously.

“I know a lot of stuff, idiot. When we last met I told you to do your homework, but you obviously didn’t,” Dean shook his head and leaned back again and closed his eyes. “If you think that I’ll stop my mother from making that deal, then you can go bugger off because I won’t. I like the future as it is, thank you very much.”

“So you don’t care that these are your parents?” Castiel questioned, his brows furrowed in confusion.

Dean sighed. “I do care, oh I care a lot, but I won’t risk my future…my happiness for the off chance that my parents survive this whole ordeal. I mean I save them today but what if Azazel, or any other demon for that matter, come back tomorrow or the day after. Yes, I wish that my parents wouldn’t die, that Sam and I had a normal childhood but what I’ve realised since you dumped me here is that I don’t want to change a thing,” he ranted but realised that Castiel must have vanished some way through it.

So Dean leaned back and tried to finally get some rest.
It wasn’t until noon the next day that anything happened that Dean could really observe except that the man that must have been his grandfather left the house in a priest’s outfit and drove off. Shortly after noon though Mary came out of the house and got into another car and also drove off. Dean started the engine and slowly followed his mother at a long distance. They drove for some time but finally reached an old secluded house that had evidently seen better days.

Dean parked behind a few trees and watched his mother enter the house. For the next twenty minutes, nothing happened when Dean suddenly heard a scream come from the building. Worried, he left the car and slowly walked towards the house cursing under his breath that he didn’t have his weapons. He opened the front door slowly and carefully entered the house only to feel a demon trap flare to life.

“Shit!” he cursed while looking up at the ceiling where the trap was painted.

The sound of steps drew his attention towards a door on the left from where his mother emerged with a smirk on her face.

“So I was right, you are a demon. What do you want?” she questioned him while coming to stand right in front of him.

“That’s complicated,” Dean simply said. “And I doubt that you’d believe me anyway.” He muttered the last part

“Try me!” Mary raised an eyebrow, but Dean only looked at her.

Dean actually feared that should he tell her anything that it would change what would happen and consequently the future.

“You better start talking demon, or I’ll make your life extremely unpleasant,” Mary finally said when her patience ran out.

“Dean,” he replied but elaborated when he only received a questioning glare. “My name’s Dean.”

“I never heard of a demon called Dean,” Mary was now surprised. “So why are you here, Dean?”

Dean growled in frustration and walked around in a circle within the trap before he came to stand in front of Mary again.

“ARGH!” he groaned. “Okay well, you want to hear the truth? I’m from the future. An idiot of an angel dumped me here for a reason even I’m not entirely sure about yet.”

Mary looked at him and blinked a few times before she collected herself again.

“Right…that really is insane. I’m really to believe that an angel dumps a demon in the past for no apparent reason? You should have thought of a better cover story than that.”

“Said you wouldn’t believe me,” he deadpanned when an idea hit him, it was a risky one though but he doubted that it could get any worse, so he reached into his pocket and pulled out his wallet and threw it to Mary who swiftly caught it.

“Look into that.”

Mary looked at him in disbelief but nonetheless opened the wallet to find some money, credit cards and his ID card.
“Dean…Winchester?” she asked carefully. “Wha-…who…?”

Dean sighed. “As I said I’m from the future…I’m your son,” he told her waiting for the explosion that would inevitably follow but to his surprise didn’t.

“You’re my son?” she asked incredulously though after looking closer at him she could see the clear resemblance to herself and John. She knew that John wanted to propose to her soon and that she would agree, but having the proof standing in front of her…though what disturbed her greatly was the fact that he was obviously a demon. “You’re a demon…how…why? Or are you just possessing my son?” she confusedly asked.

Dean lay his left hand against the barrier in front of him that for him was like a solid wall while rubbing his face with his right hand.

“No, I do not just possess your son…I really am your son, but that’s a long story, and we don’t have much time,” he replied letting his head hang.

“Then I’d say you talk quickly because I’m not going to let you go before you tell me everything.”

Dean chuckled lowly, but it sounded hollow. “Very well.”

Present

In the kitchen of Bobby’s house, four gazes laid on Alastair trying to process what the demon just said.

“What do you mean Dean just vanished?” Sam finally asked panic rising within him. “Where is he?”

“I don’t know,” Alastair growled annoyed. “I went to fetch some breakfast, but when I returned to our motel room, he was gone. First I thought he just went out and would be back soon, so I waited but when he didn’t show up an hour later I got worried so I checked every place he might be with this house being the last one, but he’s nowhere to be found.”

Loki hummed lowly, closed his eyes and started to concentrate on Dean's soul and aura. “Strange…I cannot sense him either,” he said after a few minutes. That was when he suddenly felt a shift in the fabric of reality and started to snicker which ended in outright laughter. “That bastard!” he exclaimed after opening his eyes still snickering. “Don’t worry he’ll be back soon.”
Dean sighed deeply and with a flick of his hand conjured a simple chair before he slumped down on it. He leaned forward, placed his elbows on his knees and raked his left hand through his hair.

“It all will begin tomorrow,” he began. “From what I know a yellow-eyed demon named Azazel will possess your father and kill both your parents and John to get you to make a deal to save him, which you will.”

Mary drew in a sharp breath upon hearing that. The demon would not only kill her family but also the man she loved? There had to be a way to prevent that.

“However, it won't be the standard deal where you'd get ten years; it’ll be a special one instead. In exchange for saving John, Azazel wants access to the nursery of your home sometime ten years from when you make the deal. The next few years everything will be silent then but when Sam, my brother, is not even one year old Azazel will show up again.

“He will show up in Sammy's nursery one night. You will wake up and see him standing at his crib, but you think that it is John because of the darkness. When you realise your mistake, you'll hurry back, but Azazel...he'll kill you strangely and especially for disturbing him.”

“What did he want in the nursery?” Mary interrupted him not even surprised that the demon would kill her. If he killed her family to get access to her in the first place, she didn’t doubt that the demon would kill her if she got in his way.

Dean looked up and at the woman that would be his mother. “He wanted to taint Sam with his blood. I don't know how he can possibly know it already but Sam is a natural wizard or better yet will be. It could also be that he doesn’t know yet but chooses him for some other reason.”

“Wait, Sam's a wizard?” she asked surprised.

“Yes,” Dean replied carefully. “Why?”

“Don't you know? My mother’s actually a squib outcast from the British magical community,” she explained. “She came to America when she was twenty.”

“Huh, that’s news to me,” Dean said slumping against the backrest of his chair staring at some point behind his mother, lost in thought. After some time he shook his head and focused on Mary again.

“Anyway, that same evening Azazel killed you and became John’s obsession. Trying to find and kill the demon, he became a hunter himself. We didn’t stay long in one place and moved from motel to motel. He hunted anything and everything that crossed his path. Neither Sam nor I had a real childhood. I learned how to hunt when I was a teenager though I tried to shield Sam from most of it. Sam, however, at least wanted some semblance of a normal life and went to Stanford when he was twenty-one. He stayed there for a year, even getting a girlfriend, Jessica,” Dean told her.

“Then a year later John suddenly vanished. I didn’t know what to do and went to Sammy to ask him
for help. He reluctantly came with me to investigate the last case John was on, a woman in white. But we didn’t find him. We finished the unfinished hunt, and I drove Sam back to Stanford because he had an interview the next day for a law school. That was when everything quickly went to hell.”

Dean took a deep breath. “I was just about to drive off again when I saw fire coming from Sam’s bedroom. In an instant, I ran to their flat only to see that Jessica had been killed in the same way as you. That was what pushed Sam to become a hunter again and also pushed him to try and find Azazel who was behind the murder of his girlfriend, even if not directly. Soon after Sam’s magical abilities showed up for the first time.”

“He never showed any signs during his childhood?” Mary asked surprised. “No accidental magical outbursts?”

“No, but as we learned recently, that the demon blood probably suppressed it,” Dean said, shaking his head. “We even found others that showed similar abilities than Sam, telekinesis, premonitions, even one who could convince you of anything by only telling you to do it.”

“That one probably laced his voice with compulsion charms to make you do what he wants you to,” Mary nodded.

Dean also nodded. “Anyway, later on, we learned that John had vanished to search for a certain colt that can kill anything, even demons, to kill Azazel.”

“Wait a moment, why didn’t he go to the Rabbit Hole and simply buy demon killing ammunition?” Mary asked confusedly.

Dean snorted. “John never learned about that location and Sam and I also only learned recently of its existence. For a hunter, he knew surprisingly little about what he was hunting.”

“You’re referring to something that happened to you recently again…what happened?”

“Let me continue, and you’ll know,” Dean replied with a smirk. “So John hunted down the colt while Sam and I continued the hunting business. We even had a run in with Azazel but weren’t able to kill him. That was when a truck hit us. I was critically injured, and John made a deal with Azazel to save my life. He handed over the colt he found by then as well his instant death and departure to hell in exchange for my life.

“Sometime later all the special children as we called those with demon blood boosted abilities were brought to a ghost town somewhere in the middle of nowhere for some twisted tournament where they were to kill each other. The last one living then was supposed to open one of hell’s gates with the colt as the key, which is actually the real purpose of it, and lead an army of demons to earth. At that point, we also learned that Azazel fed Sammy his blood the night you were killed.

“Later on I learned that the whole thing was mainly staged to free Lilith from hell, the first demon, but I’ll come back to that later on. In the end, Sam was killed during that tournament. That was the reason I made a deal, to save him. I had to.” Dean let his head fall into his hands and swallowed hard, talking about everything still hurt more than he wanted to admit.

Mary looked at Dean and saw how much it took out of him to talk about everything. Making a moment’s decision, she took out a knife and broke the seal on the ceiling before walking over to Dean and kneeling in front of him.

“I can see how much you love your brother. It would be highly hypocritical of me if I condemned you for what you did to save your brother when I’m willing to do the very same to save John,” she
said with a sad smile while grabbing Dean’s wrists and pulling his hands away from his face to be able to see into his face.

Dean blinked a few times before he tentatively returned the smile. “It’s just…it hurts talking about it…when I lost Sam…, I fell into a hole.”

“What happened next?” she asked to prompt Dean to stop thinking about it.

Dean, who saw how uncomfortable Mary was kneeling on the floor, waved his hand and conjured another chair for her to sit on. Mary nodded in thanks before sitting down upon it.

“Well, you can probably guess how worried Sam was when he learned what I did. He tried everything to get me out of that deal. Half a year later we had a run in with Loki,” Dean continued snickering when he thought about Loki and what he did. “At that time we wanted to kill him for what he did but thinking about it now….”

“What did he do?”

“He trapped Sam and me in a time loop that only Sam would remember. In every single one of the loops, I would die in one way or another.” thinking about it, Dean snickered even more. At some point, Loki had unlocked his memories about it, and Dean had to admit that some of his deaths really had been extremely funny.

“Loki killed you over and over again, and you find that funny?” Mary incredulously asked.

“Yes, in retrospect it is,” Dean replied with a shrug. “Mary, you don’t know Loki as I do…it might seem strange, but…it’s just his way of caring. Loki just wanted Sam to realise that he would lose me eventually.”

“By hurting you and consequently also Sam over and over again? Yes, that is a strange way of caring.”

Dean sighed. “Mary, just trust me that Loki isn’t the bad guy in all this. I mean yes, he isn’t a saint, but up until now, I’ve never known anyone who didn’t deserve what Loki did. What he did to us…it was harmless in comparison to what he really is capable of,” Dean threw his arms into the air in frustration. “Let me continue, and maybe you’ll see things as I do.”

Mary looked at him for a long moment before she slowly nodded, not entirely convinced.

“It was the day after the Christmas holidays that everything changed and I mean for the better. Sam and I did a small pit stop in Malibu when we met him for the first time.”

“Him?”

“Harry Potter. At that time we had no idea who he was. Sam and I left a shop when I became aware that something or better said someone turned my car all pink and girly. That was when I spotted Loki and well at that time we were on less than friendly terms with the pagan god, mainly because of the time loop thing,” Dean once again snickered. “But when I confronted him we learned that he was with this boy who was the real culprit behind the sudden transformation of my car. Loki, on the other hand, vanished hell knows where and left the boy behind.”

“What?” Mary asked shocked. “He just left the boy behind?”

“Yes he did, though it was the best thing he could have done, trust me,” Dean told her. “Sam didn’t want to leave the boy to himself, and so we offered him to drive him where he wants to. When we
learned that he was on holidays and that he would spend them alone now that we scared Loki away, we decided to accompany him. Later on, we learned that Loki at first didn’t really leave and made sure that Harry was in good hands, namely ours. To say that that was an enlightening time would be an understatement. Within the next four hours and the days afterwards, we learned more than in all the years before. The fact that Sam was a natural wizard, the existence of the Rabbit hole and that’s only the tip of an enormous iceberg. We also learned a lot about ourselves and that both Heaven and Hell have plans for us, especially concerning the breaking of the first seal on Lucifer’s cage.”

“What?” Mary exclaimed. “You can not be serious!”

“I am serious,” Dean replied looking her straight into the eyes. “You see when Loki turned up again, later on, we learned that it’s inevitable and that the seals will fall no matter what.”

“And you believed him?” Mary was shocked beyond belief.

“I did, and I do. The thing is when Sam tried to get me out of the contract nothing worked, and I mean absolutely nothing. After a long talk about it, we then decided that if it was inevitable that the seals would fall, that they would at least fall to our own conditions. When we learned a certain thing about Harry’s guardians…let’s just say that it made the decision all that easier. I went to hell quite willingly.”

“They abused him?” It seemed to Mary that the shock and surprise didn’t want to end, how could someone…anyone abuse a child? Not that she doubted it for one moment; Dean didn't peg her as someone who would go to hell willingly for anything less. “And that’s why and how you became a demon.”

Dean simply nodded. “Partly yes, but I think that what happened in hell also played a role in it. When I went to hell I met Alastair and…” he paused not knowing how to explain to his mother that he fell in love with a demon and not just any demon but the chief torturer of hell.

“You love him, don’t you?” she asked him.

Dean blinked a few times in surprise. “Her, but yes I do. I…she…yes I know she’s the chief torturer of hell and not all that nice to others but…,” he tried to justify it, but Mary interrupted him.

“Dean, it might surprise you, but I know quite a bit about demons. Very few are really the evil bastards they are painted as and if you say that she treats you well…I believe you,” she said with a low chuckle, Dean looked happy when he talked about the demon and who was she to judge her without knowing her? “And I only trapped you because I feared you wanted to hurt me.”

Now Dean openly gaped at her until he got himself under control.

“I…” he began but closed his mouth before opening it again. “It’s just that Sam and I for a long time believed things we only recently learned were false to being with and I didn’t think that you’d be so open-minded towards all this,” he shrugged helplessly.

“I’m pragmatic. Why would I care if someone sells his soul to a demon? For the demons it is business and if the people are alright with going to hell for whatever they want it is their problem, not mine. Also with other creatures…as long as no innocent is endangered I won’t interfere. Anyway, so you broke the first seal on Lucifer’s cage. What happened then?”

“When the seal was broken, I stayed with Alastair in hell for a bit more. But at some point, we decided it would be nice to go back to earth for a while, so we left and went to visit Sammy. We helped contain the effect of the breaking of another seal. Alastair and I were hunting down a
Wendigo when that damned angel showed up and dumped me here in the past. That was pretty much everything important," Dean finished with a thoughtful look, but in the end, concluded that he didn't miss anything.

They both descended into silence after that, both lost in thought about what just transpired and what would happen in the future. Mary was pretty much thinking about if there was any way to not die while not changing the future. She could see that her future son was happy with how things developed, even with the hardship before and she didn’t want to risk that.

Dean, on the other hand, wondered just how much the future would change only because he told his future mother everything. Would she try to survive that fateful day? Or would she try to save her parents from Azazel? He could only hope that the future would change for the better, not only for him and Sam but also for Harry. Oh, Harry…would Loki still take care of him? Or would the boy be damned to live through the hell that was his family? Dean hoped that it wasn’t the case and even if it was the case…the first thing he’d do when he got back to his time would be making sure that the boy was alright.

Neither knew just how long they were sitting there, but slowly the sun rose over the horizon indicating that the day when everything would start had long since begun.

Mary blinked a few times when the sun hit her face.

“How did Azazel kill me?” she finally asked.

Dean looked up in surprise over the question. “Are you sure you want to know?” he asked her though Mary only gave him a deadpanned look. “He slit open your stomach before he pinned you to the ceiling and let you burn in hellfire.”

Mary hummed lowly, but finally, she nodded.

“Very well, I have to thank you that you shared this with me, but I have to go. I was away for far too long now, and my father is undoubtedly worried about me already,” she said while standing up.

“Wait,” Dean exclaimed while standing up and grabbing her arm to stop her from leaving. “What do you intend to do now? I mean I won’t ask you to not change anything but…please let me know.”

“Do you trust me?” she inquired in return. Dean observed her for a long moment but finally nodded. “Then trust me when I say that everything will play out just nicely.”

She turned towards the man that would be her son and gently cupped his cheek with her hand and smiled at him. A moment later she let her hand fall back down, and she turned around and finally left. This time Dean didn't stop her.

When she was gone Dean closed his eyes and slumped back down on his chair, despair encompassing him. What had he done?

That was when he heard steps coming towards him. Looking up he saw Castiel approaching him and sitting down opposite of him.

“What do you want?” Dean snarled, not in the mood for the angel’s antics.

“You’re a demon?!!”

“No shit! What gave me away?” Dean asked sarcastically.
Castiel though didn’t even blink when confronted with Dean’s mood. “But that wasn’t what was supposed to happen…this is impossible…how did no one know?” the angel was more confused than ever. He had blatantly listened in to the conversation between Dean and the woman that would be his mother, and it had left him with more questions than answers.

How could Dean have become a demon? That was never meant to happen though it would explain why he hadn’t been able to find him in hell. Then there was the fact that Dean is destined to be Michael’s vessel, but that won’t happen if Dean is a demon.

Then there is the thing with Sam. He was a natural wizard? How could that be? His abilities came from the demon blood, or maybe not? That was at least what his superiors had told him. That Dean had to stop Sam because he was becoming dark. But then again they also said to him that Dean needed to be here in the past to witness how everything began, but Dean used that to change the future. How could Zachariah not have foreseen that? Not to mention why didn’t he know that Dean obviously already knew about all that?

“What will you do about it?” Dean asked when it became apparent that the angel wouldn’t talk.

Castiel looked at Dean. Things certainly didn’t add up here, but what could he do? For now nothing except watching Dean while he stayed here in the past.

“Nothing,” he absently replied before he vanished into thin air again.

Dean growled in frustration but decided that there was nothing left to be done here and since he was famished he decided to hit up the diner again.

The rest of the day nothing noteworthy happened while Dean kept his distance from both his parents. It was nearing midnight that day when suddenly dizziness hit Dean, and he blacked out from it. When he awoke again, Dean saw that he was apparently back in his time and was lying in front of Bobby’s house right now. Groaning he let his head fall back on the ground and tried to assess the situation and how much had changed because of his little trip through time.

The first thing he recognised was that he still was a demon so either he was immune to changes because of it, or far less had changed than he would have thought.

It couldn’t be helped, but he would have to get up and see for himself just how much damage the idiocy of the angel had done.

With one last sigh, he got up and walked over to the front door while brushing off the dust. Once he reached the door, he knocked firmly and waited. Soon after the door opened and Bobby appeared in the frame.

The man looked him up and down. Dean began to fear what might have changed when Bobby smiled at him.

“So ya thought it a good thing to take a jaunt through time?” he asked Dean gesturing for him to come in.
“Not voluntarily I can tell you,” Dean replied and followed the older man through to the kitchen.

When he arrived there, he looked around when his gaze fell on a boy with black hair. “Harry!” he exclaimed and ran over to him before embracing him in a strong hug. “I feared that I changed too much and you’d have to stay with…them.”

“I’m still here, but I’m glad that that didn’t change,” Harry told him with a smile.

“Believe me, had that happened I would have gotten you out,” Dean said, fondly ruffling the boy’s hair much to Harry’s indignation.

“It is nice to see how much you value me,” Alastair’s voice came from Dean’s left.

Dean didn’t honour that with a verbal answer but simply embraced her in a deep kiss that he only ended when Harry coughed loudly.

“You two should get a room,” the boy deadpanned.

“So you’re the one who managed to win Dean’s heart?” a female voice suddenly asked from the doorway.

Everyone turned around to see a blonde woman leaning against the doorframe with a shotgun in her right hand resting against her shoulder.

“I think it is time that we had a talk,” she said with a smirk.
Chapter 31: Surprise, Surprise!

The woman pushed herself off the door frame, walked over to Alastair and came to a stop in front of her. She looked the demon straight into the eye for a moment having to look up slightly since Alastair was a bit taller than her even if it was not by much.

“Should you ever hurt my son...believe me hell will look like a summer spa in comparison to what I'll do to you,” she told the demon in a no-nonsense voice.

“You should be glad that I value Dean too much or I'd gladly test that theory,” Alastair replied with a smirk leaning in towards the woman who apparently was Mary Winchester.

“Don't make threats you cannot follow through with.”

“Are you so sure about that?” Mary also smirked.

“Mary?” Dean suddenly asked, interrupting the conversation and openly gaping at her.

Sam, as well as the others, just stared at her in confusion. The only exception was Bobby, who looked at her equally shocked and surprised as Dean, and Loki who couldn’t keep his snicker in.

“Mary?” Bobby asked carefully. “How is this even possible?”

Mary though didn't react at first, still in a staring contest with Alastair which neither of them wanted to break first.

“I like her,” Alastair suddenly exclaimed with a broad grin and a chuckle before walking back over to Dean and gracefully sitting down on the man’s lap.

Dean at first didn’t react, too shocked and confused about what was happening even though it was Sam who finally asked the question that was on everyone’s mind.

“Can someone please tell me what is going on here?” he asked no one in particular. “Is...is she...?”

Mary snickered lowly and sat down on the chair Loki had helpfully conjured for her. Dean in the meantime finally broke out of his stupor.

“I don’t know how she did it, but yes Sam...this is Mary Winchester, she’s our mother,” he introduced the woman who now smirked mischievously.

Sam looked from his brother to the woman, who was evidently his mother, and back to Dean not knowing what to think anymore. In the end, he sighed and rubbed with his hand over his face. None of them though saw the glint in Loki’s eyes.

“Perhaps it is the best you start at the beginning and tell us what happened,” he said, having a feeling that this would be a long day.

Dean nodded slowly. “Well, when that stupid angel brought me to the past, and I found out exactly
in what time I had ended up in, I wanted to sit out whatever the purpose of all this was without interfering at first. That was when I stumbled over John and what can I say…my curiosity got the better of me. I followed him to a car seller and hell, that idiot nearly bought a VW Bulli instead of the Impala,” he told them and took a swig of the beer Bobby had served to the adults and a coke for Harry and Loki.

Sam when hearing that they nearly never would have had their beloved Impala, looked slightly ill. “Please tell me you changed that,” he almost begged.

Dean looked at his brother with a deadpanned expression. “What do you think…of course, I prevented him from making that mistake,” he retorted. “Anyway, after that I followed him around, well…until Mary here caught me snooping on them. Turns out she comes from a family of hunters.”

“And you're still alive?” Sam asked surprised.

“It is refreshing to see just how much you care for your brother’s life,” Dean huffed.

“You know what I meant, idiot.”

“Bitch!”

“Jerk!”

The name-calling went on for a bit after that until Bobby, who couldn’t keep the grin from his face, interrupted them.

“Ladies, ya can continue that later. We have better things to do now ya idjits.”

Dean gave Sam one last glare but continued his story. “Actually, I wondered about that too. The answer surprised me even more.”

“The Campbells never cared for what someone is but what that person does. So as long as Dean doesn’t endanger innocents I don’t care all that much that he’s a demon,” Mary explained with a soft smile.

“Huh, that’s different. Dad was always the kill first ask questions never kind of hunter,” Sam replied musingly.

“And it pains me greatly that this is the case, but luckily I was able to prevent innocents from being killed because of those values,” a painful expression flickered over Mary’s face before she smiled again.

“Say what?” echoed Sam and Dean simultaneously before they looked at each other and snickered.

“Did you really think I would just leave you behind? I might not have been in your life because I didn’t want to change things, but I still made sure that you were alright. I saved your life more times than I’m comfortable with because of John’s less than ideal preparation during hunts, not that either you or he ever noticed it.”

“How did ya even survive that night?” Bobby asked what all of them wanted to know. “I mean ya died…John said that he saw ya die.”

“And in a way I did,” Mary chuckled. “After Dean told me about everything that would happen I first tried everything in my power to save my parents from Azazel…but it was too short a notice…too little time. Anyway, after that, I began investigating things, Azazel, the seals…Loki,” she said
with a smirk towards the pagan who returned it. “It was one year before that fateful night that I finally managed to hunt him down.”

“I never would have thought that a hunter would join in on that kind of fun, you can be quite inventive,” Loki piped in, while conjuring some chocolate for everyone.

“Please, that guy was a bastard with how he treated his subordinates,” Mary shook her head. “Not to mention that he slept with his secretary while being married.”

Loki chuckled lowly and nodded. “True, but I didn't know that one could use office supplies in such a way.”

“Never betray a woman, we can be very inventive in our revenge. However, when I tracked down Loki, I explained to him a few of the things Dean told me about. Not much mind you but enough so that he would help me. He supplied me with a method to contact him when the time would come, and we parted ways. When then a year later Azazel showed up I called him. We staged everything in the way Dean had told me about so that everyone would think I was dead. In the meantime, I vanished, but I never stopped looking out for you two. I wouldn’t have forgiven myself had anything happened to you,” she finished her explanation about how she survived.

“Yep,” Loki said popping the p, waving his hand in a flourish. “What you saw dying was just one of my little illusions.”

“So you were alive all that time? Why didn't you contact us, talked to us from time to time, let us know that you were alive?” Sam sounded hurt.

“Sam, believe me I wanted to, but I couldn't. I couldn't risk changing the future in such a way. What would have happened if I changed the future so much that Dean would never have ended up in the past? If dear Harry here would never have met Loki?”

Harry shuddered at that thought, and even Sam looked slightly ill at that prospect. When it finally sank in just what such a change would mean he stood up and hugged Harry as if he feared that the boy might vanish any second, much to the boy’s indignation. Harry had long since become a part of their family and if Sam knew one thing, it was to protect someone who was family at all costs, even if it meant that he had to go to hell and back.

“From what Dean said I knew that you were happy even if you had a childhood I certainly never wanted for you. I'll never understand just how John could place his desire for revenge over your happiness. I’m so sorry for what you had to endure, and I would have changed that in a heartbeat but this simply really was the only option,” Mary gave her youngest son a pained smile.

“We actually thought about it for quite some time. True, I could have gotten Harry out of there early, and I don’t doubt that Mary would have taken him in, but that would have opened an entirely different can of worms,” Loki said with a sigh.

“What do you mean?” Harry asked confused, wiggling out of Sam’s embrace to look at the pagan god.

“You know the saying that Fate’s a bitch?” Loki asked in return, Harry nodded. “Well, she IS a bitch when she wants to be. I cannot pinpoint it, but I have a feeling that she has her fingers in how your life has gone so far and believe me you don’t want to witness her when something doesn’t go along her plans. Actually, I wonder why she allowed me to meddle so much without at least some kind of warning, not that it would have worked mind you,” he said with a grin, but this was something that was on his mind for quite some time now.
Either he was involved in Fate’s plans for Harry which he didn’t like one bit because he was in control of his destiny…or fate…or whatever, thank you very much. But then it could also be that he wasn’t supposed to be part of Harry’s life, but there was nothing even Fate could do against it. While he loved the thought of being more powerful than Fate, he knew very well that he wasn’t. No, he must have some part in what was going to happen and that irked him something rotten.

“Anyway, then there is also the problem that a major change in not only your life, Harry, but also you two idiots could have caused a massive paradox, especially one where Dean consequently wouldn’t have ended up in the past. That would have been even worse. Trust me when I say that I would prefer going three rounds with Fate to creating a paradox.”

“Has that happened before? A paradox I mean,” Bobby wondered, curious what the result of one would be.

“One time. Normally small changes in time resolve themselves like it did with Mary. A paradox, on the other hand, especially one on that magnitude…I had the misfortune of witnessing the creation of one once…well it wiped out the dinosaurs.”

Silence reigned in the room only broken by Harry’s exclamation. “Ouch!”

“Yes ouch, I hope you now see why I couldn’t risk it,” Loki said solemnly.

They all stayed silent after that each of them lost in their own thought. Okay, maybe not everyone since Dean and Alastair had begun to snog again.

“Seriously you two, get a room,” Harry laughed, and even Mary couldn’t stop chuckling about that display.

She had to admit that she had doubted her son when he told her that he fell for Alastair and that she shouldn’t worry but seeing those two now it was evident that not only had Dean fallen for the demon but also the other way round.

“Sam,” she addressed her younger son, ignoring the snogging for now. “As I already said I kept an eye on you two, but at the beginning of the year you suddenly vanished. What happened?”

Sam looked worriedly at his brother, but Dean was fully occupied with exploring Alastair's mouth as it seemed. That was until Loki snapped with his finger and the two vanished.

“What?” he asked when everyone looked at him in disbelieve. “Don’t tell me you wanted to watch them when they get it on with each other.”

“Yuck!” Harry exclaimed scrunching his nose.

“Language!” Mary scolded Loki at the same time.

Harry snickered when he heard Loki being scolded like a naughty little child. “Don’t worry I heard worse,” he said towards Mary.

“And would you mind telling me where you heard such language?” Mary inquired with a rose eyebrow.

“Dean,” Sam answered slumping down in his chair while Harry snickered again.

“It seems that I need to have some choice words with my son about the choice of language in front of a child,” she replied with a gleam in her eyes that spoke of nothing good.
“It’s undoubtedly too late for that,” Harry now outright laughed about the predicament Dean found himself in should he show up again any time soon, though considering what he was occupied with at the moment that was debatable.

“For that, it is never too late. However, Sam, I asked you where you vanished to. I was quite worried when I wasn’t able to find you anymore,” Mary inquired again, glad that she wouldn’t be distracted by her son’s behaviour anymore.

Though it wasn’t Sam who answered but Harry.

“I think that was kinda my fault actually,” he admitted sheepishly. “When I learned that he was a wizard and that he would be alone for some time because of Dean’s trip to hell I suggested that he could come with Loki and me to Hogwarts. That way he would not only not think about his brother so much but also learn magic that would help him later.”

Sam when he heard Harry telling his mother that he was a wizard, looked at him in shock, thinking that Mary would react negatively. During his time as a hunter, he learned that most hunters distrusted those who wield magic on principal, not because they were generally dangerous but because they had a hard time to discern between natural born and demon deal magicals, both used magic the same way.

“You went to Hogwarts? That’s good!” Mary exclaimed but elaborated when she saw her son’s surprised and confused gaze. “Oh yes, you don’t know it yet, my mother was actually a squib.”

At first, Sam didn’t seem to understand the implication, but soon his face morphed into one of understanding.

“Oh!” he said.

Mary chuckled lowly. “Yes, she…,” Mary began to explain, but Castiel decided to show up right at that moment.

The dopey gaze of the man scanned the kitchen, looking at each of them. With every person he looked at his confusion seemed to rise. When his gaze fell upon Mary, he didn’t know what to think anymore.

“Where is Dean?” he finally asked.

“Shagging his girlfriend,” Loki replied with a chuckle.

“Language!” Mary scolded him while Harry let his head sink onto the table.

“It is hopeless with him,” he muttered earning himself a broad grin from Loki which he didn’t see though.

However, that drew Castiel’s attention to him. “Harry Potter?” he asked confused. “What are you doing here? … And Loki? What in the name of father is going on here?”

“Why would we tell you?” Dean’s voice came from behind the angel. “And I’m not shagging my girlfriend as you can very well see.”

That was when Mary had enough. She stood up walked to Dean and grabbed his left ear before pulling him out of the room.

“You’re coming with me.”
They all could hear her scolding her son for his language. It took them a few minutes before they returned and when they did, Dean looked subdued and wearily glanced at his mother. The only one not laughing was Castiel who looked at Dean strangely. However, before the angel could say or do anything, he jumped a foot into the air when Alastair suddenly appeared behind him and whispered in his ear.

“Well, well, if it isn’t heaven’s little foot soldier. What are you doing here all alone?” the demon asked him with a smirk before walking around him and gracefully sitting down in the empty chair that Dean had occupied before Loki had decided to dump them in one of his pocket dimensions.

Castiel, on the other hand, whipped around and stared at Alastair, his eyes going wide.

“Alastair?” he asked shocked mixed with a bit of panic and fear tinting his voice, having recognised the demon because of her aura which she hadn’t bothered to hide. “What are you doing here? And… and…Harry Potter? What is going on here?”

It seemed that all of that was too much for the angel as he collapsed and if Loki hadn't conjured a chair for him, he would have hit the floor.
Chapter 32: America beware – Harry Potter is Coming!

“Did he really just faint?” Loki asked in disbelief.

Dean walked over to the angel and waved a hand in front of his face. When he got no reaction, he felt for a pulse to make sure that the vessel at least was alive.

“Seems to be the case,” he finally replied.

Loki blinked a few times before he began to laugh…loudly, he even fell off the chair from laughing so hard.

“You…that…,” he tried to get out between bouts of laughter. “Do you…have…any…idea how…hard…it is…to get…an angel…to faint?”

“Achievement unlocked!” Harry snickered.

“You definitely play too many games on that laptop of yours,” Sam snorted while shaking his head.

“What? Do you really think I use the internet only for porn?” he cheekily retorted.

“Er…WHAT?”

“Didn’t you know? The internet is for porn!”

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Everyone bar Loki, who was still lying on the floor laughing, even more now with what Harry was doing, stared at Harry as if he had finally lost it.

“Normal people don’t just use the internet for porn,” Sam finally stated dryly sending Harry into a bout of laughter because he had unknowingly used the same words as they were used in the version of the song he knew.

With amusement, Harry nodded towards Dean who stood next to the passed out angel and looking
confused.

“Sorry but he’s not normal,” Sam told Harry.

Harry narrowed his eyes and nodded towards Loki.

“Even less normal,” Sam deadpanned.

That made Harry snicker until he was also laughing. In the end, he reached into his pouch that he got from Loki on Christmas and pulled out his laptop and opened it. After a quick search on the net, he turned it around while setting the volume to maximum.

Turning it around so that the others could hear and see the video he played, he carefully watched their faces.

“You're not even twelve!” Mary said in the end, shocked what the child had access to.

“So what? Between Loki, my godfather, who is even more immature than Loki is, and yes, this is possible, as well as Dean and Sam I can honestly say that this is the least worrisome thing. Then there were also my so-called relatives...let’s just say that they were certainly NOT role models.”

When he thought about his relatives, suddenly another thought occurred to him, one that he conveniently ignored until now. He looked at Loki and hummed lowly in contemplation.

“Say Loki, what happened to Dudley? Didn’t you say that he stayed with big balloon Marge? But how could he then have appeared as a ghost on that day?” he asked the pagan god.

Loki who had calmed down by now sighed. “Don’t look at me like that, this wasn’t my doing. It seems that Dudley had a little meeting with the hellhound of that woman that didn’t end well,” he finally brought out. “As I said it wasn’t something I did, but I would be lying if I were to say that it was a bad thing to happen.”

“You mean Ripper? Huh, interesting; but what do you mean that it wasn’t a bad thing to happen?”

Loki warily looked at Harry not knowing whether he should tell the boy or not but in the end he decided that it would be worse if he kept it a secret, he didn’t want to lose Harry’s trust over something like this.

“From what I heard from Crowley the boy got even worse once he lived with his aunt. While he already was a bully under his parents’ tutelage, he became outright criminal once they were dead. I don’t know whether it was because of his parents’ death or if his aunt encouraged it, but one of the victims of him and his little gang ended up in the hospital with several broken bones,” Loki said in a grave voice.

Harry looked down at his hands that were fiddling with the hem of his shirt. It wasn’t that he wished for Dudley to die since he was still a child but with how bad he became it seems that it was the lesser of two evils.

“Ah well, it isn’t as if anything can be done about it after all,” Harry sighed. “What are we going to do about the angel?”

“Huh, I don’t know,” Loki muttered.

Alastair in the meantime gave the still unconscious angel a contemplative look, a smirk slowly creeping up her face. She stood up, walked over to Dean and leaned down and whispered something
in his ear. Dean looked at her, raising an eyebrow.

“Are you sure?” he asked tentatively.

“Why not?” Alastair replied, her smile now positively evil.

Dean looked at her for a long moment before he smiled similarly.

“What have you two planned?” Loki questioned warily.

“We’re going to corrupt ourselves an angel,” Dean answered.

That however set Loki off for some reason. “I’m not going to allow you two to torture some innocent angel,” he growled threateningly. “It isn’t his fault that he was sent to do what he did.”

“And we’re not going to torture him, at least not in the way you’re thinking about,” Dean retorted his smirk not wavering for one second despite the glare Loki was sending him and Alastair.

It took Loki a moment, but he finally caught on with what the two demons had planned, and he started to laugh. “Oh, that’s just…you two know how to get to my pocket dimension,” he told them, now smirking mischievously. “Have fun you two!”

Dean nodded and vanished together with the angel in a cloud of black smoke closely followed by Alastair. Harry though seemed to have gotten lost. The others also looked confusedly at Loki.

“Can someone please explain to me what just happened?” he asked.

“Sorry kiddo, but I fear that Mary will rip my head off if I told you,” Loki shrugged apologetically.

That, however, seemed to have been the clue the others needed as everyone’s eyes widened while Harry furrowed his brows, thinking through what the pagan had said. It took him a minute, but in the end, he got what Loki had hinted at.

“Oh!” was all he said to that setting Loki off into peals of laughter.

“You, my dear, know far too much for your age,” Mary scolded him lightly.

Harry shrugged trying to suppress a yawn.

That was when Loki looked at the clock and saw how late it was. “Anyway, I think it would be a good idea for you to go to bed now,” Loki told Harry with a soft smile.

Harry tried to stifle another yawn. “I have to agree with you.”

“Ye’ll have to share a bedroom with Sam,” Bobby told him. “But I don’t think that this will be a problem. It’s the one on the first floor on the left.”

Harry nodded and followed by Loki he went up the stairs. He quickly got ready for bed and not soon later he laid down with Loki sitting on the edge of his bed looking worriedly at the pagan. While dealing with the angel had distracted him somewhat, his mind constantly turned back to Dudley.

“Don’t worry about Dudley, Harry, he isn’t worth you losing sleep over him,” Loki said while tucking him in having an inkling about what was going through Harry’s head.

“I know I shouldn’t feel bad with everything he did to me, but he wasn’t much older than I am. He…he just didn’t deserve it,” Harry again looked down.
Loki gently cupped his cheek. “I agree, but it is nothing we can change, now sleep.”

“G’night Lo,” Harry mumbled already halfway to Morpheus’ realm. “And thank you.”

“Good night Harry,” Loki replied with a fond smile, stroking a strand out of the face of the peaceably sleeping child. “You’re welcome.”

“You’re a good father even if he isn’t really your child,” Mary’s low voice floated over to him from the door.

Loki chuckled lowly while he got up and walked over to the door. “I think I’m more of an older brother to him.”

With a last look at Harry, he silently closed the door.

In Loki’s pocket dimension a certain angel started to regain consciousness once again only to find himself lying on a large bed. He sat up and looked around in confusion, seeing Dean sitting in a chair at a desk not far from the bed and maintaining what he knew was a gun. Letting his gaze wander he saw Alastair standing in front of a large window with her back towards him and staring out on the grounds.

“Ah, our sunshine has finally woken,” Dean spoke up putting down the trigger mechanism of the gun he was currently cleaning.

“Where am I?” Castiel asked his confusion clearly showing.

“In Loki’s pocket dimension. If I were you I wouldn’t even try to get away,” Dean replied with a smirk.

“As if a mere pagan god would be able to contain an angel of the lord,” Castiel said while trying to get out of wherever he was, but he quickly found out that he couldn’t.

“Don’t ask me what he did but it seems to work,” Dean now smirked.

“What do you want?” Castiel now looked a bit wary.

“To Corrupt you…what else?” he retorted. “You know this entire thing here can go two ways. First, the easy way. You admit that there is nothing you can do against it and just surrender. Second, the hard way. You see Alastair has waited for a long time for the opportunity to corrupt an angel.”

Castiel’s eyes widened in shock before they narrowed in determination. “Torture me all you want, I won’t break,” he challenged them.

That made Alastair smirk and turn around. “Oh, my sweet, clueless angel. I don’t need to torture you to break you, at least not in the way you expect,” she purred while prowling over to the angel in a way like a predator would stalk its prey.

When she reached him, she pushed him over before she followed him, climbing on top of him.
Dean who watched his girlfriend had to swallow hard – this was so damned hot.

The next three days were quite calm. Loki and Harry went out for a few times while Sam and Dean picked up a hunt not far away from where Bobby was living. It was just a simple salt and burn job though they managed to muck it up a little much to the other’s amusement. Bobby in the meantime did some research on the seals on Lucifer’s cage to be prepared when one broke that they didn’t want to and Alastair stayed with Castiel. All in all, it was quite peaceful until Sirius suddenly showed up.

“Hey guys, guess who’s here!” he shouted through Bobby’s house.

Harry instantly came dashing down the stairs and bumped into his godfather hugging him close, completely missing the snowy owl that took off and hooted reproachfully.

“Hey Siri, how are you?” Harry asked after letting go of his godfather.

“I’m good, but I think you forgot someone,” Sirius laughed and pointed towards the owl.

“Hedwig?” Harry exclaimed. “What are you doing here? I thought I left you with Severus?”

“It seemed that she didn’t want to stay with this old git,” Sirius retorted.

“Oy, stop insulting Severus,” Harry said mock hurt.

Sirius laughed upon hearing that. “What were you up to Harry? Pranked the hell out of everyone?”

“Nah, but Loki and I want to go to Washington D.C. today, and I have a nice little prank prepared,” Harry said with an impish smile.

“What kind of prank?” Sirius eagerly wanted to know, but Harry’s grin only widened. “Oh come on you can’t just leave me hanging like that!”

“You’ll see soon enough,” Harry snickered. “It should annoy the hell out of a few people.”

“Fine have your way,” Sirius retorted sulkily before wandering off seeing if he could find something more interesting to do.

Harry shook his head and walked over to Hedwig who had settled down on the back of a chair. Stroking her white feathers, he waited for Loki to show up and take him for his outing.

“Hey girl, it wasn’t that I didn’t want to take you with me, but I thought you’d be more comfortable at Hogwarts than travelling all around the world,” he told her.

Hedwig though hooted as if she wanted to say that she wanted to stay with her human. Harry snickered lowly when he heard footsteps coming closer.

“Ah Harry, there you are. Ready to go?” Loki piped up when his gaze fell on Hedwig. “Hedwig? I thought she stayed at Hogwarts?!”
“It seems she’s more comfortable coming with us,” Harry shrugged. “So off to Washington, I want to see the White House.”

“I don’t know what you find so interesting about this building,” Loki muttered leaning against the fence separating the front lawn of the White House from the street.

“Except that it contains one of the most powerful people on the planet?” Harry retorted with a mischievous grin towards the pagan.

Had Loki looked at Harry at that moment he would have been worried in an instant, but as it was, he was lazily observing the tourists who had their cameras out and were taking photos of the building or of friends, family or whomever else posing in front of it. Wondering just why he was entertaining Harry with this he looked out for something to make this trip a bit more…interesting.

The first thing that told him that something wasn’t as it was supposed to be – and that without his doing – was when people suddenly gasped and more cameras than before flashed, taking photos of something behind him. What really showed him that something had happened were the sudden shouts, that clearly were of military nature, at some distance behind him. The thing that let him finally turn around in confusion were the commands to search the close vicinity for whoever did whatever said person did.

However, Loki was in no way prepared for what he would find when he turned around. Over the entire front of the White House, a banner was taut with huge lettering on it and soldiers running around over the grounds trying to find out who and better yet how that banner was placed there.

The banner read five words:

LOKI FOR PRESIDENT – CHOCOLATE RULES!
Chapter 33: MACUSA has Fallen

Loki blinked a few times gaping at the banner when he heard a shout coming from some distance to the right.

“LOKI LAUFESYSON!” a man, who looked similar to a more warrior-like Dumbledore with a shorter beard and hair as well as an eyepatch, shouted. “SHOW YOURSELF!”

Right at that exact same moment, a few pops sounded off to their left and four clearly magical people appeared before they swarmed out after a few words from their leader.

“Oh shit!” Loki cursed before he vanished into thin air leaving a surprised Harry behind.

Harry though, by now used to the pagan’s antics, shrugged when an evil idea occurred to him. He turned towards the banner. After a few moments, the lettering was added to, a second one appearing beneath it.

ODIN SUCKS!

That earned him an angry roar from the man off to the right who now frantically looked over the assembled people evidently trying to find the culprit. When he didn’t see him in the nearby vicinity, he stormed off away from Harry. The magicals though had not such a hard time finding the culprit as they were collectively walking towards him now.

“Hi, can I help you?” Harry asked with an innocent smile that might have fooled Dumbledore but obviously not the four people in front of him.

“Hello, name’s Marcel Reynard. I’m the Head Auror of the DMLE of MACUSA. Were you the one to conjure the banner that is currently covering the White House?” the leader of the four asked him.

“Okay, I’ll just pretend that I understood anything from what you just said,” Harry retorted with a snort, he knew what an Auror was and the DMLE but who or what the hell MACUSA was he had no idea of. “What makes you think that it was me?”

Reynard raised an eyebrow at him before he started to explain obviously thinking that Harry was a magical born to No-Majs as the Americans tended to call the muggles, or at least someone unfamiliar with the American government structure. “An Auror is someone you could say akin to a police officer while the DMLE is the Department of Magical Law Enforcement. MACUSA is the Magical Congress of the United States that handles all the magical and otherwise supernatural affairs here in the States. Clear so far?”

Harry nodded giving the man a glare that clearly asked him whether he thought him stupid.

“Good. Now, did you conjure this banner up?” he asked again.

“And if I did it? What’s the problem?”

The Auror sighed deeply. “Listen, you cannot just conjure up something like that in front of so many
No-Majs, this is dangerous and could end up in the revelation of our world to them. Moreover, do you have any idea who Loki really is?

“What do you mean who Loki is? I know very well who he is,” Harry retorted with a sneer that could have rivalled the one his favourite potions professor liked to dish out.

“Kid, I know that Loki sounds like the best pagan god out there with all the pranks he plays but believe me he isn’t as cool as he looks, he’s dangerous,” he explained while crouching down so that he was at eye level with Harry.

“So you want to tell me that he isn’t the funny guy I made friends with? The one person who’s saved my life multiple times? The one who got rid of my relatives so that I won’t have to return to them ever again?” Harry asked challengingly.

“He what?” one of the other Aurors choked out.

“Oh the horror, it's such a shock. He killed my relatives,” he deadpanned. “My relatives who treated me worse than the poorest house-elf, who beat me since I could think, who called me a freak and an abomination. You don’t like Loki? Well, I do. Now go bugger off.”

With that, Harry turned around and walked away from the Aurors in search of something more entertaining. However, it seemed that those idiots didn’t want to leave him alone.

“Hey kid,” Reynard shouted after him. “I fear that we’ll have to take you with us.”

Harry groaned but turned around to stare at them when an idea hit him, and he grinned like the Cheshire cat.

“Oh, okay,” he replied overly cheerful though he could see how the four Aurors instantly became wary of him. What they didn't know was that they would soon rue the day they heard the name Harry Potter for the first time.

“What's your name? We can hardly call you kid all the time.”

“Harry Potter.”

Reynard looked at him a bit surprised but firmly grabbed his shoulder. “I’ll go and sidelong apparate you,” he said as an explanation.

A sucked through a rubber tube feeling later, Harry found himself standing in the entrance hall of a huge building. On the wall on the other side of the room, a large emblem was embedded with the crest of the MACUSA. In front of that stood a giant statue depicting a phoenix and many people were bustling around.

When everyone landed behind him, they led him down several corridors past offices, a cantina and meeting rooms though most people were in the cantina since it was lunchtime. Unknown to his escort Harry used this time for some fun. So he magicked a few potions courtesy of the twins into coffee machines and food, hexed doorknobs or other things that were likely to be touched or set up whatever else he could come up with. Everything was on a time delay, of course, he wouldn’t want to alert anyone too early.

Soon, however, he found himself in a small office sitting in front of a massive desk with stacks of paper littering all over it while Reynard took a seat behind it.

“So you're Harry Potter?” he asked carefully.
“Are you sure that you’re allowed to question me without my guardian being here?” was Harry's counter question.

“Your guardian has already been informed and is on his way here as we speak.”

Right at that moment, the door to the office opened but who stepped through wasn’t a person but a goat with an overly long beard followed by a monkey.

“Oh uh ah,” the monkey said obviously enraged while the goat looked at him with an amused glint in its eyes.

Reynard, on the other hand, looked at him with a gaze that could have killed, but Harry was utterly unimpressed by it.

“Oh, this is rich, I never thought that Dumbledore was the one you informed,” Harry brought out between bouts of laughter.

It seemed that this was the point where Reynard had enough and drew his wand, though before he could do or say anything, it fell to the ground with a clattering sound because the Auror transformed into a horse. That set Harry off into even more laughter.

“It was nice meeting you, but I think I’ll leave now,” he said once he had cooled down enough. “Oh, and a little parting advice…when you take in the apprentice of Loki the next time…make sure that he cannot hex anything and everything in his reach.”

With a lazy wave of his hand, Harry stepped around the goat who bleated at him in amusement and left the room. When he stepped out into the corridor, he saw that the entire floor was complete pandemonium. Birds were flying around, and there was even the proverbial elephant standing in the room trying not to move too much lest he destroyed anything. Monkeys were racing around in obvious confusion and a bit of panic while papers were scattered everywhere.

Harry snickered at the sight and made his way back to the atrium. There he stopped shortly and turned towards the emblem embedded in the wall. A few seconds later another banner appeared reading:

_LOKI'S APPRENTICE 1 : MACUSA 0_

_Ps.: Your security sucks!_

Laughing about how he had taken out the entirety of MACUSA singlehandedly and only with pranks, he stepped out through the front door only to find that he wasn’t in Washington DC anymore but in New York.

“Ah, that reminds me…I always wanted to go see the Statue of Liberty,” he muttered to himself before he set off towards the nearest train station that was luckily at the next corner to see how to get there.

About half an hour later he was on a ferry to the Isle of liberty. Once he arrived there, he enjoyed a tour through the statue and was now sitting on a bench outside looking at the statue musingly,
wondering what to do now. While looking at the statue an idea came to him and with a smile that would have the devil running and fast he went to work.

He was just in the middle of giving the Statue of Liberty a make-over via glamours and colouring charms when he heard the tell-tale sound of multiple apparitions. Looking around he soon spotted seven Aurors that came his way and didn’t look very amused.

Harry snickered lowly, waved at the approaching Aurors before he activated the portkey Severus had given him leaving behind enraged Aurors and a banner covering the side of the statue’s socket that faced them reading:

LOKI'S APPRENTICE 2 : MACUSA 0

Harry didn’t know where he landed, and honestly, he didn’t really care because he was so busy laughing his ass off over the indignant and enraged faces of the American Aurors he had left behind and who realised that they had no way to follow him. He didn’t even care that he fell flat on his backside because…well activating a Portkey while sitting is generally a terrible idea.

The sound of an arriving Portkey, as well as the ringing laughter, caught the attention of Severus who was sitting in his study and correcting the exams but now worriedly rushed into his living room in Hogwarts.

“Harry, what’s wrong? What happened?” he asked while walking over to him in a brisk pace and casting several diagnosis charms on the boy to see whether he was hurt.

“I…their faces…,” Harry brought out between bouts of laughter.

“What. Did. You. Do?” Severus asked pronouncing every word but only sighed when Harry laughed even harder.

Knowing that the boy wasn’t hurt he sat down on one of his armchairs and waited for Harry to cool down enough to be able to tell him what exactly happened. It took Harry more than 5 minutes though before he was even remotely able to form a coherent sentence.

“So what did you do?” Severus asked again now that the boy he swore to protect was able to hold a normal conversation.

“I might or might not have pissed off the entirety of MACUSA.” Harry retorted with a broad grin while he stood up and sat down on the chair opposite of his Potions Professor. “Oh, and I found perfect blackmailing material on Loki!”

Severus, on the other hand, pinched the bridge of his nose and took a deep breath lest he lost his composure over his protégé’s Gryffindorish stupidity.

“Oh I think it best if you start from the beginning,” he finally said.

With that Harry began to tell Severus what he did, starting with the White House, how he took out the MACUSA via pranks and lastly what he did with the Statue of Liberty. He had just finished with
describing the look on the Aurors’ faces when someone knocked on the door leading to the corridor and the rest of Hogwarts.

Severus glared at Harry but with a flick of his wand the door open and admitted Dumbledore and two British Aurors entrance.

“Good evening Professor Snape, Mr Potter, it was brought to our attention that you Mr Potter not only used Magic outside of Hogwarts but also did so publicly and in full view of several muggles. What do you have to say to those accusations?” one of the Aurors, a tall and dark-skinned one wearing blue robes, asked.

Okay, that entire thing bore one massive problem, Harry had no idea what Dumbledore told them since he was very well aware of the fact that yes indeed Harry had been at the MACUSA not too long ago. That was when he remembered something Loki told him some time ago about the usage of hand-magic.

“Sir, I don’t know who told you about it,” he carefully began with a brief glance at Dumbledore who only smiled grandfatherly at him. “But I think that an examination of my wands should solve that problem.”

He took out both of his wands and handed them to the bald-headed Auror who carefully took them and cast a Priori Incantatem over both of them. However, the spell told them that the last time he used either of them was on the last day of Hogwarts where he had used his second wand he got in America to levitated his trunk.

“It seems gentleman that it is as I said a misunderstanding,” Dumbledore told them with a twinkle in his eyes.

“That indeed seems to be the case. Thank you, Mr Potter, for your cooperation and I have to apologise for the inconvenience. We will leave now that this is solved,” the man said. “Thank you for your time and good evening. Headmaster, we’ll find out on our own.”

With a curt nod, the two Aurors turned around and left the room, closing the door behind them.

“A second wand?” Dumbledore asked Harry curiously.

“Yes sir,” Harry began but was quickly interrupted by Dumbledore who now sat down on the last empty armchair.

“Please call me Albus, we have holidays, and I’m not your headmaster at the moment.”

“Very well Albus, I got the second wand when I visited America during the winter Holidays. The holly wand is quite nice, but the new wand is far better,” he sheepishly admitted

Dumbledore snickered lowly. “Yes, this is the downside of premade wands. What I’m more curious about is how you did it if you didn’t use either of your wands.”

Harry grinned broadly and flicked his hand towards Severus. The man narrowed his eyes on him having felt the magic coming towards him when a strand of his hair fell forwards and he saw that it wasn’t black anymore but emerald green with a few silver strands. However, the only reaction he gave to that was a resigned sigh and pushing the loose strand back.

“Hand-magic, I have to say that I’m impressed,” Dumbledore said. “Am I right to assume that Mr Laufeyson taught you, my boy?”
Harry’s reaction was instant, he tensed and warily looked at Dumbledore. “Don’t worry, my boy, I know who Mr Laufeyson is. I actually knew right from the beginning, you forgot that I control the wards and therefore know exactly who is coming through the gates of Hogwarts,” he explained with a gentle smile.

“Well, yes he did,” Harry replied looking down on his hands. “You’re not going to send him away are you?”

Dumbledore could see how much Harry feared that he would part him from the pagan god. “No, I will not send him away. This is also the reason for why I declined his request to teach History of Magic. You see, I observed you right from the point you stepped through the doors into the great hall for the first time. I could see that you were not the happy child that I hoped you would be. However, over the months I could see that you became happier…more frolicsome and it was because of Mr Laufeyson,” Dumbledore explained with a sad smile.

“And you told me that he was a pampered prince,” Severus growled.

“I told you that he was well cared for and that was what I honestly thought. Harry, you cannot fathom how sorry I am for what happened to you,” a pained expression flittered over the old man’s face and it seemed as if he aged several years over the last few minutes.

“Don’t worry, you’re not at fault anyway,” Harry waved the concerns away.

“Unfortunately I am, my boy, I was the one who placed you there after all. I honestly thought that you’d be safe and well cared for there, but I was obviously wrong. Was it really so bad?” he tentatively asked.

“Loki gave them a speed trip to hell so what do you think?” Harry deadpanned.

Severus in a rare show of affection stood up, pulled Harry up and sat back down in Harry’s chair with the boy in his lap before leaning him against his chest and draping his arms protectively around him. Harry gladly complied.

“Then it is as I feared, I’m truly sorry!” Dumbledore muttered.

It was right that moment that Loki chose to appear next to them. “Ah, here you are, little devil,” he chirped with a broad grin. “But did you have to piss off Odin?”

That was what Harry needed to get rid of his depressed mood, and he smirked at the pagan god. “What? Didn’t you like it?”

“Odin, you say? I happened to come across him at MACUSA, he looked quite…interesting,” Dumbledore snickered, gladly taking the chance to change the topic away from Harry’s relatives.

“What do you mean?” Loki sceptically looked at the old man.

With a grin, Dumbledore summoned one of Severus’ many empty vials, placed his wand at his temple and after a moment drew out a silvery strand that he put in the vial. Once he was sure that everything was safely contained he taped the vial with his wand so that the memory situated within it was projected for them to see.

The figure whom they saw was clearly Odin, but he looked anything but the proud warrior Harry had seen at the White House. No, he looked quite comical actually. His helmet was missing, and
instead, a chicken sat on his head as if it was breeding eggs, while a chameleon was climbing up his beard. On top of that he was wholly littered with bird scat, his face one of indignant rage.

Loki blinked a few times before he broke out in heavy laughter directly followed by Harry and even Severus couldn’t keep a smile from forming on his face.

“I need a picture of that,” Loki said after a few minutes still chuckling. “That’s perfect blackmailing material!”

He waved his hand over the vial, and a picture dropped in his hand with the moving image of Odin.

“Oh, I also have something that I want to show you,” Harry suddenly piped up leaning forward but still sitting in Severus lap. “How does that work with that silvery memory stuff?”

Dumbledore turned towards him with his usual grandfatherly smile back. “I’ll place my wand at your temple, and you think about the memory you want to share. Once you’re ready, I will remove it.”

Harry nodded and soon Dumbledore had a second vial with Harry's memory in his hand. With a tap of his wand, it was projected.

What they saw was the Statue of Liberty and how Harry slowly morphed it. In the end, it looked like Professor McGonagall in Dumbledore’s bright robes. Harry chuckled lowly.

“I have to admit that I’m impressed. Not everyone your age manages such a feat,” Dumbledore said once the memory stopped.

Harry blushed and hid his face in Severus' shoulder in embarrassment. “It is just a glamour. I didn’t think that I would be able to transfigure it and I didn’t want to try either since there are people in the Statue,” he sheepishly muttered.

“And that was the right thing to do,” Severus praised him, he couldn’t stop Harry from pranking, but at least he could make sure that he knew how to do it without endangering anyone.

“Thank you,” Harry replied with a smile before he turned towards Loki. “Could you make a few pictures of it? I think Professor McGonagall would appreciate a copy.”

“Sure,” Loki shrugged. With a wave of his hand five copies of the memory fell into Harry's hand who nodded in thanks and held out one for Severus. The man accepted it with a smile.

“Albus, could you perhaps give Professor McGonagall the picture?” Harry asked the headmaster, not knowing whether the woman was even at Hogwarts at the moment.

“Of course my boy, and I think one copy will make a good addition on my desk,” Dumbledore answered and took two of the pictures.

“Harry, I think it is time to return, before Sirius levels America to the ground in a bid to find you,” Loki said with a broad grin.

“Ah well,” Harry said while hopping of Severus' lap. “We don’t want that, do we? Off we go and thank you, Albus, for not outing me.”

“No problem, my boy. But one last question if you would indulge an old man. Why did you have to use a permanent sticking charm on the banners?”

Harry snickered lowly. “They are semi-permanent and will stop working when I want them to,” he
replied with a grin. “But don’t ask me to stop them…who knows when I’d need some bargaining material.”

“Ah yes, I see your point,” Dumbledore said. “I’ll see you then at the beginning of the new school year.”

“Next time only use the portkey in case of an emergency,” Severus tried to tell him sternly, but the amusement in his eyes betrayed him.

“And here I thought getting away from a hand full of angry Aurors would count as an emergency,” Harry cheekily retorted.

“Go you brat before that mutt does anything stupid!” Severus shook his head with a smile.

Loki placed his arms around Harry, and they both vanished.

“Should I pity the MACUSA?” Severus dryly asked.

“At least he pointed out a serious security problem to them,” Dumbledore replied with a smile before he left the Potions Master to his work.

Severus shook his head but returned to his study where the end of the year exams still waited for him to grade them. At least that had been a nice distraction.
It was about two weeks and a half since Harry suddenly appeared in his living room at Hogwarts after having pranked the American ministry. At the moment Severus was sitting in an armchair in front of the fire nursing himself a cup of coffee while reading a book, but his thoughts continued drifting to what Harry had done. He had to admit that while the deed itself was quite Gryffindorish, how the boy had handled the accusations towards him were indeed very Slytherin in nature.

Though he had to admit that the British Aurors are not the brightest, only because someone didn’t use their wand doesn’t automatically imply that said person didn’t use any magic at all as Harry so impressively demonstrated. But then again the British community was of the firm opinion that wandless magic was nearly impossible to achieve after all, completely forgetting that Merlin himself was quite accomplished in hand-magic.

The Potions Master was in the middle of his musings about wandless magic when he heard the tell-tale sound of an incoming portkey behind him. With a groan and wondering what the boy did now he turned in his chair to look at him.

“What did you do this time?” he asked shocked when he saw who was standing behind the boy, Lily Potter.

“Why do you always assume that I did something? Can't I just come by for a visit?” Harry asked indignantly not even realising that he brought his mother with him, but only received a rise of Severus’ eyebrow. “Okay, okay, it was an emergency you know? I had to save this from Loki and Sirius,” he said holding up a small box in explanation before handing it over. “For you!”

“Indeed this seems to be a reasonable emergency, thank you,” Severus told the boy who smiled broadly at him.

He knew that Loki had a massive sweet tooth. So he wouldn’t argue with Harry about it especially when it was one of the delicacies meant for him, but he still wondered how the boy had managed to bring Lily with him, who at the moment stood behind Harry gaping in shock.

Loki chose right that moment to show up and stared longingly at the box but quickly backed up when he saw Severus' glare.

“How did you do it?” Loki asked Harry with shock, surprise and a bit awe now that he concentrated on the real issue.

“How did you do it?” Harry questioned confused.

“How did you do it?” Harry asked shook, surprise and a bit awe now that he concentrated on the real issue.

“Do what?” Harry questioned confused.

“Getting here of course! Not to mention that you managed to take your mother with you!”

“Huh?”

Harry’s confusion even rose when he finally turned around only to come face to face with his equally confused mother.
“I used the Portkey Severus gave me,” he muttered in disbelief.

“You not only managed to portkey out of heaven but also took someone with you, whom shouldn't be able to leave to begin with!” Loki exclaimed.

“I…I don’t know,” Harry whispered, watching how Loki now walked around his mother in a circle.

With every step, Loki took his eyes went wider and wider, in the end, one might fear that they might pop out of their sockets. Loki looked the epitome of shock.

“This is impossible! How…? What…? She’s alive,” he rambled. “Alive! As in utterly, completely and absolutely alive! As in not dead…! That shouldn’t be possible. Definitely impossible! There is no way….”

His rambling made every one of them stare at Harry who flushed red in embarrassment.

“I don’t know how it happened,” he tried to explain when he had an idea. “Loki could you perhaps bring me back? I’d like to try something.”

That brought Loki out of his shock and grabbing Harry’s shoulder they both vanished leaving behind a shocked speechless Lily and a confused Severus.

Harry and Loki landed in the living room of the heaven and as soon as they did Harry bolted from the room.

“Dad?” he called out while entering the kitchen where they had been when he activated the Portkey.

In the kitchen at the table sat Sirius, who had come with them to visit Lily and James, and James, worry and confusion written all over their faces. They were mainly worried though not knowing what happened when Harry had activated the portkey and vanished together with his mother. When Harry burst into the room, they both looked up in relief seeing that Harry was unharmed though Lily was nowhere to see.

“Where is Lily?” James asked his son, his worry slowly returning.

However, Harry didn’t answer the question but just walked over to him and grabbed his arm. “Dad, I need you for a moment,” he said, and without another word he activated his portkey again, this time vanishing together with his father, leaving behind an even more confused Sirius.

“What in the name of sanity just happened?” Sirius asked no one in particular.

“I have no idea, but it would be a good idea to follow them,” Loki answered before grabbing Sirius and vanishing too.
In Severus’ living room now four people stood gaping at each other, none of them knew what happened or what to say. It was this setting to which Loki and Sirius arrived. However, not soon after Loki showed up again, Harry began to sway before falling unconscious. It was only credited to Severus’ quick reaction that he didn’t collapse and fall to the floor. Severus lifted him up and carried him over to the couch where he gently laid him down closely followed by Lily who worriedly fretted over her son while James just watched the two.

That was also what brought Loki out of his stupor. He rushed over to Harry and instantly began to assess what was wrong with the boy. A few diagnostic charms later Loki sighed in relief.

“He only drained too much of his magic, but other than that he is fine,” the pagan finally said.

“Harry drained his magic? But how?” Severus asked more confused than ever, and he didn’t like it not knowing things.

“Hell, I don’t have the faintest. If I had to make a guess, I would say that Harry used his magic to revive Lily and that reviving James so soon afterwards drained it to a level that made him fall unconscious. However, that should be impossible, and I mean really impossible. Magic cannot in any given way, no matter what, revive a person the way Harry just did. I mean yes there is the magic of Necromancy, but even that magic cannot fully bring back the dead, they would only be empty husks,” Loki rambled again. “The only ones who would be even remotely able to bring dead back like that would be either a demon or an angel. I am absolutely sure that Harry is neither…so no I have no idea how he did it. And there is normally a price to pay…but not with Harry…it is as if he just reversed death.”

“So basically you say that thanks to whatever Harry did, James and I are alive again?” Lily asked for clarification.

“Basically…yes,” Loki answered looking up to her.

“Well, that will be interesting to explain,” Lily mused with a low chuckle.

“Interesting to explain? It seems that Harry is able to bring back the dead without any repercussion whatsoever!” Loki exclaimed before he became serious. “No one can ever know of this. He would be hunted!”

Right at that moment, a knock echoed through the room. Severus who kneeled at Harry’s side next to Loki looked at everyone worriedly before he stood up and walked over to the door. He opened it wide enough to see who knocked but not enough for whoever was out there to see what was going on inside.

“Dumbledore, what do you want? I’m in the middle of a very complex brewing process,” he lied to the man expertly in the hope of getting rid of him less he learned what was really going on.

Dumbledore, on the other hand, looked sternly at the Potions Master over his half-moon spectacles. “Severus, you should know better than to try and lie to me,” he scolded the man.

Severus looked at the old man for a long moment before he sighed and pulled the door open entirely to grant him entrance. Dumbledore strode in with a smile and a twinkle in his eyes, completely ignoring the glare Loki shot him.

“James, Lily, it is nice to see you two though I have to wonder just how it is possible for you two to be alive in the first place,” he said with a warm smile before he worriedly turned towards Harry who
was still unconscious. “I hope he is alright?”

Loki nodded curtly towards the headmaster still not sure whether it was a good idea to let him know what happened. Dumbledore in the meantime walked over to one of the armchairs and sat down, chuckling lowly over the worried and apprehensive glances he received.

“Don’t worry, I won’t tell anyone about anything going on in this room, I’m merely curious to what happened here. I felt the wards shift and came here to investigate,” he told them.

Loki took a deep breath, sitting down at the end of the couch Harry was lying on before he conjured up enough chairs for everyone. When they all sat, and an elf brought them tea on Dumbledore’s order he began to tell the man what happened.

“I have to say, that Harry has remarkable abilities, especially for his age, but I would suggest that he is careful to when and how he uses them lest someone catches on and tries to kidnap him to abuse those abilities. The worst that could happen is that someone wants to kill him to prevent him from using them all together,” Dumbledore mused once Loki finished.

“That is exactly what I said,” Loki replied when Harry began to stir.

“What happened?” Harry questioned once he regained consciousness.

Loki looked at him and held out his hand over the boy’s chest pushing some magic into him to speed up the process of regenerating his magical core.

“You nearly completely drained your magical core with whatever you did. I helped to regenerate it but you cannot perform any magic for the next two days or you run the risk of depleting it completely resulting in you losing your magic,” Loki explained while helping him sitting up.

Harry winced, leaning against his mother who sat down next to him and placed an arm around him. “Not wanting that.”

“Thought as much. How do you feel?” Severus asked concerned.

“A bit weak and I have a headache but besides that…,” Harry replied with a shrug.

Severus flicked out his wand and not soon later a potion vial came sailing through the air, falling into the man’s waiting hand before he handed it to Harry.

“Drink that it will strengthen you and help with the headache,” he explained.

Harry dutifully took the potion.

“So the big question now will be how we explain that two people, who were dead for the last ten and a half years, are suddenly alive again,” Sirius spoke up for the first time since he arrived. “Not that I’m not grateful for having you two back, but that will be extremely hard to explain.”

“True,” Loki nodded. “At least the goblins will be able to verify your identity and since it isn’t the first time that someone presumed dead returned the Ministry has a procedure to reinstate you as alive giving back your titles and standing. The problem with that is that you’ll have to tell them just how you got back.”

“Why is that a problem? I brought them back,” Harry asked confusedly.

“Harry, you brought them back without suffering any repercussions for it. Do you have any idea
what certain beings would do to have such a power? You can never tell anyone about it! It is a wonder in itself that at least Death didn’t show up yet and throw a fit,” Loki told him.

“Is it really so bad?” Harry didn’t understand Loki’s problem.

Loki sighed. “Harry…yes, certain parties can bring back the dead, demons for example, but for that to happen, you have to pay with your very own soul. Angels also can bring back the dead if they desire so but they have to give an extremely good reason for doing so because otherwise, death shows up and said person is dead again before he even realized that he was alive not to mention the trouble said angel would be in for defying the law that blatantly.”

“So we have to fear that we’ll end up dead again any moment?” James asked apprehensively.

“Honestly? I have no bloody idea. This is a situation that is unprecedented. But that gives me an idea… I think I know how we can forgo telling the ministry just how you got back,” Loki said now with a Cheshire grin. “A feigned demon contract.”

Harry hummed lowly. “Crow or Al?”

“Crowley, though I wouldn’t call him Crow to his face if I were you,” Loki instantly retorted. “But we cannot call him here….”

Dumbledore looked at the pagan for a long moment before he closed his eyes and took a deep breath. “I can let him in but only this one time,” he said sternly.

“Are you sure?” Loki inquired, Dumbledore was on hell’s list of those they desperately wanted to finally claim after all, but Dumbledore only gave him a strange look. “Okay, okay, I’ll call him.”

Loki took out his mobile phone and quickly called Crowley asking him to come to Hogwarts. It wasn’t much later that Crowley appeared in the living room looking at everyone before his gaze fell on Dumbledore. It seemed that he wanted to say something when his eyes widened.

“You’re not Dumbledore,” he finally said.

“Very perceptive,” the old man replied with a smirk, ignoring the stares he received upon that revelation. “Dumbledore is out of hell’s reach.”

“Who are you? What did you do?” Crowley hissed lowly his eyes narrowing on the man.

Dumbledore, or at least who impersonated the man, chuckled lowly. “I gave him and his lover a nice little place in heaven where they can… live in peace before taking his place.”

“You’re an angel,” Crowley exclaimed though he couldn’t tell which angel because as it seemed said angel suppressed his aura so that he couldn’t get a read on it, but it must be a high-ranking one because otherwise, he wouldn’t have been able to do what he did.

“And that is everything you’ll need to know. Anyway, we didn’t call you here to talk about Dumbledore but because we need your help,” Dumbledore replied.

“What do you want?”

“Well, we have to reinstate two people as alive with the British Ministry without revealing the real reason to why they are alive again, to begin with,” Loki answered the question. “My idea was to fake a demon contract as a pretextual reason.”
Crowley hummed lowly looking at everyone present. Lily, James and Severus were quite tense, not used to deal with demons and therefore cautious. Harry, on the other hand, looked pleadingly at him while Loki and the wannabe Dumbledore watched him expectantly.

“That won’t be cheap,” he said in the end.

“What do you want?” now also Loki looked apprehensively.

That was an excellent question that Crowley thought through carefully. He had three ways to go but which was the one that would gain him the most?

One, he could demand to know just what angel thought it a good idea to cancel the contract with Dumbledore by giving him a place in heaven. But that won’t gain him all that much. Sure, it would be nice to know but alone knowing that an angel was hiding as Dumbledore was worth a lot and the gain of knowing which angel wasn’t all that high.

Second, he could ask for the details of how they managed to bring back the boy’s parents and yes he knew very well who the two were after having done some research when Loki approached him with the request of getting his other relatives into hell. However, this was a tricky request and could either be worthless when the angel in disguise as Dumbledore had a hand in it or could be invaluable, but the risk was extremely high.

Third, he could use this situation to bind Harry in a contract to deliver him the soul of Riddle once he managed to collect all the pieces. Since the boy was prophesied to do so, to begin with, this would be a highly profitable deal. What would cause some trouble though would be the fact that Loki would want to have a word in the wording of the contract and he didn’t want to piss off the pagan. On the other hand, the boost he would gain by claiming Riddles soul and getting him where he belonged would probably be worth it. As long as he didn’t add anything that would harm Harry, he would be safe. Would he be truthful he would have to admit that he liked Harry and he wasn’t inclined to hurt him.

So he made up his mind, the third option was the one that would gain him the most so a deal with Harry it was.

“I want a deal with Harry,” he told them but hold up a hand to stop the impending explosion of everyone except Harry.

Crowley observed with interest that the boy just was curious and not in the least bothered that he practically asked him to make a demon deal. However, he quickly had to elaborate before the adults would try to kill him for even suggesting something like that.

“Not a normal deal so stop worrying,” Crowley added. “What I want is just a signed contract that Harry would deliver the soul of Riddle to me once he collected all those blasted pieces. No going to hell after ten years, no hidden conditions, just him delivering that idiots soul for me resurrecting his parents.”

Harry cocked his head in contemplation before he looked at Loki. “What do you think?”

“You're not really contemplating making that deal, are you?” Sirius exclaimed. “This is madness, you cannot trust a demon!”

Lily and James in the meantime looked at each other for a long time seemingly having a silent conversation. In the end, James nodded while Lily sighed but also nodded. Severus, on the other hand, sat in his chair, tapping his mouth with his right index finger and deeply lost in thought.
“What I think is,” Loki began giving Sirius a pointed glare that he should shut up resulting in the man throwing his hands in the air and slumping down in his seat. “That I’ll read the contract before Harry signs anything. Did you really think that I would let Harry become entrapped in a demon contract?”

“So you want to send Harry on a wild goose chase after those blasted soul pieces?” Sirius retorted heatedly.

“Sirius, stop for a moment and think. Crowley never said that it would have to be Harry who searches and finds the soul pieces….,” Loki argued but was interrupted by Severus.

“Ultimately it would be us searching and finding the soul pieces, giving them to Harry and he hands them over;” he commented in a low voice that was well-heard none the less.

Crowley smirked. “I don’t care how he gets Riddle’s soul as long as he gives it to me in the end.”

“What if someone else manages to collect the entire thing before Harry can?” James suddenly asked.

“Unlikely,” Loki muttered already thinking about how to get the rest, but when he looked up, he saw the man’s confused face. “I already have two of the pieces, the one Severus and I extracted from Quirrell and the one from Harry’s scar,” he explained absentmindedly not realising what he just admitted.

This resulted in a shouting attack of Sirius while James and Lily just looked sadly at Harry having already known about it. Dumbledore looked confused while Harry, on the other hand, was surprisingly calm.

“So that was that black smoke that came out of my scar when you gave me that tattoo,” he deduced silencing Sirius’ rant with it.

“Why do I learn about this little detail only now?” Severus asked in a deceptively soft voice.

Loki swallowed hard and looked sheepishly at the Potions Master, that man can be more frightening than a seasoned demon. “I forgot to tell you?” he said making the statement sound more like a question.

“The next time you come to know about something that might threaten Harry’s health you instantly inform me about it, is that understood?” Severus asked the pagan threateningly receiving a fearful nod in return. “Good.”

“What surprises me, is that I wasn’t able to detect it when I made sure that Harry was alright after what happened at Godric’s Hollow,” Dumbledore spoke up.

“It seems that Riddle did something so that the soul pieces can’t be detected though I don’t know what, even I wasn’t able to detect either the one in Harry nor that Quirrell was possessed. However, I think we got a bit off track. Crowley, you set up the contract, and I’ll read it before Harry signs it,” Loki addressed the demon who had silently observed them for the last few minutes.

It took Crowley and Loki only a few minutes to set up the contract, and it was simple and straightforward. The deal would cover up the sudden returning of Lily and James Potter to the living for Harry delivering the soul of Riddle without stating how he got the soul or giving a time limit. Afterwards, Harry signed it. Crowley went on his way with a smirk that would have made a shark look tame.

“So, now that this is out of the way there is only one question unanswered. Who are you really?”
Loki addressed Dumbledore.
“Who are you?” Loki asked again. When he only received a smirk from Dumbledore he scowled. Dumbledore’s smirk just broadened in response.

“How about you find out on your own? Let’s see how good you are, shall we? …Gabriel?”

Loki instantly tensed up when he heard that name and was ready to leave should this situation turn against him, or at least more than it already had. Everyone else though was quite confused.

“How…?” he asked weakly.

“Stop worrying you’re scaring Harry,” Dumbledore retorted sternly when he saw how Harry was looking at Loki with a look of fear probably thinking that he would leave him. “I’m neither here to reveal you, nor to drag you back or some such tripe.”

“Ah yes?” Loki snapped, fury replacing his worry. “Then why come here and call me out? Why come here if not for me? What do you want?”

Dumbledore sighed deeply. “At the moment I probably want the same thing as you do, hiding,” he told him only to earn himself a snort. “The best will probably be that I tell you how it all began.

“You know, it was such a long time ago…before everything went to hell, I was free to be who I wanted to be, and I was happy. I had my family. Nothing could dampen my mood, except for your sometimes annoying pranks maybe,” he told them, and everyone listened raptly.

“Then the war began and with it came discord. Soon I was forced to become someone who I didn’t want to be, a strong-willed warrior…a cold-hearted bastard, I became what everyone expected me to be. It wasn’t who I truly was, but I didn’t see any other way, then you vanished – presumed dead – and with it any remaining happiness I had. I only worked on autopilot afterwards, did what needed to be done…so many died in the hope of keeping together what remained.” Dumbledore’s voice broke. Tears started to flow down his face.

Loki observed the other angel with shock and surprise, he had the nagging feeling that he knew the angel, but for the life of him he couldn’t say who it was, and the only one that sprang to his mind was impossible, or maybe it wasn’t…? However, in the end, it didn’t really matter who the other angel was if he really only was here to get away from things. How could he blame him if he did the exact same thing in the first place? He chanced a glance at Harry and saw that his brother was right, he was frightened, so he gave him a reassuring smile and watched how the boy relaxed a bit.

“About a century ago,” Dumbledore finally continued, turning Loki’s attention back to him. “Zachariah then suddenly got the notion that it was time to free Lucifer and restart the fight. That was when I realised that I had to do something, but I didn’t know what. I couldn’t dispose of Zachariah because he had more followers in this than I thought possible and I also couldn’t go against him otherwise and so I did the only thing I could by secretly trying to delay the inevitable.

“Thirty years ago Zachariah also managed to drag some of the demons to his side. They began to
plan out how to break the seals, and all I could do was watching helplessly. What caught my
attention though was what happened about twelve years ago. You see one of the conditions for the
demons agreeing to work with Zachariah was that he brought them the soul of Riddle. But that was
where Zachariah ran into a problem, he didn’t know how to locate them so he turned to someone he
knew would help him, Dumbledore. Zachariah promised him eternal fame and getting him out of his
demon contract though from what I learned he never intended to go through with the last one.

“Together they then formulated the Prophecy that would bind a certain child Dumbledore knew
would be born soon and Riddle together, solving their problem. They had planned out your entire
life Harry, how you would face Riddle again and again, in the end defeating him. I couldn’t let that
happen. While I have to admit that for a long time I blamed humanity for the war and thought very
poorly of them, I also knew that God would never have wanted an, at that time not even born, child
that never did anything wrong to suffer in such a way. Not to mention that God gave the humans free
will and taking that away in such a fashion…it went against everything I believe in.

“However, I knew there was only one point in time I could safely intervene without tipping off
Dumbledore and Zachariah. So on Samhain, after Riddle attacked you, I came to your house and
weaved a strong protection around you, one that, while not preventing bodily harm, would heal you
during the night and at least keep you alive.”

Here Dumbledore sighed deeply. “You don’t know how much it pains me that I couldn’t do more,
but I feared what Zachariah would do if he learned about it.”

To his utter surprise, Harry stood up, walked over to him and embraced him in a firm hug. “Thank
you,” he muttered.

“No…I failed you,” Dumbledore replied looking down.

Harry leaned back and smiled at him. “No, you didn’t. I could feel it…every night when they finally
left me alone I could feel it. When I had to sleep outside because they locked me out again, I could
feel it. A warm protection that enveloped me and kept me safe, warm and alive, that took my pain
away and healed my wounds. Despite not knowing what it was, it's what kept me going, what gave
me strength, what kept me from giving in to the despair.”

“Then at least that worked,” Dumbledore gave him a tentative smile.

“It seems that we also owe you a thank you,” James spoke up. “You might not have been able to do
much but you did more than most when it comes to our son, and for that, we’ll be forever grateful.”

“What confuses me…you said that it was you who placed me with my…them when I came here last
time, but you weren’t posing as Dumbledore over the school year, I would have known,” Harry
muttered. “So how can you have been the one to place me there? Or did you order Dumbledore?”

“He played his role,” Loki answered. “It would have been highly suspicious had he talked about that
event from the point of an outsider when it is known that Dumbledore had been involved. So he
mixed past events from Dumbledore with a bit of his own truth. Take his statement from last time
that he didn’t want to separate me from you hence why he refused me to teach History of Magic, I
assume you threatened Dumbledore to refuse?”

“Indeed, but how did you know that I haven’t been posing as Dumbledore throughout the year?” he
asked Harry curiously.

“Your aura,” Harry stated as if it explained everything and in a way it did though most were
confused, so he elaborated his statement. “Over the school year it was mostly black – probably due
to the deal – mixed in with…I don’t know how to describe it but the feeling I got wasn’t good at all, and it would fit his behaviour. But then there was the Rising of the Witnesses, and his aura began to change – becoming a bit friendlier – though the black still stayed. However, when you stepped into the man’s office at the MACUSA, it was a blinding white and still is. Uhm, you couldn’t possibly do something about that? It gives me a headache….”

“You're an Auramancer! Give me a moment,” he stated surprised before he closed his eyes and concentrated. “Better?”

“Yes very, thank you,” Harry answered relieved, Dumbledore’s aura had dulled somewhat, it was still white but not as blinding anymore. “What’s an Auramancer?”

“It is someone who can see and partly influence auras,” he explained.

“I can influence them?” Harry asked excitedly.

“Yes and no,” Dumbledore stroked his beard wondering how best to explain it. “Every being has a base aura, something that is defined by the life they live or the beings they are. I don’t know whether you met one yet, but Vampires, for example, have a blood red aura while demons have black ones with sulphuric yellow streaks in them. Those auras can only be changed with extremely radical methods and in more cases than not eradicate what makes them the person they are.

“But what you can do is create additional auras. Think of it like an additional layer that doesn’t influence the base aura but can boost certain abilities be it physical or mental. One example would be an aura to boost one’s intelligence. It isn’t that it suddenly makes you a genius, but you’d think a bit quicker and retain information better. The better the aura you weave, the more it boosts the ability though it has its limits.”

“Cool!” Harry exclaimed already thinking about how he could use this though he would have to get a few books on that matter.

“I think we got off track. Why did you come here?” Loki intervened before they could get any further away from the original topic.

“Oh yes, my apologies. Harry is right, I only came to take Dumbledore as my host after the end of the school year. Actually what drew me here was you,” here Dumbledore snickered lowly over Loki’s shell-shocked face. “It was half a year ago around Christmas, and by then I was frantically searching for a way to get away from the new impending war when I felt a shift in the heavenly sphere. Don’t worry it was so small that I doubt anyone else felt it, and I wouldn’t have either hadn’t I taken a stroll through the garden at that time.

“When I felt it I was curious and went to investigate. You cannot possibly fathom my shock and surprise when I found you very much alive and caring for just the boy I wanted to protect from Zachariah’s machinations. But I didn’t confront you fearing how you might react so I took the opportunity to investigate things a bit and it gave me an idea to get away. If you could hide for more than two millennia so could I. However, I didn't want to hide just anywhere to be able to intervene should Zachariah do something so I searched for a possibility to hide here at Hogwarts.

“At first I wanted to try and get the DADA post but then the second seal broke, and that gave me an excellent opportunity. It seemed that Dumbledore’s meeting with his sister’s ghost changed something in him, let him see the error of his way. So I approached him and gave him a choice, I could give him a nice place in heaven together with Grindelwald, whom I learned he had imprisoned, with the possibility of seeing his sister or he could continue on the path he was on and be doomed. Two days after the children left he agreed and here we are, he gave me his body and he
now is together with the people he loved the most. I had to tweak his body a bit for it to be suitable for me but besides that…"

Everyone stared at Dumbledore for a long time after he fell silent until Loki broke the silence.

“I don’t know what to say…and you knew?” he asked Harry who nodded. “Why didn’t you tell me?”

“Why should I? I could feel from the first moment when he stepped into the room at the MACUSA that he had been the one who protected me all those years. He also didn’t rat me out to them so I thought the least I could do would be to keep my silence as long as I could. I could feel he’s not a threat to me,” Harry said with a shrug.

“And you have my gratitude for that,” Dumbledore nodded towards the boy that was currently sitting on the armrest of his chair. “So now that you all know why I decided to come here, what will you do?”

“You swear that you only came here to get away from heaven and Zachariah?”

Dumbledore raised an eyebrow. “Mainly yes, but if I can thwart his plans along the way all the better. I’m not overly fond of the idea of the fight renewing.”

“So what if suddenly lo and behold Lucifer shows up here?” Loki questioned further.

Now Dumbledore’s brows furrowed completely in confusion. “While I cannot see any reason for why he should show up here at Hogwarts…I don’t know, I would have to see about it should it really happen.”

“Oh, I can see a very valid reason for him showing up here, don’t you think…Michael?” Loki glared at the other archangel.

“So you finally recognised me? I have to admit that you have a point there but…I have the hope that if I don’t appear threatening to him, he would not instantly reignite the war. It was never my desire to harm or kill him, all that I did only served the purpose of saving as many as possible. That is also the reason for why I helped Balthazar steal the artefacts and fake his own death, I didn’t want to imagine what someone like Zachariah would do, had he gotten them in his hands,” he said with a wistful smile.

“Balthazar is alive?” Loki suddenly sat up straighter.

“Very much, yes. The last time I checked he was playing crossroads demon, making deals with humans,” Michael/Dumbledore shrugged.

“And you let him be?” Loki asked surprised.

“As if I care what humans do with their souls, free will and all that remember?” Michael snorted before getting serious “So what now?”

“The most important thing will be to keep Zachariah away from Harry and certain truths. About the seals we don’t really have to worry, Dean and Bobby are on it, and they’ll disperse any attempts on seals that would do too much damage or the wrong kind of damage, but there are a few things Zachariah is better off learning later rather than sooner,” Loki mused.

“I already heard that Dean’s little visit in hell had a little…side-effect,” Dumbledore snickered. “It will be a mighty shock for Zachariah when he learns about that, though you should warn Dean that
he should be careful, I fear that Zachariah might become desperate.”

“The shock will be even greater when he learns that you chickened out of his well-laid plans of you and Lucy battling it out,” Loki snorted. “What I would do to be the fly on the wall when he learns.”

“Mischievous as always, aren’t you Gabriel?” Michael shook his head.

“It’s Loki now,” Loki growled.

“Ah yes, I forgot…sorry, but it’s been such a long time since I last saw you. I missed you, brother. Anyway, Zachariah will have too much to do with kick-starting the apocalypse rather than worry overly much about Harry. As long as I can convince him that I’m Dumbledore and that everything goes as planned, he won’t look this way anytime soon. Though I have the feeling that Fate has joined in on the entire thing. There are just a few things that fit too conveniently together like you coming to Hogwarts and coming across Harry, which not only threw a wrench in Zachariah’s plans concerning Harry but also practically cancelled the apocalypse.”

Loki groaned. “I knew it, and I hate her for meddling in my life, but then I wouldn’t wish to change anything. Ah, I can only hope that she knows what she’s doing,” he sighed before he turned towards the Potters who until now enjoyed their tea while listening. “Then all that remains is getting you two reinstated as alive. After that…originally I wanted to take you on holiday, Harry, but I understand if you’d rather stay with your parents,” he told Harry, but the boy could see that he was a bit sad about the prospect of him staying with his parents.

Harry looked at his parents before he looked back at Loki. “I’ve stayed with my parents for about half a year now, I think I can survive a few weeks without them,” he answered the pagan, whose face instantly brightened up.

“Maybe we can go on a holiday too, what do you think luv?” Lily asked James.

“America looked quite interesting,” James mused. “And maybe we’ll be able to dig Remus out of the hole he went into hiding in.”

“Tell that flea infested rug that he owes me a drink or ten,” Sirius piped in.

“You’re not coming with us?” James asked surprised.

“Nah, I have my own mission,” Sirius answered with a lopsided grin. “When I stayed with Dean I met that lovely woman, Ellen was her name I think. I want to go visit her and her daughter Jo.”

“Do I have to worry about you?”

“Oi, what’s that supposed to mean?”

“Nothing, but you and seeing a woman for more than a few times? Not in this universe!”

That comment did it for Sirius who tried to hex James but was quickly bound and disarmed by Severus.

“Do I have to remind you that you are currently in my rooms?” he sneered. “So act accordingly.”

Michael chuckled lowly. “I think we imposed ourselves on you long enough after all.”

“Finally peace again. Maybe now I might get something done without interruption,” Severus muttered, but everyone could see that he wasn’t as troubled by it as he made out to be.
“Then you shall have it,” Michael said while standing up.

“Before you leave…how am I to call you from now on?” Severus inquired.

“Dumbledore would be for the best I think so that we don't draw unwanted attention,” he replied.

“Loki, can you give us a lift to the Ministry?” James asked.

“Do I look like a taxi to you,” Loki retorted incredulously but nonetheless walked over to him and Lily, placing a hand on their shoulder. “Harry, do you come?”

Harry nodded, but before he walked over to him, he hugged Michael and Severus each which they gladly returned. Once he and Sirius, whom James unbound at one point, latched onto Loki they vanished.

“Why Dumbledore?” Severus asked before the other man could reach the door.

“Not because I thought he deserved it mind you, but he was the best choice,” Michael replied with a small smile. “I know what you’re thinking about and you shouldn’t worry about it. You’re infinitely better than Dumbledore ever was.” Michael reached out and grabbed Severus’ left wrist so that the dark mark was visible.

“Believe me I know exactly how it is to make the wrong decision. Every day I wonder what would have happened had I not confronted Lucifer about him disagreeing with father’s wishes. Would we still have fought? I don’t know and I never will but what I know and what I learned the hard way is that we have the freedom to choose what we do. In the end, all that matters is that we live the life we want and nothing and no one should tell us what we want to do,” here he placed a hand over the mark, and when he pulled away it had vanished to the shock of Severus. “Don’t let the past dictate your future. You’re a good man never doubt that.”

With that, Michael turned around and left a shocked speechless Potions Master behind.
Chapter 36: Bugs and other Nuisances

The first thing they did was teleport over to the Ministry to get Lily and James reinstated as alive. Unfortunately, both were very well known for their sacrifice, and therefore a murmur of incredulity as well as shock and surprise followed them from the moment that they landed in the Atrium.

After a short visit to the front desk to state their business, they were on their way to the second floor where the respective Department was situated while Sirius went to the canteen for a coffee. They were just in the middle of recounting how they were both alive again when Amelia Bones came rushing into the room.

“And here I thought that I made myself clear that you shouldn’t create chaos while staying here, Loki!” She said foregoing any greeting.

“Oy, why do you think that it was me only because something unconventional happened?!” Loki retorted mock hurt.

“Do I really have to answer that question?” Bones replied looking at him sternly.

“Actually, it was my doing this time,” Harry admitted sheepishly.

“Wait you did this?” Bones was now shocked. “How?”

“I made a deal with Crowley,” Harry ducked his head.

“Crowley?”

“A Crossroad Demon.”

“King of the Crossroad Demons actually, Madame Bones, don’t worry Harry is in no danger,” Loki explained when he saw the stern woman’s gaze darkening on the thought that a child made a demon deal.

“Believe me that I wouldn’t have allowed it otherwise. The only stipulation is that he delivers Riddle’s soul to him.”

“Riddle?”

“Tom Marvolo Riddle aka Lord Voldemort aka the most wanted man in hell,” Loki growled.

“But he’s dead is he not?” the woman asked confused.

Loki looked at her contemplatively before he made a decision. He grabbed under the t-shirt he was currently wearing, and that read “Always be yourself unless you can be Loki. Then always be Loki!” The shirt Harry had gifted him for Christmas because he was so amused by it that he had to buy it. Considering that he hadn’t been born as Loki made it all the more hilarious. Pulling out a pendant that had a lowly glowing emerald in the middle, he gave it a last look before he held it out towards Bones.
“Do you know what this is?” he asked her.

Bones looked at him strangely but carefully picked up the pendant. She ran a few spells over it when her eyes widened with shock and surprise.

“A Horcrux?” she asked in complete disbelief.

“Yes and no,” Loki answered. “Yes, this is de facto a Horcrux though it wasn’t made the normal way. I actually made this one when it became apparent, that a part of Riddle’s soul was possessing Quirrell last school year. When I punished the man for endangering a student’s life I became aware of it and quickly captured the soul piece so that it couldn’t endanger anyone else. Unfortunately, Quirrell didn’t survive the shock of the soul piece leaving him. Another piece then was added, when I gave Harry a magical tattoo that would protect him from possession of all sorts. Obviously, Riddle had also made him a Horcrux though whether it was intentional or not I don’t know.”

Bones now looked with wide eyes and pale from the shock at Harry. “Is…are you alright?” she finally asked him only to receive a glare from Loki that told her what a stupid question that was; as if he wouldn’t have made sure of it.

“So, he is still alive,” she muttered when she realised something. “And you didn’t deem it important enough to tell me?” she now thundered.

Loki ducked his head sheepishly. “I forgot?” he said, but it came out more like a question.

“You forgot…why am I not even the slightest bit surprised?” she shook her head in exasperation. “Is there maybe anything else you want to tell me that might endanger anyone…maybe why suddenly aggressive ghosts appeared everywhere?’

Loki gulped audibly, this woman could be terrifying when angry. Harry, on the other hand, snickered over the pagan’s predicament.

“How about you tell her about everything before she sends the Unspeakables to play with you, while we wrap everything up here and meet at Fortescue’s in Diagon Alley?” he asked between snickers.

Loki looked unhappy about being alone with a pissed off Bones but nodded, standing up to follow the woman.

“And Mrs Bones…I want him back,” Harry told her with a mischievous smirk. “Or I might want to test the Ministry’s security. Perhaps you should ask the MACUSA how to improve it, I heard they had an extensive test of their security not all that long ago and failed completely.”

“So you were the one pranking them,” she replied knowingly.

“I already proved to your Aurors that I never cast any magic with either of my wands after the end of the school year,” Harry shrugged.

“And you want me to believe that you’re not able to perform the deeds in another way with you being close to Loki?” the knowing glint in her eyes only intensified. “Anyway, Mr Laufeyson I think we need to talk. Good day.”

With a nod towards the rest of them, she strode out of the room closely followed by Loki. It took the woman, who was taking care of the reinstatement of Harry’s parents as alive and fully restoring their rights and titles, a few more moments to come out of her stupor but once she did, they quickly worked through the massive amount of paperwork.
It then took them another half an hour before they could go. They picked up Sirius before they left the ministry by Apparition, Lily taking her son with her, and reappeared in a side alley to Diagon Alley. Together they went over to Fortescue’s where they sat down outside to enjoy the sun, though the entire thing quickly became bothersome. Some of the passers-by recognised not only Harry but also his parents and began to stare and talk about them. That naturally attracted the attention of others, and soon a massive crowd formed around them. The height of it though was when a woman with blond curly hair that she had pinned up loosely, bright red painted nails and lips and green robes sat down at their table without even asking for permission a notepad and a green quill floating next to her, ready to note down anything and everything.

“Rita Skeeter, reporter of the Daily Prophet,” she introduced herself sweetly with a broad smile. “So, it is true that you Lily and James Potter are back with the living. Any comment to that for my dear readers?”

“Only that if you write any lies about us you’ll be out of a job very quickly,” James snarled, he knew that sort of reporter…always out for the big scoop. "And it is Lord Potter for you."

“There, there, no reason to become hostile Lord Potter,” she said with a charming smile. “I only wanted to give you the opportunity to give your view on things before rumours come up, we don’t want the people to think that you performed some dark ritual, do we?”

“It was no dark ritual,” Harry frowned, carefully thinking about what to say next knowing that it wouldn’t be a good idea to tell them that he had been behind it or that he made a deal with Crowley either. “It was just a little trade between friends. I have something Crow wanted, and he was powerful enough to get me what I wanted in return, no ritual involved.”

“So, your friend revived your parents?” her attention now was on Harry. “How did he do it then if not with a ritual?”

“He waved his hand and they were alive,” Harry rose an eyebrow. Okay, it hadn’t really happened exactly that way, or Crowley’s doing at all but the result was the same, she was left in the dark.

Now it was Skeeter’s turn to frown. “Merlin, your friend must be extremely powerful to just revive them like that. But my dear, what did he want in return?”

“Nothing fancy, just that I collect and deliver something to him,” Harry shrugged.

“Very altruistic of him,” Skeeter said with a nod and a small glance at her notepad before she turned to all of them, deciding to leave the topic alone…for now. “So now that you’re alive again and reunited with your son, what are your plans for the future? And can you tell us something about what awaits us in the great next adventure?”

James sighed lowly, not in the mood to answer the reporter’s questions which made Lily chuckle.

“Unfortunately, we cannot tell you anything about what comes after death, but for our future, Harry and we plan to take a vacation. After that…” Lily answered trailing off in the end with a shrug. “Maybe visiting and getting reacquainted with old friends. I heard that Alice and Frank got better after having been...ill for a long time. It would be nice to see them again, we were friends after all.”

Fortunately for them, that was the moment Loki arrived and looked strangely at Skeeter.

“Mrs Skeeter, what a surprise to see you here,” he said in a sugar sweet voice, one that promised retribution of the worst kind should she dare thinking about printing anything that would paint Harry or the Potters in a non-favourable light.
“Oh, Mr Laufeyson you’re Harry’s school mate and friend, aren’t you? I heard that you created quite some mischief over the year. Is there any possibility that it is connected to the recent happenings over in America?” she enquired in eager anticipation.

Though the reaction she got wasn’t what she expected. Loki looked at her with indignation as if it was an insult to even ask him such a thing while Harry snorted.

“Mr Potter, something you want to enlighten us about?”

“Only one thing: I solemnly swear that I’m up to no good!” Harry now cracked up and vanished without a trace leaving behind a reporter with neon pink hair, three shell-shocked adults and one speechless pagan god.

“Did…did he just apparate away?” Lily finally brought out while James and Sirius had to suppress their laughter.

“Uhm…no. He teleported himself…,” Loki muttered in reply earning himself questioning looks from nearly everyone around him.

“What’s the difference?” Sirius asked, speaking up for the first time.

“Well with Apparition you actually create a shortcut through space from your original point to your destination through which you get sucked hence the getting sucked through a rubber tube feel to it. That’s also the reason for why the further away you want to apparate the more magic you need to cover the distance. The sound, on the other hand, is a result of the sudden disappearance of a large body henceforth creating a momentary vacuum that instantly gets filled with the surrounding air… physics…nothing you’d understand anyway.

"With teleportation though you transform your body into a stream of energy that travels through the surrounding streams of energy – ley lines and such – and rematerializes at the destination. Since that travel happens at light speed, it seems to be nearly instantaneous, and you can go everywhere without needing too much magic.” Loki explained, but more than a few people only looked at him as if he decided to grow a second head.

It was evident that almost no one understood even one word of what he had just said.

"Fascinating," Skeeter spoke up happily as if she just won in the lottery. "Very well Ladies and Gentlemen, I'll be on my way then. It was nice meeting you.”

With that, she stood up and scurried away through the crowd. James looked after her shaking his head, he could only hope that the woman wouldn't write anything negative though she had been right, this had been an excellent way to get their statement out before anyone could jump to conclusions. James might be a prankster at heart, but he wasn't delusional and knew how fickle the people could be.

"So where did our son vanish to?" he finally asked Loki watching the crowd disperse now that nothing interesting was going on anymore.

Loki closed his eyes and tracked down Harry only to open them again with a smile.

"He's with Sammy in America, so nothing to worry about," he replied.

"Harry teleported himself half around the world?" James exclaimed.

"It is as I said, teleportation only needs magic or energy to dis- and reintegrate yourself, the travel
itself doesn’t need much magic," Loki shrugged.

"So following him?" Sirius asked.

"Following him," Loki nodded. Once the others firmly touched him, they were gone.

When Harry landed he at first was a bit dizzy, but once he didn't feel as if the world was turning too fast anymore, he looked around to see where he had landed.

"I really should be used to the feeling by now," he muttered when his gaze fell on two male and one female sitting at a table in the diner he had landed in. "Sam, Dean, Alastair," he greeted them with a broad smile.

"Harry? How did you get here?" Sam asked surprised. "I thought you were visiting your parents."

"I was...until something happened...and then more stuff happened," Harry replied. "And then we were haunted by reporters and I had to get away."

"You teleported yourself here from England?" Alastair enquired interestedly.

"Yep," Harry said popping the p.

"I'm impressed, you're really a quick learner," she praised him which made him blush though when she saw the confused glances from Dean and Sam she elaborated. "It was at the beginning of his holidays while he stayed at Bobby's...I was bored and thought why not teach him how to teleport yourself."

"Well, that certainly explains how he knows how to do it," a new voice said.

Harry turned around only to see Loki together with his parents and Sirius coming towards them.

"Ah you got away from that reporter," Harry beamed.

"She got away from me," Loki snickered. "Now I think your parents wanted to go on holiday and for us, I also had a nice little trip planned."

"Yep," Harry piped up hyper, bouncing over to Loki.

"Do I have to drop you off somewhere or are you good?" Loki addressed the others who came with him.

"No, we should be good," Lily said.

"I also should be able to go from here," Sirius added with a smile.

"Mum, dad, I'll see you soon okay?" Harry hugged both his parents before turning towards Sirius.

"Don't do anything I wouldn't do, pup," the man said while hugging his godson.

"That isn't much and includes things I'm certainly not old enough for," Harry sternly replied.
That made Sirius laugh. "One cannot begin early enough."

However, that comment resulted in James grabbing him and putting him in a headlock.

"Ignore him," his father said. "Do what you think is right."

"I will, I will," Harry replied.

With a wave and a last hug, Sirius apparated away followed by James and Lily. That left Loki and Harry.

"So onwards with our vacation then," Loki chirped. Without any further ado or a warning towards Harry, he grabbed the boy, and they left. Leaving behind two highly confused males and a smirking woman.
When Loki landed, Harry let go of him so he could look around properly. He saw with amazement that they had ended up next to what seemed to be a huge Asian market that obviously was magical. It was still dark and obviously very early in the morning there, but the red paper lanterns that were floating over the entire market lit it up quite well.

Everywhere stood small booths and even in some cases only a cart with a tarpaulin above it to keep the objects being sold dry during rain. In the middle was a huge fountain depicting a dragon that spewed water. Surrounding that was the large area with houses containing shops, cafés and whatever else needed a house and not just a booth or cart.

Though, despite the earliness, it was still quite full. People were bustling in between the booths and carts. Harry could even spot dwarves, goblins and several other races. It was a bit like the shopping mall in America and yet completely different, more like those middle-age markets than a modern one.

“You know all the nice places, don’t you?” Harry asked turning towards Loki with a beaming smile.

“Of course I know the good places, anything less wouldn’t do after all,” Loki snorted and set into motion. “I guess you’ll want to buy some souvenirs?”

“You’re right it would be rude not buying something for our friends,” Harry mused, missing the surprised look from Loki.

It had been such a long time that he had let anyone close to him not only in fear of something happening like it had with his family, but also because he knew very well that the lifetime of a human was limited and he wanted to spare himself the pain of losing a good friend. Breaking into heaven (or possibly hell) would only be a pain in the ass not to mention that it brokered a considerable risk. Now it seemed that he had gained a large circle of friends without even trying and he also got one of his brothers back – okay it was the typically stern elder brother who liked to scold him for his pranks, but at this point, he was just glad to have him back. If only Lucifer would be that reasonable.

Somehow, he had a feeling that the future wouldn’t be as bleak as he had feared it would be. No, he was actually looking forward to what was to come for the first time in a very long time.

Throwing an arm over Harry's shoulder – which was thanks to him being an adult again a fairly easy thing to do – he led him towards the first stall.

“Then let’s see what they have!” he piped happily walking towards the closest stall, which was selling charms.

Loki and Harry strolled all over the market for quite some time buying something here and there that they thought their friends would appreciate when Harry’s stomach began to rumble.

“Looks like someone is in need of something to eat,” Loki laughed.
Harry blushed slightly but nodded. “Haven’t eaten anything since we left heaven,” he muttered.

“Wait…what? Why didn’t you say anything?” Loki questioned shocked, but Harry only shrugged.

“It’s nothing…I’m used to it…well, I was before I went to Hogwarts and I didn’t want to bother anyone,” he mumbled looking at his feet.

“Not anymore!” Loki exclaimed. “I want you to tell me when you’re hungry tired or whatever else. I’m not those…those….”

Loki growled in exasperation. It seemed that a few issues still were left from the treatment Harry got before he came to Hogwarts, but Loki was confident that he could help him overcome them. Considering that Harry now not only had him but also his parents, Sirius, Severus…hell, probably even his brother Michael, it was a given that he would learn to be a normal, if not a little bit spoiled, child with time.

“Listen,” he said crouching down before Harry so that they were on the same eye level. “I want you to be a happy and healthy boy. There is nothing wrong with telling me when something bothers you or you need anything, okay?”

Harry nodded tentatively. “I’m also getting tired,” he admitted slowly.

Loki smiled at him. “Okay, I suggest we get something to eat and afterwards we’ll check into a hotel so that you can get some sleep.”

“Sounds good,” Harry smiled.

They both set off again walking towards a building a bit to the side that looked a bit like a Chinese palace. When they stepped inside, they were presented with a large entrance hall with a reception and to the left was a restaurant for which Loki now aimed. Inside a waiter greeted them and led them to a table before taking their order for drinks.

“Say how comes it that I can understand everyone? I guess they are speaking Chinese or something like that,” Harry wondered once the waiter was gone to prepare their drinks.

“Japanese actually but I took the liberty to cast a charm over you that would translate everything for you, I hope you don’t mind,” Loki explained with a sheepish smile, he hadn’t even thought about asking Harry for his consent.

“Nifty,” Harry grinned. “And no I don’t mind.”

They both watched the waiter approaching them with their drinks and two menus for them to choose their dinner or from.

“So you have been the Archangel Gabriel once?” Harry asked conversationally while reading the menu.

Loki looked up at the boy, carefully examining his reaction. “Yes, though when the fight between Michael and Lucifer got too much, I left and not soon later I became Loki. Now I’m quite happy with living on earth, much more fun,” he added the last part with a huge grin. “You don’t seem to be overly surprised by that.”

Harry shrugged. “I already knew that there was more to you than was obvious, but only when I learned who impersonated Dumbledore I knew you had to be an angel.”
“How come?”

Now Harry looked up and at Loki. “Your aura…it is very well hidden, but there is a slight white sheen to it as if it’s glowing. It also explains why you got into heaven that easily,” he explained with a chuckle.

“Why did you never say anything?” Loki wondered. Anyone else would surely have questioned him about it but not Harry.

“Well, why should I? Honestly, I don’t care who you’ve been it is what you do that counts for me. Moreover, everyone has his or her secrets, and it is yours to tell and not for me to pester you about,” he shrugged again.

Right at that moment, the waiter came back to take their orders. Harry, wanting to try it, ordered sushi while Loki went with Okonomiyaki.

“You’re quite wise for your age.”

“The Dursleys managed to teach me at least one thing then, actions speak louder than words. To the outside, they were the perfectly normal family but behind closed curtains…,” Harry sighed.

Loki sighed, this conversation went down a route he didn’t want to go. “On another note, is there something you’d like to do?” he asked trying to get back to some less dour conversation.

Harry smiled, thankful for the switch of topic. “I don’t know, never been to Japan,” he replied amusedly.

“Brilliant, I know a few good places to visit once you’re well rested,” the pagan replied with a mischievous grin.

They fell into a comfortable silence when their food arrived. Harry hummed lowly when he tried the sushi.

“This is brilliant, it is a shame that Hogwarts doesn’t offer something like it. Maybe I can convince the elves to make some from time to time.”

“True, the food at Hogwarts is actually quite one-sided. I don’t doubt that the elves would love to make you some if you ask nicely,” Loki said while offering Harry a piece of his Okonomiyaki, wanting him to try many things so that he could find out what he liked and what not.

Harry carefully took and tried it. “Also not bad but I like the sushi more I think,” he mused.

Once again, they fell into a comfortable silence while they ate, watching the people walking past the window they were sitting in front of. When they were done, they talked about different things until Harry stifled a yawn.

“I think we should get you into a bed,” Loki snickered.

“Agreed,” Harry said while trying to stifle another yawn. Despite his wanting to explore the market a bit more, he was too tired to appreciate it properly.

Loki paid for their meal before he led Harry back to the atrium they came through earlier and over to the reception desk. There he booked a room for two days. They quickly retired to the room. After changing and brushing his teeth, Harry went to bed and was asleep as soon as his head hit his pillow.
Loki waited a few minutes to ensure that Harry was alright and sleeping he vanished after casting a quick charm over the boy that would alert him if something was wrong.

Michael was sitting in the headmaster’s office and taking care of the thrice-damned paperwork, that came with being not only headmaster of a magical school but also being Chief Warlock of the Wizengamot. Fortunately, he had resigned as Supreme Mugwump two weeks into impersonating Dumbledore because it was too much. He honestly wondered how Dumbledore had managed the work of all three positions, but Michael would be damned had he to deal with it, he wanted to enjoy life a bit and not work day in and day out, thank you very much.

He was in the midst of signing an application he actually found quite ingenious when he was startled by the sudden arrival of another man.

“Loki! I thought you were on holiday with Harry,” he greeted him with his new name respecting his wishes, once he realised who it was.

“Hey brother, yes I am but after everything that happened Harry was tired out and so I booked a room where he’s currently sleeping. Don’t worry, I have a spell on him that alerts me should something happen,” he replied with a cheerful wave of his hand.

“So you thought you’d come by and pester me instead?” Michael sternly stated, but the amused glint in his eyes betrayed him.

“Oi, I haven’t seen you for a long time so forgive me that I’m happy to finally have you back as my brother,” Loki exclaimed.

Michael chuckled lowly. “True, I only wish that Lucifer would be that adaptable.”

Loki hummed lowly. “Why did he even start this…I don’t know how to call it…temper tantrum?”

“When father made the humans and told us to bow to them and love them more than him Lucifer disagreed and said that he wouldn’t be able to love humanity, whom he didn’t even know at that point, more than his own father. Did you know that I actually agreed with him?” Michael explained earning himself a shocked look from Loki. “Yes, I mean how were we supposed to suddenly love someone we don’t know more than our own father? However, everyone expected me to abide by father’s orders because I was the oh so good son. Then father ordered me to throw Lucifer out of heaven….”

By now Michael had closed his eyes, but his face clearly told Loki how much the past weighed on his brother.

“He’ll probably never forgive me for that.”

Loki blinked a few times before he stood up, walked around the desk and sat down on the armrest of Michael’s chair before pulling him into a sideways hug.

“I have a feeling that things are not as they seem to be. When I arranged for the recovery of the Longbottoms, three different seers pretty much said that it would be a good thing when Lucifer
finally got out of his cage,” Loki chuckled lowly upon recalling the memory. “The first time I heard that, I actually called the woman insane but when a second and then a third said the same…I don’t know why but I began to believe that it might be true. Or it might be my hopeless optimism.”

That actually made Michael laugh and look at his brother against whom he was currently leaning.

“You always have been the most optimistic one of us and the most mischievous. So you believe that Lucifer won’t be out for revenge?” he questioned.

“I believe…” Loki began carefully slowly standing up and sitting on the desk so that he could see Michael better. “That we should worry about Lucifer when the time comes, when he is out. Until then it is a moot point to muse about what he wants and if I have to prank him to hell and back to get him to see reason…I will.”

“Of that I’m sure,” the thought alone made Michael laugh even more. “So you’re Loki now…how come?”

“It was about two centuries after I left, that Odin found me fighting against a horde of Vikings and was so impressed that he invited me to Asgard. When he asked me for my name, I said it was Loki. The first time I met his wife Frigga she all but adopted me,” Loki chuckled, yes Frigga, or Frea as she was also known in the Langobardic region, had been completely smitten with him. “She was so happy to finally have someone around with more brain than muscles. And well that’s how the pagan god Loki was born. I stayed with them for quite some time until that thing between Odin and my… children happened.”

Loki swallowed hard, clenching and unclenching his right hand in an attempt to calm down.

“You have children?” Michael asked surprised.

“Uhm…,” Loki suddenly looked warily. Maybe it hadn’t been a good idea to admit that little detail, quite a few in heaven would run amok should they learn that several Nephilim were running around free. However, from the look of it, Michael was more surprised than angry, so he took a leap of faith. “Four actually, Hel, Fenrir, Jörmungandr and Sleipnir.”

“What happened?” his brother inquired carefully not knowing how Loki would react to the question.

Loki sighed deeply. “Some idiotic completely drunken seer one day exclaimed that my children and I would be the end of the Æsir when Ragnarök comes. Completely bollocks if you ask me, but Odin went ballistic when he heard it. He banned Hel to hell and forced the other three into their animal form and bound them in it.”

Michael placed a hand reassuringly on Loki’s arm. “Are they alright?”

“Hel and Fenrir yes. Hel most of the time stays in hell but visits from time to time and Fenrir is currently with Kali, hiding from Odin most of the time. However, Jor and Sleipnir? I have no idea where or how they are….”

Michael couldn’t help but stand up and embrace his younger brother in a hug.

“I promise you, that we’ll find them, and then we’ll give Odin a piece of our mind for what he’d done,” he told him.

“So you’re not mad with me?” Loki tentatively asked.

“What for?” Michael was confused but then it clicked and he knew what Loki’s problem was.
“Brother, why would I care whether you have children or not? If father didn’t want us to have children, he surely would have made it impossible for us to have them in the first place and for those who fear Nephilim… those are ignorant idiots who fear what they don’t know or understand. Actually, now that I think about it, we’re not all that different from humans in that regard,” that was definitely something he would think about when he was alone again.

Loki chuckled lowly and just wanted to retort something to that when he felt a presence suddenly appearing in the room behind him. When he recognised the signature, he went rigid. Michael, who was standing in front of him didn’t fare any better.

“Zachariah, what do you want?” Michael asked the man that had appeared in his office tensely.

“Hello Dumbledore,” the man said in a soft tone stroking with his hand over the table he passed upon, looking at the many little devices that stood upon it with a small smile.

“I thought we had a deal? You get fame, power and entry to heaven after your death while I in return get the soul of Riddle. Now I learn that you resigned one of your positions of power and that the family of your little… chess piece went to hell. What happened?”

Michael had to withhold a snort. “The position as Supreme Mugwump wasn’t worth the hassle and what happened to the Dursleys was an unforeseen problem but nothing that I couldn’t handle. I already have an alternative plan, don’t worry, Riddle’s soul will be delivered,” he said with a grandfatherly smile and the customary twinkle in his eyes, playing the role of Dumbledore to perfection.

Loki, hadn’t he known the truth, would have thought that it was really Dumbledore who sat in the headmaster’s chair, but he couldn’t keep from staring at him anyway. That was until Zachariah’s gaze fell upon the archangel turned pagan god.

“What is he doing here?” the man asked with a frowned.

That finally brought Loki out of his stupor. “I’m working here, feather duster,” he snapped at the angel.

“Ah yes, you know I would be careful to whom I insult if I were you,” Zachariah sauntered over to Loki.

“Or what?” Loki asked challengingly.

“Or Hogwarts will be in need of a new…” here he looked at Dumbledore/Michael.


“Yes, History of Magic professor,” Zachariah finished. With a flick of his wrist, he had his angel blade in hand and pointed it straight at Loki’s heart.

Loki only laughed and took a step forward until the blade was firmly pressing against his chest. “Go on! I don’t fear you… feather duster,” he teased him with a determined face that suddenly morphed into shock and surprise.

When Loki looked down, he saw the angel blade sticking out of his chest. Shoving Loki backwards Zachariah drew out the blade with a squelching sound. Loki’s lifeless body fell back right onto Michael’s desk.
On the other side of the world, Harry suddenly woke up from a restless slumber with an uneasy feeling that could mean one of two things. Either Loki was about to pull a massive prank, or something had gone horribly wrong. He hoped for the first but feared for the latter.
Chapter Notes

I should have warned you....I love cliffhangers....especially the really evil ones. Or as someone said on fanfiction.net...."you are evil. the evilest evil that ever eviled on this earth. okay, maybe i'm overreacting, but... no, you're evil! and mean."

Chapter 38: But the Second Follows Quick

Michael frowned at the lifeless body that lay on his desk, knowing in an instant that this was one of his brother's tricks because otherwise his wings would also be imprinted onto the wood and floor.

"Did you really have to dump him on my desk? Now all the paperwork has bloodstains on it," he complained with a frown.

"I think this is the least of your problems," a voice behind Zachariah said making said angel whip around. "Zach...Zach...Zach...has no one ever told you that if you try to pull such a stunt on a trickster god, you should make sure that it really is him?" he chuckled lowly when he saw the angel’s shocked face.

"Hellooo," Loki piped in a singsong voice waiving jovially, taunting the angel. “Trickster god, don’t look so surprised, one might think that angels are complete idiots. Oh, wait…angels ARE complete idiots. Or dicks with wings if one can believe a certain someone. Oh, and another word to the wise...make sure that when you attack someone, said someone doesn’t have an angel blade himself.”

To Zachariah's shock, Loki not only stood right in front of him well and alive but was also pointing an angel blade at him. When the angel reached out with his grace to validate its authenticity, he sucked in a breath.

"Where did you get Lucifer's blade from?" Zachariah questioned, his eyes wide from fear, while blades from angels’ lower ranking than him would only hurt like a bitch when stabbed with them, the sword of an archangel could literally kill everything, even another archangel not to mention someone like him.

"I have my methods," Loki replied with a broad grin. "You see I'm very resourceful. Anyway, I suggest you leave and go play with your petty little apocalypse and leave us alone."

"You think that hiding behind a pagan god will help you Dumbledore? Mark my words, you will rue the day you crossed me," Zachariah raged before he vanished into thin air in a manner that clearly told the two archangels that he was pissed off.

Loki, on the other hand, looked at the dead body on the desk with a grin before said body began to waver and shimmer away including the blood his brother had whined about, not that Michael would admit to having whined.
"I have to admit that I'm impressed, you've gotten extremely good with illusions. Were it not for me knowing who you are and the missing imprint of wings, I would have thought that he got you," Michael said with a bit of awe and a frown.

"Frigga is a good teacher, she taught me quite a lot about illusions," Loki shrugged.

Michael chuckled lowly. "However, do you think it wise to antagonise Zachariah in that way? No offence but he will take this personally, and heaven knows what he will do if he thinks that he won’t get his way."

"True," Loki said with a sneer.

"But maybe it is better that way," he continued in a musing tone. "I never have been good at keeping up a ruse for long that had always been Lucifer's and your virtue. At least now he thinks my change in attitude is because of you."

Loki snickered. "Never would have dreamed of the day where you dear brother would hide behind me," he said amusedly.

"Ha, ha, very funny. Where did you get Lucifer’s blade from anyway?" Michael inquired curiously.

"You remember that one time when Lucy suddenly needed a new one?" Loki replied amused.

Michael nodded. Loki in the way of explaining things waved the blade.

Michael couldn’t help himself, but he snorted. "Lucifer bitched for several centuries about how he never loses anything, and you had it all that time," he shook his head in fond amusement. "Is there anything else that suddenly changed its owner?"

Loki only looked at Michael innocently, but Michael didn’t buy his act for one second.

"Anyway, I have to return. Harry woke up some time ago and seems to be confused and quite worried. I better go check up on him," Loki said when he suddenly frowned. "That’s strange…he’s moving…rapidly. Tokyo, Sydney, Malibu…Stockholm?! What?"

Harry was restlessly pacing the hotel room. Loki obviously left while he slept to hell knows where and had yet to return. Then there was the feeling that something might have happened to the pagan god and Harry wondered what he would do should that be true. Sure lately his life took a turn for the better and he even got his parents back, but he knew that nothing of that would have happened had it not been for Loki and for that he was eternally grateful. So should have anything happened to his first and best friend…well, he would go ballistic on the one who hurt him.

So it was no wonder that Harry was currently working himself up when suddenly a man he didn’t know showed up in the room making him jump slightly. Said man was older with a nearly bald head and only hair at the back of it. He wore a black suit much like Crowley though with a white shirt instead of a black one. What instantly worried Harry though was the man’s aura because it was a blinding white, it was an angel.
“Hello Harry Potter,” the angel said in a soft tone and with a warm smile. “I’ve heard a lot about you, and it’s nice to finally meet you in person.”

“Who are you and what do you want?” Harry bluntly asked.

“My name’s Zachariah. I’m an angel of the Lord and have a task for you. If you complete it to everyone’s satisfaction, you’ll be greatly rewarded. I’m here to offer you my help,” he answered even if a bit peeved that he’d been interrupted, however when he saw Harry’s blank look he frowned. “You don’t seem to be very impressed that your God has a task for you.”

“There is only one god in this universe that I’d gladly follow and that isn’t yours, so no I’m not impressed at all. Moreover, if you want Riddle’s soul get it yourself,” Harry retorted.

“Ah, so you know about it,” Zachariah said with a smile that for some reason reminded Harry of Dumbledore, the old Dumbledore, and consequently set him on edge.

“It would be hard to fulfil a task without knowing about what you have to do after all,” Harry sneered in a way that would have made Severus proud. “However, you’re out of luck…because I won’t do it, not now, not ever!”

“You should be careful whom you antagonise,” Zachariah snapped, at the end of his patience, he’d played nice in hopes of convincing the boy to play along, but it seemed that it was a hopeless endeavour. “I have methods to get you to comply, so you better play along.”

“You have methods? But for that you’d have to catch me first,” Harry told the angel with a broad smile before vanishing into thin air.

Zachariah for a moment stared at the spot the boy had been only moments ago before he also vanished following the boy. When he reappeared, he saw that he was on the roof somewhere in a major city. Harry was standing a few feet away from him grinning like a loon, before vanishing again. Zachariah began to swear quite colourfully while following the boy.

The next time he reappeared at a beach though what infuriated Zachariah was that the boy now had the gall to sing.

“I’ve got to hand it to you
You’ve played by all the same rules
It takes the truth to fool me
And now you’ve made me angry,"

(I can’t decide – Scissor Sisters)

Harry sang before pulling his vanishing act again.

Zachariah roared in anger drawing quite some attention from other visitors to the beach. How could one boy be so infuriating? Nonetheless, he quickly followed him only to be greeted with another verse of the song.
"I can't decide

Whether you should live or die

Oh, you'll probably go to heaven

Please don't hang your head and cry,"

Harry continued as soon as he saw Zachariah landing in front of him before vanishing again.

“You know for a feather brain you're quite slow. Even a ninety-year-old granny could outrun you,” he said with a laugh when Zachariah appeared before him.

That was the last straw for Zachariah. He lurched forward to grab the boy and beat some much-needed sense into him only to fall flat on his face because Harry had again vanished. The angel in his anger and frustration punched a massive hole in the pavement beneath him before getting up and following Harry.

However, in his rage, he didn’t pay attention to where exactly he teleported and therefore was not prepared for the fact that he did not land on solid ground again but in the air and even less for the fact that Harry had teleported above a lake of fire hovering above it on a broom. That was the reason for why Zachariah instantly plunged into said lake of fire not able to prevent it in his shock and surprise and because he was too close to the surface.

“Oh I could throw you in the lake

Or feed you poisoned birthday cake

I won't deny I'm gonna miss you when you're gone

Oh I could bury you alive

But you might crawl out with a knife

And kill me when I'm sleeping

That's why

I can't decide

Whether you should live or die

Oh, you'll probably go to heaven

Please don't hang your head and cry,"

Harry laughed while watching Zachariah leave as a ball of bright light once his vessel was destroyed. Though when Harry remembered what Loki had told him about the vessels he instantly felt extremely bad for what he’d done. But then again it was much like it had been with Ruby, kill or be killed. Well, not exactly killed but he doubted that anything Zachariah would have done to him
would have been pleasant. Nonetheless, it weighed heavy on him that he again had no other choice than killing someone…this was becoming too often an occurrence for his liking.

Sighing deeply he looked around seeing lakes of fire but also some ruins in the distance to his right as well as something akin to a village to his left.

“So this is hell? Interesting if a bit hot,” he muttered but at the moment he wasn’t in the mood to explore it more thoroughly not to mention that Loki probably would begin to worry if he didn’t return soon.

With a last sad look at the lake of fire he was currently hovering above, he vanished for probably the last time that day and reappeared in the by now well-known office of the headmaster of Hogwarts using his wish to be with Loki for guidance.

Lucifer was sitting in his cage musing about what heaven and hell were up to lately. He knew very well that quite a few of both camps were currently breaking seals left, right and centre on his cage so that he might finally be free to fight with his brother again. Though what neither camp knew was that he didn’t want to be out, he actually voluntarily went into the cage in the hope of giving heaven and earth peace again.

However, now everything was endangered once again only because that prick Zachariah thought it an excellent idea to reignite the apocalypse. Well, if that idiot thought that he would play along, he would have another thing coming. Lucifer had no damned reason to fight his brother for a second time because of some petty squabble.

No, he would leave the cage and then go into hiding somewhere neither Zachariah nor his brother Michael would ever expect him to. He was Lucifer after all, and it shan’t be said that he wasn’t a crafty and sneaky bastard that could be found easily.

What made him wonder though was what he had witnessed lately. Not only had Dean Winchester, who was destined to become his brother’s vessel in this fight, willingly come to hell to break the first seal but he also became a demon. That had surprised Lucifer a lot because he would never have expected that, not to mention the relationship he had with Alastair. What he had assumed was that Dean would fight his little trip with tooth and nail which would have been to no avail and then when the seal was broken some little foot soldier from heaven would come and get him out so that he could say yes to his brother.

Sure enough, said angel came after a few hell-decades to get Winchester out but missed him about a few years since the man had already left together with Alastair. He wondered what happened to that little angel. Alas, he would probably never find out.

What it confirmed though, was that something was definitely amiss in this entire scheme and from what he could hear from his cage a certain pagan god called Loki had his hands in it. If what Crowley had let drop was correct then said pagan god not only was the one who convinced Dean that it was a good idea to go to hell willingly, but he also supported breaking the seals, or at least those he deemed safe enough to break, together with the Winchesters.

Loki, this was another unknown factor that had shown up without any reason. The only things he
knew about the pagan god was that he was a trickster and foretold to bring Ragnarök to the Norse pantheon which was their apocalypse. Did this Loki think that getting him out would do the trick? If that was true then he was as much a fool as Zachariah, he was no one’s puppet. How Loki thought that he could survive a full out war between him and Michael was anyone’s guess.

Lucifer was in the middle of imagining how he would show that Loki guy that he would never dance to his fife when suddenly a wave of magic washed through hell. This made Lucifer instantly perk up because it was something that had never happened before in the entire time he had stayed in his prison.

Carefully reaching out with his grace through the bars of his cage and scanning the layers of hell he tried to track down whatever the source of the strange magic had been. What confused him was that it looked like he was the only one who even felt the wave of magic. Not letting himself deter from his search by that conundrum he finally found what he was searching for.

Three levels above him a human living boy was floating above a lake of fire on what seemed to be a magical broom. Lucifer was so surprised by it that he nearly missed how an angel rose from the fiery lake and fled hell.

Had that boy really teleported into hell to dump an angel in one of the lakes of fire? But then there was the soul of the boy that he could clearly feel was not evil, quite the contrary actually. Would he have to categorise it he would say the boy was neutral leaning towards the light. But then there was also a certain randomness to it that somehow reminded him of his youngest brother Gabriel. At last, there was something else. It was faint, and he couldn’t quite grasp it, but it made him curious.

Who was this boy that had so suddenly appeared in hell as if he was on a field trip, dumped an angel in the fires of hell and was more of a conundrum than anyone else he had met so far?

Making a moments decision, it became clear for him that he wanted to know more and that would mean that he had things to plan. Suddenly his impending freedom couldn’t come soon enough for his liking. Knowing that he couldn’t get any information alone while he was in his cage, he called a few demons to him so that they could listen around and gather some needed intel for him.

Lucifer needed to know who that boy was.

As soon as Harry landed, he let his broom fall to the floor, ran up to Loki and embraced him in a tight hug, ignoring Michael completely.

Loki on the other hand first was too stunned to react but quickly recovered from the surprise and gently laid his arms around Harry.

“What happened?” Loki carefully asked when he became aware that Harry was crying against his chest. He carefully picked him up, walked over to a chair and sat down with Harry in his lap.

At first, Harry didn’t answer and just held Loki close as if he feared that the pagan god might suddenly vanish. It took him a few minutes to be able to tell them what happened and that was what he did. Harry told them how he woke up with the feeling that something might have happened to Loki and how worried he was. Following that was how Zachariah suddenly had shown up, and the
chase around the world before Harry had ended it with dumping Zachariah in a pool of fire in hell.

“You teleported into hell without guidance?” Loki asked in disbelief.

Harry nodded tentatively. “You told us so much about it and even showed us images of certain places...I just thought that if I couldn’t at least get rid of him by surprise, at least the demons might occupy him for long enough for me to escape,” Harry muttered.

“Do you have any idea how foolish an idea that was?” Michael asked sternly. “The demons wouldn’t only be interested in Zachariah but also in you. They would have done things....”

To the surprise of both archangels, Harry snorted. “If I could escape Zachariah, I could have escaped them,” he said with conviction. In the worst case he would have ported into heaven and let the angels deal with any demons following him, not that it was hard to get in there if you knew the cracks to slip through, and thanks to Loki he did.

“Harry, Michael is right, the demons wouldn’t have been fooled as easily as that dick Zach,” Loki told him while stroking a strand of hair out of Harry’s face.

“The world is coming to an end...you agree with me,” Michael deadpanned.

“Oi! I can be reasonable,” Loki countered.

“Only when you’re sleeping, and even that is questionable,” Michael shot back.

“As if you’re so much better.”

“As a matter of fact, yes I am!”

“I remember a certain event where you locked me out for a decade only because I changed your office into neon colours.”

“It was irritating as hell, and you refused to turn it back,” Michael now glared at his brother. “Not to mention that you used the time to convince my entire garrison that wearing nothing but those ridiculous hats was a good idea.”

“Hey, you have to admit that they looked good with them,” Loki grinned.

That did it for Harry and he started to laugh.

“I...that image...,” he said gasping for air because he laughed so hard. “Zach...and then wearing...no that....”

“Zachariah actually belongs to Raphael’s garrison but I have to say the image has some merit to it,” Michael said amusedly while Loki smiled fondly at Harry, at least they managed to get his thoughts away from what he had done.

“Harry, I want you to stay with me from now on, or in case I cannot be there with someone I know will be able to protect you from Zachariah,” Loki suddenly said seriously. “He will be pissed enough with you managing to outwit him, and I don’t want you in danger okay? I already failed to protect you twice, and I don’t want it to happen for a third time.”

Harry nodded solemnly, he knew that he had once again escaped a fate worse than death by a hair's breadth and he wasn’t eager to do it again any time soon so yes he would gladly stay with Loki.

“What about our vacation?” he tentatively asked, it was something he had looked forward to and
didn’t want to be cancelled only because of one idiotic angel.

That made Loki laugh. “Nothing short of the apocalypse would be able to keep me from giving you the vacation you deserve.”

“Stay safe you two,” Michael told them. “And be careful, I have a feeling that this isn’t the last we see of Zachariah.”

Loki nodded before summoning Harry’s broom that he had left lying carelessly on the floor and vanished together with the boy back to Japan, they had a vacation waiting for them.
Zachariah was currently pacing his office in heaven furiously. Not only had that infuriating boy outwitted him, but also his vessel was destroyed because of it. How had that brat even managed to get into hell in the first place? He didn't want to think about how he had foolishly followed him like some amateur, heaven was that embarrassing. The only good thing about the entire ordeal was that no one had witnessed his idiocy except that cretin. He could only pray that he wouldn't have to share this with anyone, he would be everyone’s laughing stock.

Then there was also Dumbledore who apparently suddenly decided that it was a good idea to cross him. Oh, how that foolish pest would rue the day he met him. That he thought that he was able to best him only because he had the gift of magic made Zachariah laugh. No, Dumbledore was no threat to him though to his plans he was.

He had counted on the man’s want for power and that he would get him Riddle’s soul in exchange but now it looked like he had no influence over either Dumbledore or the boy to get him the soul, which he needed desperately.

The thing was that his entire cooperation with those disgusting demons depended on the delivery of that blasted soul. Why they even needed it was beyond him, it was just one soul, but it was his only way to get them to cooperate.

It was infuriating. Ever since Raphael had set him on the task of getting Lucifer out and the Winchesters to cooperate everything had gone to hell. Before, he was the best man heaven ever had. The other angels respected him…even feared him, but now? Now they laughed at him. The fall of the high and mighty they called it, and they were right. Heaven, if he couldn’t even convince that stupid child to play along, how was he supposed to convince the Winchesters?

In his frustration, he punched a large hole in the wall with a growl. He needed to get things back on track again, but for that, he needed a new vessel. Slowly he began to think that the entire thing was too much of a hassle, but he would never dare to go against his superiors.

Therefore, with a plan in mind, he set off to Earth to find himself a suitable vessel.

Loki and Harry were currently strolling through a mundane shopping mall in Japan, looking for some clothes. However, Loki could feel that something was still bothering Harry.

“I honestly don’t know what to do with you,” Loki suddenly said with a sigh, getting a confused look from Harry over the statement. “You draw in more trouble than anyone else I’ve ever met.”
“This coming from a trickster god who is chaos and trouble incarnate,” Harry snorted. “Hypocrite much, eh?”

Loki chuckled lowly. “True. Anyway, I hope that you know that if you want to talk with me about anything at all, anything, no matter how trivial it may seem that I’ll always listen.”

Harry looked at the floor obviously thinking about what to say when he took a deep breath, walked over to one of the benches that stood next to the escalator and sat down.

“I know, it is just…,” he began before he took another deep breath. “All I ever wanted was to be Harry…just Harry, a normal boy like everybody else. I hoped that if I was just a normal boy that my relatives would finally acknowledge me and what I did for them. Then I received my Hogwarts letter, and I learned that I never would be…could be normal, that I would always be a freak. At the same time, I hoped that maybe this time I would be accepted, that I would be normal in the magical world at least…until I learned about what happened and that stupid moniker they gave me.”

“There is nothing more boring than being normal,” Loki shuddered at the prospect making Harry snicker lowly. “I mean…imagine me wearing a suit, going to work every day…having a wife and a small house with a garden and a car parked in front of it…no thank you!”

Harry’s snicker grew to a peal of full-blown laughter when an idea hit him. He looked at Loki in contemplation with a broad grin that made the pagan wary when said pagan suddenly wore a black suit with a white shirt and a black bowtie.

“You’re right you look like a waiter,” he said with another snicker.

Loki looked at him in disbelief before he walked over to a mirror to look at himself. The moment he saw what he wore he groaned.

“Really? A bowtie?” he asked in disbelief, flicking his hand and changing his clothes into something that wouldn’t have been too out of place on a Woodstock festival. “Much better!”

Harry leaned against him once Loki sat down again and in return Loki placed an arm over his shoulder.

“That is what I like so much about you, you’re funny, unpredictable…chaotic,” Harry told him with a smile.

“But?” Loki carefully asked this sounded as if a big but was following that statement.

“I think I’m beginning to realise just how dangerous this world really is. I mean before the only dangers I knew were either Dudley when he had one of his little Harry hunting sessions or in the worst case Vernon…then you came and showed me the fun side of life, and I thought that life would be better now and I’d be safe. Until Ruby,” he sighed. “Now Zachariah and…what I fear is that I may lose myself in all this.”

That surprised Loki, he had thought that it was the danger Harry feared but this? No that hadn’t even been anywhere near what he thought. But how to reply to that? He looked at Harry and thought about it while stroking a strand of hair out of the boy’s face.

“Who do you think you are?” he finally inquired.

“I don’t know…not anymore,” Harry answered fiddling with the hem of Loki’s shirt.

“I’ll tell you then. You are a strong boy who faces danger bravely but level-headedly all the same
honouring your house with it. At the same time you’re cunning and solve problems with a cleverness that would very well fit into the house of the snakes not to mention your sense of self-preservation and no, this is not something bad. Then there is also your loyalty to those you deem worthy of your loyalty, and you would go any length for your friends to help them. At last, you have an insatiable thirst for knowledge that is probably bigger than most of the Ravenclaws’ with an intelligence to match. I don’t doubt that the founders of Hogwarts would be extremely proud of you.

“However, all that doesn’t even put all the other things about you into consideration. You are a brilliant baker that would give many professionals a run for their money. You have a wicked sense of humour and I would be lying if I were to tell you that I am anything but proud of you. You have friends and family who would follow you to hell and back.”

“But they don’t know what I’ve done…not all of them,” Harry muttered.

“Do you really have so little faith in your friends? Do you really think they would leave you only because of a few bumps in the road? Zachariah should be glad if they never find out what he wanted to do to you.”

“I doubt that they would do anything…they’re not like that,” Harry interrupted him.

“Then you don’t know them at all,” Loki softly said. “Do you know what the twins answer was when I told them that my favourite pranking targets – that’s the Winchesters by the way – were more inclined to kill me? They demanded to know who it was so that they could give them a piece of their mind.”

“Yeah but they adore you,” Harry grumbled looking away.

“They may adore me, but they all but adopted you,” Loki placed his free hand under Harry’s chin and nudged him to look at him. “Harry, open your eyes…you are not alone, not anymore, and nothing you could do would change anything about that. I know how it is for someone to have everything around you change so drastically in such a short amount of time, to have your entire world turned on its axis and yes even I thought that I was alone when it happened to me, but you can trust me when I say that you’re never alone. You only have to accept that there is always someone worrying about you even in the darkest of times. As for your fear of losing yourself in the changes… I have an idea,” he continues now in a brighter mood. “Answer me a question and don’t think about the answer, just tell me the first thing that comes to your mind. Right now, what do you want to do?”

Harry didn’t even need to think about that question, there was only one thing that he would love to do right now.

“Prank someone,” he answered not missing a beat and a broad grin spreading over his face.

“There you have it, nothing changed,” Loki laughed. “I actually have the perfect target for that, I wanted to introduce you two anyway so why not now and with a good old prank. Ready?”

Harry nodded. After sending their purchases to their hotel, Loki grabbed Harry’s shoulder, and they both vanished.

When they reappeared, they were in the garden of a large mansion built in what seemed to be quite an old style though it looked as if it was new. To their right next to a small pond a tanned woman with long dark brown hair was sitting cross-legged and evidently meditating though she seemed to have felt their appearance because she opened her eyes and looked their way. Loki who saw that placed a finger over his lips. The woman chuckled lowly and returned to her meditation.
Loki silently walked forward closely followed by Harry to take a look inside. Luckily he chose the right window because inside in which was apparently the living room, a young man with shoulder- long light brown hair wearing jeans and a band shirt was sitting on a couch and watching TV.

“See him?” Loki asked Harry in a low voice receiving a nod as an answer. “He’s your target. Get creative!”

A broad grin spread over Harry’s face that would have anyone else that didn’t know him question his sanity before he turned around to search for a way inside. On his way he pulled out the invisibility cloak and threw it over himself, vanishing from sight.

“Oi! Not fair! That’s cheating,” Loki wined.

Not soon after Harry’s departure, a roar echoed through the house, and a moment later a massive grey-brown wolf shot out of the house and into the garden sniffing around. It didn’t take the wolf long to locate Loki and charge at him. Once it was in range, it jumped at the pagan though instead of attacking him the wolf began to lick him all over the face.

Loki, however, was barely able to react to any of that since he was laughing so hard because said wolf was wearing a pink nightgown and a nightcap both with frills around them.

What neither of them heard though was the nearly silent clicking of a smartphone camera.

It took the two a few minutes to calm down again during which Loki ruffled the fur of the wolf. Once they were somewhat calm again, the wolf shifted back into the young man they saw through the window earlier though he still wore both the nightgown and the nightcap.

“Father, next time you try to pull one over me at least hide better afterwards,” the young man said sternly but with a broad grin though he looked surprised when he finally saw what his father was wearing, a white dress with a blood red cape over it.

Loki was just about to tell his son that he hadn’t been behind the prank when he was distracted by Harry breaking out in heavy laughter letting the cloak slide from him to the ground making him visible again.

“Who are you?” the man asked confused.

“Someone with a nice video of you your Little Red Riding Hood performance,” Harry answered waving his smartphone around where the video played as proof.

Loki when he saw that, let his head sink back to the ground while he closed his eyes with a groan.

“I don’t know who that is, but I wholeheartedly approve;” the young man said while standing up and brushing himself off. “Fenrir Lokison at your service,” he greeted Harry, holding out his hand.

Harry took the hand and shook it firmly. “Harry Potter, your father’s apprentice…or something like that.”

“How long?”

“About a year now,” Harry replied with a shrug.

“You’re good, getting back at my father like that after only a year,” Fenrir replied throwing an arm over Harry’s shoulder. “Have you met Kali yet?”
“Thanks and no. Your father didn’t introduce me yet.”

“Yes, Loki’s priorities don’t really conform to the socially accepted ones,” the woman who had been meditating told them, having walked up to them.

“What is that supposed to mean?” Loki asked suspiciously.

“That you think that pranking someone is an acceptable form of introduction,” the woman replied.

“I don’t see how there’s anything wrong with that,” Harry piped in with a wink towards the woman before Loki could say anything.

“And now you even infected the mind of that poor soul with your twisted values. You should be ashamed of yourself,” she scolded Loki.

Harry began to laugh. “I love it when Loki gets scolded like an unruly child,” he told the woman, ignoring Loki’s muttered ‘traitor’.

“Harry Potter, nice to meet you.”

“Kali, my pleasure,” she replied with a shake of his hand. “Where are my manners, can I offer you something, a drink maybe? Or are you hungry? You look far too thin for a boy your age. Has Loki not fed you right?” Kali asked with a glare towards Loki.

Harry blushed but shook his head. “It’s not Loki’s fault, and yeah I’m quite hungry.”

“Come on then my dear, I’ll see what our kitchen has to offer,” she addressed Harry with a smile before she glanced at Loki. “For your sake, I hope you took care of that problem.”

“Of course,” Loki retorted as if he would have ever not taken care of such a problem.

Fenrir in the meantime dragged Harry after Kali. “You’ll see she is a brilliant cook, but I should warn you…don’t piss her off, she can be quite scary,” he told him on their way to the kitchen.

“Good to know,” Harry muttered.

“I wonder though, how did you know who Fenrir was?” Loki asked him, and even Fenrir looked interested in the answer.

“His aura told me that he is something akin to a werewolf but not really…I don’t know,” Harry shrugged. “And knowing that you have four children, it wasn’t that far of a guess.”

“How do you know?” Loki asked confusedly.

“You do realise that I did some extensive research on you when you got me that laptop? Hell, I’d probably have known earlier had I read that book as Hermione did.”

Loki facepalmed upon hearing that earning himself a laugh from Fenrir.

“He got you there, father.”

“Oh shut up you….”

“Or what, old man?” Fenrir teased him but quickly had to dive out of the way and run out of the kitchen because Loki had lunged at him and decided to give chase.
“To think that they are both adults,” Kali said amused.

“Growing older is mandatory, growing up not,” Harry replied.

“How true….”

With that Kali and Harry set to making something to eat while father and son were busy chasing each other throughout the house.

It was now a week and a half ago that Harry and Loki showed up and Michael was wondering what they were up to. A too long silence from either of them was suspicious, especially when his brother was involved though he hoped that they were only enjoying their holidays. Michael, however, was once again was shuffling through mountains of paperwork, when suddenly a pitch black fierce looking owl swooped in through the open window and landed in front of him after having dropped a letter on the one he was currently writing.

Michael frowned wondering who the letter was from since it wasn’t written on that stupid thick parchment that was used by the magical population but on costly looking paper. After carefully examining the letter, he opened it and immediately scanned the bottom to see who it was from. To his surprise, it was from Crowley. Curiously he began to read.

In the end, he frowned deeply. The letter in essential said that Crowley came across important information and that they needed to meet as soon as possible.

Michael leaned back and thought about what to do, but in the end, there was no other way than meeting with the demon, so he wrote a short reply.

“Fawkes,” he called out and with a low trill, the Phoenix landed in front of him.

It had been a surprise when the Phoenix had decided to stay despite him not being Dumbledore anymore. Though it was a wonder that the bird stayed with Dumbledore in the first place because the man was definitely not light.

“Would you mind bringing this letter to Crowley and possibly bring him here if he agrees?” he politely asked the bird, phoenixes were highly intelligent and demanding things of them was never a wise thing to do.

Fawkes carefully picked up the letter and vanished in a burst of flames. Michael only had to wait about ten minutes before the bird returned together with Crowley.

“Hello, Crowley. You wanted to meet with me?” he greeted the demon gesturing for him to sit.

“Dumbledore, yes I indeed wished to speak to you. Some alarming news reached me lately,” Crowley said while sitting down. “Lucifer is behaving oddly.”

“Why do you think I care how Lucifer behaves?” Michael asked with a raised eyebrow.

“Because of the reason of his odd behaviour. You see until about a week and a half ago he was quite apathetic about the breaking seals and his impending freedom, but then it suddenly changed. He
suddenly called demons to him and gave them tasks. At first, I didn’t know why but what I learned recently…it seems that at the time when his behaviour changed a boy appeared in hell, dumped an angel in one of the hellfire lakes and vanished again,” Crowley explained carefully examining Michael’s reaction, who sucked in a sharp breath.

“While I have no proof to who the boy is, I can make a very educated guess, and your reaction confirms it. Lucifer knows that Harry showed up in hell and it’s spiked his curiosity.”
Chapter 40: Happy Birthday

Michael sat in his chair staring at Crowley lost for words. After a moment, however, he stood up and began to pace deep in thought.

“This could be bad,” he muttered. “If he shows up here….”

Crowley watched the man pacing while he wondered why it would be so terrible if Lucifer got to know more about Harry, other than the quite obvious threat he could pose towards the boy.

“Talk to me Dumbledore, why is it so bad?” he finally asked.

“Because of what could happen should Lucifer show up here at Hogwarts,” Michael retorted before he continued his pacing.

Crowley though was confused. Why would it be so bad if he showed up here at Hogwarts? Okay, Dumbledore was, in reality, an angel but in what way could that be a problem? The only angel he could think of that Lucifer would have a problem with was…. Wait, could that be?

“Don’t tell me…you’re…?” he began shell shocked but was quickly silenced by Michael’s glare that clearly spoke of retribution should he speak his name, the archangel certainly didn’t want others to get to know about this even with his warding that should hopefully prevent any eavesdropping.

“Okay, now I see why that would be a spectacularly bad idea.”

Though what he made him wonder was, why Michael was here on earth, to begin with. What his sources reported to him was that Michael absolutely despised humanity and thought it a good idea that enslaving them was an excellent way to deal with them. However, now he found that exact archangel not only on earth but also actively working to avoid fighting his brother. That didn’t even put into consideration that the archangel was definitely not averse to working with demons.

Crowley certainly had expected a lot when he learned that heaven and a few from hell wanted to kick start the apocalypse, anything from the slaughter of everything on the planet to the total annihilation of absolutely everything, heaven, hell and earth. What he absolutely didn’t expect was… that. All that made him wonder though how his information could be that wrong, it seemed that everything he thought he knew was turned upside down lately beginning with Loki demanding of him to make a deal with certain individuals. Since then the surprises didn’t want to stop.

Michael huffed but still paced around. He went through his hair in frustration. This was a nightmare, when he left heaven, he had hoped that he could avoid all this shit, but it looked like he would have to deal with it anyway. That was when a thought came to him.

“Did you say that before that incident with Harry, Lucifer was more indifferent about whether he got out or not?” he asked for clarification.

Crowley looked at him oddly but nodded. “Yes, as far as I know, he didn’t make any effort to help with getting out but simply watched. It only changed when Harry showed up.”
Michael hummed lowly, this surely was interesting. Again he went through his hair with his hand before he came to a decision.

“Tell him about Harry. Take advantage of the fact that you have the knowledge that he seeks. Get to know what he really wants to do once he’s out,” he told the demon. He usually wasn’t one to take advantage out of something like this, not to mention his brother, and yes even after their fight he still counted Lucifer as his brother, but in this case it was necessary.

“Are you out of your bloody mind?” Crowley thundered. “You said yourself that it would be a horrible idea if he shows up here and now you want to give him all the necessary information to find you?”

That finally made Michael stop his pacing and glare at the demon for how he spoke to him.

“Crowley, he will find out one way or another of that I’m sure and better we take advantage out of this than anyone else. Moreover, I have the feeling that he is less inclined to restart our fight as long as I don’t give him any incentive to do so,” Michael explained.

“How can you be so sure of this?” Crowley inquired calmer now and not wanting to anger Michael any further but apparently still not convinced that this was a good idea.

“Because now that I think about it, it was too easy!”

“Too easy?” Crowley had to admit that the archangel lost him somewhere during the conversation.

Michael growled in frustration, this was certainly nothing he wanted to talk about, but it was necessary, he needed the corporation of the demon or he wouldn’t get the required information. It was frustrating but necessary.

“My victory over Lucifer? Me throwing him in the cage? It was far too easy,” he finally admitted. “You might not believe it, but Lucifer…he is more powerful and far craftier than I am, sooner or later he would have won.”

Crowley looked the angel in utter shock, he had expected a lot of things but unquestionably not that.

“Explain,” he just said.

Michael sighed deeply and sat down again. “Sure, I am a good fighter and a passable general, but you and I know that this means nothing when the other knows the art of deception and working from the shadows. Even a mouse can overcome a lion with the right tactics, and Lucifer is a crafty bastard, he knows how to turn the odds in his favour,” he explained in a soft voice without any real bite. It was evident for Crowley that Michael still respected and loved Lucifer despite their fight.

Crowley thought about that, and even if he did not want to admit it, Michael was right. From what he knew of Lucifer, the angel had always been heaven’s tactician, and he didn’t doubt for one second that he would have found a way to defeat Michael over time. So it really was a good question why he allowed to be thrown into the cage. There couldn’t be any other explanation for why Michael suddenly was able to overcome his brother, and it would fit why Lucifer was so apathetic when it came to the breaking of the seals. The Archangel didn't want to fight.

All this actually reduced the possibility of them starting the apocalypse. The only remaining question was, was it really a good idea to lure Lucifer to Hogwarts?

“Okay, I understand your reasoning but are you absolutely sure that it is a good idea to tell him about Harry? I’m not only talking about the possibility of Lucifer coming here but the reason for why he is interested in the boy," he asked pensively.
"I...I don’t know," Michael admitted. "What I know is though, that he will learn everything about Harry one way or another hence why I told you to take advantage of it, get to know everything you can in return."

Crowley nodded slowly, he knew that Michael was correct, Lucifer would learn everything about Harry and Crowley already had ideas how to use that to his benefit.

"Very well, I'll see to some information gathering and you...keep Harry safe," Crowley finally said.

It was astonishing, but the boy had grown on him, and he didn't want him to get hurt, especially not by that prick Zachariah or worse Lucifer.

Michael again looked at him with that amused, knowing glint in his eyes. Crowley wanted to comment on it but wisely kept himself from it. With a last glare at the Archangel, he vanished from Hogwarts.

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The last days and weeks flew by for Harry. Most of the time he stayed at Kali's house, but Loki regularly took him on outings all over the world which thanks to their teleporting ability was only a blink away. Other times Fenrir, who adopted him as his younger brother by now, would accompany him to trips to the city or movies. On other days, Harry teleported himself either to his parents or over to Bobby to see what Sam and Dean were up to though he always told Loki where he went and with whom he would be, lest he ran into Zachariah unprotected.

However, what made him curious was that Loki with increased frequency vanished somewhere. It made Harry extremely curious to what the pagan was up to even if he never asked.

Therefore, he was not prepared for what happened one day.

It was a normal day, quite sunny, and Harry was currently lying in the garden enjoying the sun. Kali and Fenrir had left earlier for some business. Loki also was nowhere to be seen though that didn't worry Harry because Loki had made the house angel proof the day it was decided that they would stay there. So currently nothing short of an archangel would be able to enter without Loki's approval.

Harry lay there, his little pet snitch lazily buzzing around him, while Hedwig who again had followed him was sitting in the tree sleeping when suddenly Loki appeared right next to him and emptied a bucket of water on him.

Harry jumped up spluttering indignantly.

"What in the name of sanity was that for?" He asked the pagan god.

"Wake up call," Loki said with a broad grin. "Get ready we're leaving in thirty minutes."

Without another word, Loki vanished again.

Harry shook his head spraying water everywhere around him. Luckily, he only wore some short pants, so it was no problem for him to quickly change, but that didn't mean he liked the treatment. What lightened his mood considerably though was the prospect of another outing. He loved
travelling the world with Loki because the pagan knew the best places to visit. So he quickly ran up to his room and got changed. However, he hoped that they would go somewhere warm because he didn't put warm clothes on.

As promised half an hour later Loki showed up again.

Harry instantly knew that he was up to something because he was bouncing on his heels like a kid on a sugar high which could very well be the case considering how much of a sweet tooth Loki was.

"I hope you're aware that I'll hex you if you try to prank me," Harry told him, but both knew that it was only half-heartedly, Harry loved their pranking sessions far too much.

Loki on the other hand only grinned like a loon.

"Are you ready?" He asked.

"As ready as one can be when having to travel with you while you're in such a mood."

Loki, before Harry could react or say anything, suddenly stood behind Harry and covered his eyes with his hands. It was a show of great trust that Harry didn't even twitch or try to get away from him when he did this.

"I promise you'll love it," Loki whispered in his ear, and they both were gone.

When they landed, Harry instantly tried to gauge where they were even if he couldn't see anything. He heard some rustling and a few people breathing but despite that it was quiet.

Suddenly, Loki pulled his hands away, and Harry had to blink a few times to adjust his eyes to the sudden brightness. However, before he could realise what was going on, he was greeted with a song.

Happy Birthday to You
Happy Birthday to You
Happy Birthday, Happy Birthday
Happy Birthday to You

The only thing Harry could do at that time was openly gaped at the assembled people opening and closing his mouth like a fish, he was completely overwhelmed. It took a few long minutes to fully register what was happening. Once he did, tears were freely flowing down his face. Never before in his life had anyone taken the time to acknowledge his birthday properly, not to mention throwing him a party. Therefore, it was no wonder that Harry currently couldn't decide whom to hug first, his parents who stood before him smiling brightly or Loki who probably organised everything together with them.

It was Loki who took the decision from him in the end when he hugged Harry from behind.

"Happy Birthday," he whispered in his ear.

Harry turned around in the pagan's embrace and threw his arms around him, hugging him tightly.

“Thank you!” he said, his voice muffled by Loki’s shirt. “Thank you all!”

“Did you think we would forget your birthday?” his father asked with amusement.

Harry leant back to look at him and shook his head. “No, but…,” he began but quickly hid his face in Loki’s chest, blushing in embarrassment.
“But what?” James now frowned in concern.

“I… I didn’t keep track of time… I didn’t know it was the 31st July already,” Harry muttered.

That actually made quite a few people laughing.

“Why are we not even surprised?” one of the twins began. “Our dear Harrykin is probably the only one who manages to forget about time!” the other finished while dragging Harry out of Loki’s embrace. “Come on!” “It’s party time!”

Harry smiled happily and wiped the tears away, but before he followed the twins, he first hugged his parents and profusely thanked them. After that, the twins dragged him away to where Hermione and Neville were standing.

“Harry!” Hermione exclaimed before pulling him into a hug. “It is so nice to see you. How were your holidays so far? Did you visit interesting places? I actually was in France… well, technically I’m still on holiday there… and it is so cool there. There are so many interesting places to visit and did you know that they have a magical alley like Diagon Alley?”

“Hermione… Hermione!” Harry interrupted her with a laugh. “Take a breath!”

“I’m sorry, I’m just so excited,” Hermione sheepishly admitted. “But you’re right, this is your birthday party, and I can still tell you about everything once we’re back at Hogwarts. Here this is for you.”

Harry took the present with a thank you and opened it carefully to find, unsurprisingly, a book.

“It is a book about potions of more or less serious nature,” she explained.

That let Harry’s grin become more mischievous. “I don’t doubt that it will come in handy. Thank you.”

Next was Neville to give him a present or better yet two. One was a framed article of the NY Post, the magical American newspaper that read “Loki’s Apprentice takes out the MACUSA – Who’s the one behind the massive prank?” with a massive picture of the utter chaos that reigned at the MACUSA after Harry had been through with it. The other present was a jar with the dried leaves of a plant.

“I don’t know what to say except thank you.”

The article certainly would find a nice place in his room as a reminder of his first massive prank.

“Thought you would like it,” Neville said with a snicker. “The leaves are from the plant you gifted me for Christmas. I thought it right to give you some back.”

Harry grinned broadly when he remembered something. “Wait a moment, I have something for you too.”

Without another comment, he vanished into thin air and left behind four confused friends.

“Did our Harrykin just disappear?” Fred asked.

“Don’t worry, he’ll show up again. From what I got he’s only picking something up,” Sam explained calmly sipping his drink, knowing by now that Harry tended to suddenly disappear only to reappear not much later.
“You know it is confusing to see you as an adult now,” Hermione told him. “Even with knowing about it beforehand.”

Sam just wanted to reply something when Harry reappeared.

“Ah, here we go,” he said as if he hadn’t done anything unusual at all. “Neville, a belated Happy Birthday to you!”

“What, no plant?” Neville asked mock shocked. “Thank you!”

No, it was not a plant Harry got his friend but a set of unique and enchanted harvesting tools that not only helped to preserve the harvest longer but also its magical properties.

“This is indeed an excellent set of tools,” Severus, who just walked over, complimented.

Neville blushed heavily upon hearing the praise. “Thank you, Sir, and thank you, Harry.”

“You’re welcome, Nev. Here, Hermione, this is for you,” Harry held out a small wooden box.

Hermione carefully opened it and inside saw a silver necklace with a small pendant. The pendant was the size of a Galleon, silver and depicted a stack of books with a quill in a holder next to it.

“Wow, thank you,” she whispered in awe while taking out the necklace and placed it around her neck.

“It isn’t only decoration,” Harry laughed. “When you hold it in your hand and push some magic into it, it activates. It is actually a translation charm that can translate most of the currently written and spoken languages.”

“I…,” she began but didn’t know what to say, so she just threw her arms around Harry and hugged him.

“You’re welcome!”

“So those are your friends?” a voice that Harry knew belonged to Fenrir said. “It is nice to finally meet you, Harry told me a lot about you. Fenrir Lokison, at your service.”

Hermione carefully detangled herself from Harry and looked at the young man. “Hermione Granger, nice to meet you,” she introduced herself.

“Neville Longbottom,” Neville followed.

“The infamous Devils of Gryffindor,” “Fred” “and George” “Weasley,” the twins introduced themselves with their usual antics making Fenrir snicker.

Harry, on the other hand, had only eyes for what was currently sitting on Fenrir’s shoulder. What sat there looked like a monkey with long silvery hair and a long tail. Its eyes were black orbs and it held onto Fenrir’s hair for balance.

“What is that?” he finally asked.

“Huh? What is what?” Hermione asked confusedly.

“Interesting, so you can see him. This my dear Harry is your present, he’s a Demiguise,” he explained while holding out a hand for the monkey, which it grabbed and swung over to Harry only to swiftly land on his shoulder.
“Ah, that explains why we cannot see it,” Hermione’s face brightened though everyone else still looked confused, so she explained it. “Demiguise are monkey-like creatures that live in the Far East. Their silvery hair makes it possible for them to become invisible and is used in the making of invisibility cloaks.”

To her surprise, the Demiguise jumped over to her and began playing with her hair much to the amusement of everyone else.

“Hey there,” she said while petting the creature which let off a delighted sound.

“He’s for me?” Harry asked astonished. “Does he have a name? Do I have to pay special attention to something?”

“No really, they are herbivores and quite mischievous. I don’t doubt that you two will like each other,” Fenrir told him. “And no he’s not named yet.”

Harry hummed lowly. “How about Puck?”

The Demiguise looked at him and with a jump returned to Harry’s shoulder where he wrapped his tail around his neck for better balance.

“I think he likes his new name,” Fenrir commented amusedly.

After that, the Party went on with Harry receiving many more presents ranging from pranking equipment from the twins to potions equipment from Severus and an amulet designed to keep him hidden from Zachariah from Michael. Harry was actually surprised how many people had come. So he got to know Ellen and her daughter Jo for the first time as well as Loki’s daughter Hel and even Alastair had accompanied Dean together with Castiel.

Funnily enough, the angel had gotten a near heart attack when he learned that the man who looked like a young Dumbledore with honey-blond hair was actually Michael. However, Michael only told him to relax and enjoy life for once and that he had no intention to follow Zachariah’s plans. The only thing Michael made clear was that Castiel should never mention that he was on earth or where to find him.

Dean’s reaction though was not any less amusing. He actually jumped a foot into the air when Michael introduced himself to the man and threatened the archangel that he would shove his angel blade where the sun didn’t shine should he even think about asking him to become his vessel or start the fight again as it was.

Michael in return only laughed and asked him how he got the notion that if he hadn’t come to him for the last year how he would suddenly come to him now. That made Dean stop and think and he had to admit that the archangel was right. After that, the two got along surprisingly well.

All in all, everyone had a good time, and the five friends agreed to go to Diagon Alley together for their shopping for the new school year. That brought them to a question though.

“Say, Sam, are you returning for the next school year?” Neville asked.

“I didn’t really think about that,” Sam replied surprised.

“You’re always welcome to return,” Michael added.

Sam looked at Dean in uncertainty.
“I think you should go and learn more about your ability, but in the end, it is your decision, I’m okay either way,” his brother said with a shrug.

“I’ll think about it okay?”

They all nodded and returned to their own conversations. Too soon a beautiful day ended.
Chapter 41: Malfoy, Zachariah and other Catastrophes

The last weeks of the holidays flew by, and the 1st of September was just around the corner. It was a week before the train towards Hogwarts would leave, and the friends had agreed to meet for the necessary shopping for school supplies. The twins had told them when their family intended to go to Diagon Alley, and the others decided to come and “save” them.

So now Hermione, Neville, Harry, Loki – deaged again – and surprisingly Sam – also deaged – were sitting at a table at Fortescue’s Ice Cream Parlour waiting for the twins to show up. They were accompanied by Harry’s parents as well as Sirius and Ellen, who wanted to see how the magical community of Great Britain looked like, while Jo stayed with Bobby glad to be away from her mother and her beau for some time. It took the twins nearly an hour to finally show up.

“Sorry, but getting away from our family wasn’t that easy,” Fred explained while slumping down on a chair with a huff.

“Your parents don’t know that you’re here?” Ellen asked suspiciously, and a bit worried, she was a mother after all.

“It’s not the first time we snuck away,” George replied with a shrug.

“And it is much more fun that way,” Fred added with a broad grin.

“That’s the spirit!” Loki piped up.

Neville and Hermione though only rolled their eyes, already used to the antics of the twins.

“So where do we want to go first?” Hermione asked, had she to decide they already would have gone to Flourish & Blotts a long time ago.

“Not to disappoint you or such, but we honestly should avoid the bookstore for now,” George told her.

“Yeah, there is some bloke giving autographs, Lockhart I think,” Fred added.

“That’s how we finally got away. The crowd in there gave us the opportunity to vanish.”

“Lockhart? I heard he’s brilliant!” Hermione squealed like a fangirl ready to bolt to the bookshop.

Loki, on the other hand, couldn’t help himself and snort. “That idiot isn’t even able to tell the difference between an illusion and the reality.”

“You know him?” Harry questioned.

“I might or might not have run into him once. He’s a complete fraud and homophobic as it seems,” he explained with a snicker.
“And I don’t even want to imagine THAT,” Hermione groaned in embarrassment while Neville’s face went beet red.

The twins on the other hand snickered.

“Hey, I’m a shapeshifter…I don’t care about gender,” Loki huffed in indignation.

“Kinky,” Harry said with a roguish grin.

“Harry James Potter, you’re twelve years old!” Hermione screeched, attracting quite a bit of attention with it. “You’re not supposed to know about such things and even less think about them.”

“Oi, first, technically I’m thirteen for your information and second I have free access to the internet,” he retorted. “You know, teenager plus free internet…."

“I don’t know whether as your father I should be proud of you or angered,” James spoke up earning himself a hit over the head from Lily.

“I’m definitely proud of you,” Sirius said with a broad grin also getting hit over the head though from Ellen.

“You’re sleeping on the couch tonight,” both Lily and Ellen said simultaneously before they looked at each other and smiled.

James and Sirius, on the other hand, looked horrified at their wife and girlfriend respectively, but the gazes of the women told them that they were serious, so they slouched in their chairs sulking about it. Harry chuckled lowly at their misfortune.

“I’d say we go clothes shopping first; Harry will need new robes,” Loki decided.

It was true, ever since Harry ate regularly healthy meals and – unknown to him – received nutrition potions from Snape once the man knew what was going on via his meals at Hogwarts, he grew quite a bit and also wasn’t as scrawny anymore. Sure, he was still on the shorter side, but at least he didn’t look three years younger anymore.

Harry groaned, he had hated being prodded already the first time around, and it surely wouldn’t be any better now. With a devious grin, Loki jumped up and dragged Harry with him towards Madame Malkin’s. Harry didn’t fight him but also wasn’t very enthusiastic. Luckily for him, the robe shop was empty of other customers, and so it didn’t take too long for him to be measured and the new robes being tailored. Lily though finally being able to spoil her son a bit, decided to also buy him a few casual clothes like an emerald green button-down shirt that emphasise his eyes.

Once they had everything – and had the twins been shocked when both Sirius and James in coordination with Loki decided that they also needed new robes because according to them a fellow prankster cannot run around in rags – they made their way to the other shops. They bought potions ingredients, ink, quills, parchment and whatever else they would need during the school year.

When they passed the Quidditch shop though, James got the idea to buy Harry a snitch for training.

“Dad, I already have a snitch,” Harry growled in exasperation, said snitch hovering next to him and nodding in emphasis.

“That lazy thing?” James retorted though it was something he shouldn’t have said because suddenly the snitch was gone.
James only looked around in confusion while Harry smirked. It just took a few moments before James squealed…like a girl. The snitch had flown around him under his robe and now mercilessly tickled the man who screeched and twisted in the hope of getting the snitch out. Everyone around him laughed at his misery.

“Don’t call him lazy,” Harry said with a snicker.

“Lord Potter, even after having died and miraculously come back to life you still make a fool out of yourself wherever you go,” suddenly a silky voice said behind them. “And Harry Potter, the golden boy, so desperate to get his parents back that he turns to arts so dark that even most of the dark families won’t dare touch it. I have to admit that I’m curious how you even learned of that practice.”

They all turned around towards the man talking who turned out to be Lucius Malfoy, behind him standing his son Draco. Harry rose an eyebrow at the man, wondering how he had learned about how he officially brought his parents back because he knew that the Prophet never gave any details. But Lucius probably had enough influence in the Ministry to be able to access the documents they had to fill out to declare James and Lily alive once more.

“Actually, I already wanted to ask you last time we saw each other but with it being your birthday and all, how did you bring your parents back?” Hermione spoke up tentatively but interestedly, even the twins and Neville looked at him curiously.

Harry, on the other hand, glared at Lucius.

“Oh, didn’t he tell you?” Lucius silkily asked before he smirked smugly obviously thinking that he had Harry. “Your dear saviour made a deal with a demon.”

Neville instantly blanched when he heard that while Hermione gasped in shock and even Draco’s eyes went wide obviously not having known about it, though the reaction of the twins intrigued Harry, they just stared at him curiously.

“I made a deal with a demon, so what?” Harry inquired as for nothing was wrong with that.

“H-Harry, how…how could you? The consequences of…,” Hermione tried, but in the end, her voice failed.

“Are none. Hermione, do you really think me so stupid? Or that Loki, not to mention Severus, Sirius or my parents, who all were there when I made that deal, would have let me, would it have endangered me in any way?”

“But Harry, don’t you realise that you have now only ten years left?” Neville spoke up in a low voice. “Was that really worth it?”

Harry couldn’t help himself, but he burst out laughing. “You have no idea!” he exclaimed once he cooled down again. “Okay here are a few facts for you. I’m friends with not only one but three demons, two of which are extremely high-ranking as in the king of the crossroad demons and the chief torturer of hell.”

“My, my, one might get the impression that the saviour and golden boy is going dark,” Lucius quipped with a chuckle.

“If anything, I’m neutral or grey or whatever you want to call me. I don’t care whether someone is a demon, an archangel or the ordinary wizard next door. As long as they stand behind me, support me and don’t betray me, they are my friends, no questions asked. They don’t even have to like each other so long they accept that I do,” Harry explained more for his friends than for Lucius sake.
“That’s it!” one of the twins said, walked over to him and flung an arm over his shoulder.

“Who cares what others think,” the second twin added and mirrored his brother’s behaviour.

“It is your life, and you can befriend whomever you want,” the first continued.

“Who are we to tell you what to do,” the second finished.

Harry looked at them with a beaming smile. “Thank you, you two.”

Neville on the other hand silently walked over to Harry and came to stand in front of him. He looked Harry straight in the eyes as if searching for something before in the end he nodded.

“I know that you’re not evil and as long as you don’t become evil, I’ll be your friend. You were one of my first friends, and you helped me, saved my life and I won’t betray that if I can help it,” he told him passionately.

Harry blinked a few times in surprise before he pulled Neville into a brotherly hug. “Thank you!”

It was only Hermione who seemed to be torn between wanting to be Harry’s friend and his decision to be friends with something like demons. When Sam saw that she wouldn’t come to a conclusion without some nudging in the right direction, he also walked over to Harry.

“Since one of those demons you call your friend is my brother, it wouldn’t only be highly hypocritical of me if I’d suddenly turned away from you but also a betrayal towards my brother.”

Harry smiled at him and nodded thankfully before he turned towards Hermione who still looked torn. It took her a few more moments before she shook her head.

“It is as you said, I don’t have to like them, but I like you, and as long as I don’t have to interact with them everything is well,” she said with a smile. “Though you’ll still have to explain to me why you thought it a good idea to sign a contract with a demon.”

“That I will but not now and not here, okay?” he asked her with a soft smile upon which she nodded. “Lucius Malfoy, I have no idea what you tried to achieve here, but I think you should get lost before…oh wait, too late!”

The only warning that Lucius got that something was amiss was the broad mischievous grin from Harry before someone had the gall to empty out a bucket full of paint upon him, magical paint in the colours of the rainbow. He just grabbed for his wand to hex Harry into the next universe, when he heard the amused cackling of a primate above him before the bucket, that previously contained the paint, fell down on him and with a loud clang came to rest on his head like a helmet and effectively blindfolded him.

Everyone stood there for a moment, silently staring at Lucius before the twins, James, Sirius, Loki and Harry began to howl with laughter and even the others couldn’t suppress a smirk. Not to mention all the passers-by who stared at Lucius, pointed at him and snickered. Draco, on the other hand, stood next to his father, his front covered in paint and a mortified look on his face. Luckily, Loki had raised a shield so that none of the group could be hit with the dye.

Lucius slowly rose his hands, pulled off the bucket and glared at Harry with malice.

“I promise you, you will rue the day you met me,” he said in a low but no less malicious voice.

“But why? Everyone here can attest to the fact that I didn’t do anything,” Harry replied with a smirk.
Lucius glared at him for the last time before he threw the bucket to the side and strode away, closely followed by Draco.

“Please remind me to thank Fenrir the next time we see him for his gift,” Loki chuckled while petting Puck who again sat on Harry’s shoulder cackling in amusement.

“I’ll have to thank him too,” Harry answered. “So only books left.”

“Hopefully the masses already left the bookshop,” Fred groaned.

“Yeah, or we’ll never get the books,” George added.

“We’ll see,” Loki piped up and set off towards Flourish & Blotts, but soon it became apparent that the bookshop was still filled to the brim with fans of that blonde ponce and his name wasn’t Lucius Malfoy.

A few of them groaned and watched the masses with trepidation when suddenly someone behind them addresses them, or more specifically Harry.

“Harry Potter, you’re more trouble than it is worth, but luckily that will change soon,” an unfamiliar woman told them.

“Zachariah,” Harry said without missing a beat. “What do you want now?”

“Ah nothing much, just you doing what you’re destined to do and I’ll make sure of it,” Zachariah replied with a devious smirk.

“What? Want to take me as a host? Flash news…NO!”

“Yes, the unfortunate fact that angels need the consent of the host, but luckily for me, …demons do not,” Zachariah told him with a chuckle.

To everyone’s surprise, a pillar of black smoke rose next to Zachariah to give way to a broad-shouldered man with more muscles than anything else. Harry sighed deeply.

“Really Zach? And here I thought that your amateur mistake from last time taught you not to mess with me,” he said with feigning sadness. “Not to mention that you obviously think it’s a good idea to attack me in front of my friends and family.”

“As if you pathetic hairless apes have the slightest chance against me,” the angel chuckled.

“You’re a dick with wings, featherbrain,” Harry huffed.

“How dare you,” Zachariah exclaimed. “Get him!”

The demon made a step towards Harry but before he could do anything more he had a knife in his chest much to everyone’s surprise, collapsing to the cobblestone obviously dead. However, when Harry looked at Sam, he knew positively that it had been him to throw it, probably with the aid of magic.

Zachariah roared and lunged at Harry, but the boy simply vanished.

When Harry reappeared, he felt dizzy, and the world spun on its axis.

“Wha?” was all he could get out before he blacked out.
“As if I fall for the same trick twice,” Zachariah raged.

Loki in the meantime grinned, when he suddenly frowned in confusion before worry took over. In the end, he narrowed his eyes before rounding on Zachariah.

“You just made your last mistake,” he threatened, an angel blade in hand.

Zachariah’s eyes widened when he realised that this was indeed Loki standing before him and he now was wholly pissed off, so he did the intelligent thing and vanished too. Loki stared at the place where the angel had been for a long moment but didn’t deign him valuable enough to follow him right now. He vanished the blade and turned back to the others.

“Who…who was that?” Hermione asked once she found her voice again, her shock evident.

“Zachariah, the angel of Raphael’s garrison,” Loki absently replied.

“He was really an angel? And who is that who Sam…killed? Wait, never mind…where is Harry?” Hermione rattled out a string of questions.

“That is the exact problem, I don’t know,” Loki said with a serious face that none of them had witnessed so far. “I lost track of him when he teleported away, that is impossible.”

“Is…is he dead?” Lily asked he voice wavering and not wanting to even think about it.

“No! Even then I would be able to sense him,” Loki threw his hands in the air, they all could see the fear in the pagan’s eyes. “There is nowhere in heaven, hell and anywhere in between where I wouldn’t be able to sense him.”

At that exact moment, several pops echoed through the alley that had gone unusually quiet.

“Great the cavalry, just what I needed,” he groaned and turned towards the approaching Amelia Bones who looked very much enraged.
“Loki Laufeyson!” Amelia Bones exclaimed while walking up to the trickster in a brisk pace. “I thought I made myself clear when I said that I wouldn’t stand for you endangering the magical community of England.”

“Excuse me, please?! Is it now my fault that this bastard Zachariah is after Harry? I told you all I know about the entire thing so don’t blame me when this son of a bitch decides to show up in the middle of the day only to try and get Harry possessed by a demon!” Loki raged, he was far too worried about Harry at the moment to properly appease the woman.

The others, especially the younger ones, seemed calmer though even if fearful in Bone's eyes. She wondered what happened here.

Hermione in the meantime stared at the pagan in shock and surprise over how he talked to the woman. By now she was used to Loki seeing rules and laws more like advice he then promptly ignored but talking to someone like that was usually not his thing. So, she narrowed her eyes in determination, stepped in front of Loki and dragged him with her away from the others, closely followed by the twins and Neville who warily glanced at Bones. Sam watched them before he turned towards her once they vanished around a corner into a side alley.

“Ms Bones was that correct?”

Amelia Bones could only nod in her surprise over what just happened, she couldn’t believe that Loki was that enraged or possibly worried that he would snap at her like that and if she wasn’t wholly mistaken she also saw something akin to fear in his eyes. Something had happened and that in turn made her worried, primarily if it was something that sparked fear in Loki.

“Sorry for Loki’s behaviour but he is apprehensive about Harry because he vanished and Loki isn’t able to track him. Believe me, Loki isn’t the bad guy in this, and that's nothing I say lightly. Zachariah showed up and tried to get Harry possessed by a demon,” Sam explained the woman who still looked to where Loki had vanished between two buildings.

“You want to tell me that an angel works together with a demon?” Bones asked in disbelief, she heard a lot of things throughout her work but that indeed was novel and nothing she would believe without proof or at least an excellent explanation.

Sam rose an eyebrow. “What did Loki tell you about the recent occurrences?”

“That Zachariah faked the prophecy to bind Harry to get him Riddle’s soul,” she replied confused.

“And what about Lucifer?”

“What has that to do with Harry?” she frowned, sure Loki told her everything about the cage and the seals in case one would influence even Britain, but she couldn't see the link to Harry.

Sam looked at her strangely when he realised just why she didn’t know about the connection, Loki
hadn’t had the time to tell her yet.

“Sorry, I forgot that it is something we found out only recently and it seems that Loki didn’t have the time to tell you yet. Zachariah made a deal with a few demons so that they would help him to get Lucifer out, but in return, he would have to deliver them Riddle’s soul,” Sam explained, it actually was something that Crowley managed to find out and told them about two weeks ago.

“That explains…a lot.” Bones mused watching how two Aurors carried the dead man away for a later closer inspection. “I already wondered why that angel needed the soul this desperately. Besides that who killed the demon? Just for the record.”

“That was me, I couldn’t allow him to touch or possess Harry, not that it would have worked anyway,” Sam answered with a chuckle.

“How so?” she asked curiously.

“Loki gave all of us a tattoo that prevents possession of any kind. Well, Harry, Neville, the twins and I got one while Hermione wanted to talk with her parents first,” Sam said with a shrug. “It was sparked by Riddle possessing Quirrell.”

“That sounds highly useful,” Bones agreed, even if not with the fact that neither the twins nor Neville asked for consent from their parents first, but that was not for her to sort out.

“Why didn’t I know about that?” Sirius exclaimed. “I want one too!”

James nodded eagerly next to him, and even Lily and Ellen didn’t seem to be averse to the idea of getting such a tattoo.

“And you shall get one but not now,” Loki’s much calmer voice suddenly came from behind them. “My apology Ms Bones, it wasn’t my best idea to let my anger and worry run away with me.”

“No damage done, I had worse,” she said waving him off. “Mr….?”

Sam winced when he realised that he completely forgot to introduce himself. “Sam Winchester.”

“Wait, the American hunter?” She was surprised that he was here since he said, an American Hunter. "What are you doing here and aren't you…older?"

“Uhm yes!!” Sam asked confused. "I'm currently visiting Hogwarts and Loki de-aged me for that. Don't worry, the staff knows about it. But how do you know who I am?"

“The heads of the British and American DMLE regularly update each other on who work in their own department as well as any other law enforcer working in their country. You and your brother are registered as hunters with them. Did you think they wouldn’t keep track of people like you? Anyway, Mr Winchester told me that Harry vanished and you couldn’t track him so I can understand your worry Loki.”

“Yeah, where is my son?” James interrupted them obviously never having stopped to worry about him even if he didn’t speak up about it until now. He knew from his own work as an Auror that it didn’t get him anywhere letting himself being blinded by fear and worry.

“Actually, I learned where Harry vanished to while getting berated by four children,” he said with an accusatory glance at said children who only looked at him innocently.

“And why isn’t he with you then?” Lily wanted to know.
“It seems that there is a place where I can’t track him and for him to get there he drained his magic to the point that it needs to recuperate or he would only hurt himself with trying to get back. But don’t worry he’s somewhat safe there and will be back within the hour,” Loki explained.

“Then why don’t you just go and get him?” Sirius was confused. "And it takes far longer to replenish a depleted magical core than one hour."

“Because it is a place I cannot get into and don’t ask me how Harry got there because I have no idea. Though the time there runs faster, so it is only an hour for us while it is long enough for him to recuperate.”

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Slowly but surely Harry came around, and the first thing he noted was that he hurt...everywhere. His entire body felt as if he ran a marathon while his head felt as if someone was prodding it with a hot knife. So, all in all, he didn't feel like moving at all at the moment.

The second thing he recognised was that his head was lying in someone's lap while he was lying on the floor. However, he had absolutely no idea where he was or whose lap it was. He shifted a bit in the hope of getting in a more comfortable position but instantly groaned in pain. Hell, even thinking hurt.

"So you're finally awake," a soft female voice above him stated that sounded as if she was about his age.

"I feel like I met the wrong end of a stampede," Harry muttered. "What happened?"

"No wonder, you nearly completely depleted your magical core. You shouldn't move too much. On the other hand...," she began but hesitated.

"On the other hand...what?" Harry asked but winced because it sent a new wave of pain through his head.

"I could block the pain so that you won't feel it anymore, but you'd need to trust me...I mean really trust me," she explained.

"So the options are to either feel like utter shit or trusting a girl I don't know," Harry summarised with a groan. "Ah hell, do it, it isn't as if you could make it any worse."

Harry felt how the girl placed her hands on either side of his head. He didn't know what he expected to happen, but the soft, warm feeling beginning at his temples and reaching out through his body took him by surprise. The feel was soft and warm but also had a darker edge to it, Harry just couldn't place it, but he couldn't deny that it worked as he instantly began to relax. Slowly the pain ebbed away, and he sighed in content.

"Thank you," he said once the warm feeling stopped, leaving him blissfully pain-free though he didn't want to move just yet.

"You're welcome," The girl said with a snicker. "I just blocked the neuronal stimuli that make you feel pain, so the pain is still there, but you don't feel it...for now."
"How long will that last?" Harry asked while opening his eyes only to snap them shut instantly.

"About a day so you should be careful during that time because you won't feel any pain whatsoever. Is something wrong?" She inquired when she saw him closing his eyes again as quickly as possible.

"So, trying not to get injured and no not generally wrong, just your aura..., it would give me a headache if I looked at you for too long," Harry told her not putting into account that he wouldn't feel the headache thanks to the girl's spell or whatever it was. However, it wouldn't be a good idea anyway because he would probably feel it tenfold once the charm that girl put on him faded.

"You're an Auramancer," the girl said in surprise before concentrating a bit. "It should be alright for you now."

Tentatively Harry opened his eyes again, relieved that the girl wasn't surrounded by a blinding white anymore. For all that he saw made him smile slightly. From his position, he could see that the girl had dark honey blond hair that reached just past her shoulder and was bound at the nape of her neck. Her azure blue eyes were looking at him with a little worry, and her mouth was curled into a small smile.

"Are you alright?" She asked.

"Now that I do not feel as if I was run over by a truck multiple times...yes, I'm alright," Harry replied while slowly sitting up, not wanting to hasten anything and hurt again. He felt miles better than he had a few minutes ago even when he was hit by dizziness.

"Take it slowly. While I suppressed your pain, you're still weak from depleting your core," the girl said while coming to aid Harry when he began to sway.

Harry nodded slowly and closed his eyes, waiting for the world to stop spinning. In the meantime, he thought about his situation. Not only did he have no idea where he was but that he was here with an angel. Be that as it may, thanks to her healing him, he would give her the benefit of the doubt. Somehow, he doubted that Zachariah would attack him, make him teleport away only to have someone help him afterwards, which made no sense at all in his eyes. However, he would have to find out where he was if he wanted to get back, but the more pressing question was who the angel was and whether he was safe.

"So, who of those angels are you? I know you're not that bastard Zachariah, are you working for him?"

The girl rose an eyebrow at him though he didn't see it because Harry still had his eyes closed.

When he received no answer, Harry opened his eyes again but as soon as he looked at her properly for the first time, his mouth fell open, and he could only gape at her. After a few minutes where none of them said anything, the girl just observed him curiously, Harry slowly looked around carefully as not to ignite another dizzy spell. He was in a large, hall-like room that was bare except for an armchair and a table in one corner next to a filled to the brim bookshelf. What he also could see was that the wall opposite of him was interrupted by barred windows.

"Eh...what?" Was all he could get out. "How the hell did I end up here of all places?"

Harry had instantly deduced where and with whom he was. If the vast, nearly empty hall with undeniably no exit wasn't a dead giveaway, the aura of the angel indeed was. It was to equal parts the usual blinding white and a pitch black. However, what made him curious was the golden streak flowing through it, he never saw something like that before, and he had to admit that it looked
"That is an excellent question, it should be absolutely impossible for anyone to get in here," she replied while watching him with unconcealed interest. "This makes me even more curious about you."

"Even more?"

"I felt it when you teleported into hell to dump an angel in a hellfire lake three levels above us," she amusedly replied though she could also see the benefit in this situation.

Initially, she had sent out a few demons to get information about the boy who currently sat in front of her, but now she would be able to obtain said information first hand. She wasn't one to let such an opportunity pass, especially not when presented on a silver platter and when he would have to spend some time with her while regenerating his magic. Lucifer wanted to cackle upon that but refrained in fear of alienating the boy.

"What can I say to that, Lucifer is curious about me," Harry retorted while carefully shuffling over to the closest wall.

He still felt weak, but luckily it wasn't that far. With Lucifer's help, he quickly got there and wasn't that strange? From what Loki and Michael said about Lucifer he would have expected, well he didn't know what he expected but definitely not a concerned girl his age that was curious about him. He also was utterly calm around her, he didn’t doubt that anyone else, who was not a demon – and probably even those –, would already have freaked out, but Harry actually felt safe as if he knew that Lucifer meant no harm to him.

“So, what got you so curious about me? I mean I’m no one special. Sure, Loki is teaching me some stuff and all that, but isn’t as if I’m suddenly the greatest guy in the universe.”

“You’re kidding right?” Lucifer asked in disbelief while sitting down opposite of him but Harry only shook his head. “Do you know how many thirteen-year-old boys teleport into hell as if they are on a field trip or anyone else not belonging to hell for that matter? I’ll tell you…none…as in not one single person in all the millennia I’m now in here. Not to mention that you managed to get in here.”

Harry looked at her wide-eyed. When he teleported into hell, he hadn’t thought it something special, but with what Lucifer just told him it made him wonder even more just how he was able to pull it off, or how he landed in this cage…hall…prison…whatever.

They sat there for quite some time both lost in thought, Harry musing about how he got here and how he could get out while Lucifer thought about the mystery that that boy in front of him was. To her surprise, she felt at ease in his presence, which was rare. She usually was wary when in the company of others, always expecting the worst and them to turn against her especially since all the shit happened that consequently landed her here but with that boy, it was different, curious…so curious.

“I didn’t introduce myself, did I?” Harry suddenly spoke up.

Lucifer blinked a few times before she registered what Harry said and she smiled at him. “No, no you didn’t.”

“Harry Potter, Loki’s apprentice, Boy-who-lived, Boy-who-is-obviously-capable-of-the-impossible aaaaaand a shit ton of other things people call me,” he introduced himself.

“Lucifer,” she replied with a smile and curt bow of her head. “Though you already knew that and
you can call me Lucy, I think that it fits my momentary body better. I also hope that you won’t mind
if I give that Pagan Loki a piece of my mind when I get out.”

Harry stared at her in surprise. “Why’s that?” he asked.

“As I see it, Loki tries to get me out so that I can help him to bring Ragnarök over the Norse
pantheon and I can tell you that I won’t let anyone use me,” Lucifer growled. “And certainly not a
measly pagan god like him.”

Harry blinked at her, blinked again before he began to laugh…hard.

“What? Don’t tell me you’re supporting him in this!” Lucifer asked indignantly, she would never
admit it but the thought somehow left her cold, the idea that this boy would want the apocalypse
didn’t sit well with her, not at all.

“Oh, I am supporting him in his endeavour of getting you out that certainly is true, at the same time
for a completely different reason than you might think. I’m not fond of that whole apocalypse tripe at
all,” Harry answered once he calmed down again only to receive a disbelieving look. “No, no, not
going to tell. Oh, this will be so funny. I would never have thought that I might be able to prank the
devil himself...herself and get away with it. Say, why a female body and why a child if you don't
mind me asking.”

"For no other reason than, that I thought that you might be less inclined to panic if I look like
someone your age," Lucifer shrugged. "I have to admit that you're surprisingly calm for someone
who knows who I am."

"You're Lucifer, so what? As long as you don't give me a reason to panic as you put it...,” Harry said
with a shrug. "I mean, hell, I'm friends with Crowley and Alastair as well as two angels and several
pagan deities, I am taught by Loki, was attacked by a demon and an angel alike and came out on top.
I miraculously managed to revive my parents and don't ask me how because no one knows and have
been made a Horcrux by that idiot Riddle. A stupid feather brain thinks that I have to dance to his
tune and do what he wants and even threatened to get me possessed by a demon so all in all I can
confidently say that stranger things have happened than sitting here in the cage and having a nice
conversation with you."

"What did you say about that angel threatening you?” Lucifer asked, her face darkening.

"Yeah, that dick Zachariah continuously tried to force me to do his dirty work now only because he's
too god damned lazy to do it himself, he even faked a prophecy for it," he shook his head in
exasperation. "I went as far as dumping him in that hellfire lake, and he still didn't get the message.”

"So, it was him that followed you, I already wondered. You're absolutely impossible, I hope you
know that” Lucifer added with a snicker.

"Your brother pretty much said the same.”

That, however, let Lucifer instantly tense. Harry was acquainted with one of her brothers? Lucifer
didn't like that one bit. "Which one?” She, therefore, demanded to know.

Harry looked at her in surprise of her sharp words, but in the end, he grinned broadly.

"Still not going to tell you anything," he said in a singsong voice.

Sure, he knew that teasing the devil definitely wasn't a good idea, but from the narrowing of
Lucifer's eyes, he knew that she wasn't inclined to hurt or punish him for it and that was a good sign
in his eyes. Not that he was overly fond of the safe approach. Sure, he could be sly and stealthy when it suited him but where was the fun in that? That was when an idea occurred to him, and his grin became impossibly broader.

"Just had an idea, how about a little deal? I tell you what brother of yours I meant and you, in turn, help me with a prank once you get out. I even give you one free shot at Loki. How is it?" he asked her.

"What kind of prank?" Lucifer asked sceptically, she wouldn't agree to anything without knowing the details.

"Oh, you'd just have to show up at Hogwarts as yourself once you're out. Best in some flashy way, you know as a new teacher, or....," Harry looked at her contemplatively. "A new student."

"And what do you hope to achieve with that except freaking out those students who know who I am?" she was still sceptical about that entire endeavour.

"Pff, the only ones who might recognise you – and it is questionable at best that someone recognises you – are the Muggle-born and the ones with ties to the dark arts. The first group will probably be weary in the beginning but accept you when they see that my group doesn't react negatively and see that you are nothing like they think you are."

"You came to the last conclusion why?" she asked him challengingly.

"What, you mean other than the fact that you helped me when I collapsed, that you were worried about my reaction towards you hence why you took a form I find less threatening and not to forget that we now have a decent conversation for I don't know how long?" Harry retorted amusedly.

"Don't mistake my behaviour towards you as my general behaviour!"

Harry snorted. "Trust me I don't. But you peg me as intelligent and someone who tends to think strategically. To me, it sounds like you're not inclined to start the apocalypse any time soon once you're out of here and therefore you need to hide somewhere. So why not hide somewhere, where heaven and especially Michael would expect you the least."

"Then again if I hide as myself it would defeat the purpose of hiding at all," Lucifer didn't know what to think about that.

Now Harry outright laughed. "Do you know how ignorant the population of magical Britain is? They still think that the muggles are nothing more than cavemen so I highly doubt that they would even connect you to...well yourself when you come to Hogwarts as a first-year."

"Then I understand your reasoning for me coming to your school even less," Lucifer was utterly confused now. "Why coming there in the first place as myself if no one recognises me?"

"To pull one over your brother Gabriel," Harry replied with a grin, he knew he just gave away the information he wanted to trade for Lucifer's help, but he somehow had the feeling that Lucifer would be more inclined to help him when he knew just why.

Lucifer frowned though Harry could also see pain flickering over his face. "Gabriel is dead."

"Not dead, just in hiding – his personal witness protection as he calls it – and can you imagine his face, when you suddenly show up as if it's the most normal thing in the world?" the mischievous grin on Harry's face spoke volumes about what he thought about it.
Slowly the frown on Lucifer's face merged into a smile that was downright evil and sent shivers down Harry's spine but not in fear. Harry had to admit that the smile suited the fallen angel.

"Should you be right then this will suit him right, some payback for his annoying pranks is long overdue."

With that settled they fell into a comfortable conversation which they relocated to the corner where Lucifer conjured a chair for Harry and sat down in her own. Harry told Lucifer more about Hogwarts and whatever else happened to him while Lucifer told him a few things about herself. Once they ran out of stories to tell they began to discuss Books when Harry recognised a few novels in Lucifer's bookshelf, it seemed that the demons regularly supplied him with new ones. From there they went over to the film versions and Harry – luckily, he never went anywhere without his bag – introduced Lucifer to movies on his laptop. He briefly wondered how it was possible to have working internet in the cage, but hey he wouldn't complain.

They were currently watching the second Lord of the Rings movie when they were disturbed.
"So where is he?" James asked.

"He managed to land in Lucifer's cage. Don't ask me how he got in there but he drained his magic by teleporting there and needs to recuperate before he can attempt to teleport out again," Loki explained.

"Wait...WHAT? You want to tell me that my son landed in Lucifer's cage? As in Lucifer, the devil? Satan? The ultimate evil?" Lily spoke up, her voice showing her fear and panic.

However, nearly everyone bar Hermione, who had an inkling where the woman came from with her exclamation, looked at her as if she lost it.

"There are a lot of things I would call Lucifer, but evil is not one of them," Loki finally told her a bit confused.

"Lily, Loki is right. Lucifer is an archangel banned from heaven and undeniably dark but why do you think that he's evil?" Sirius asked equally confused as Loki but also a bit curious.

"But the Bible...?" Lily asked dumbfounded that no one thought like her.

That was what made Loki laugh. "That trash piece of a drunkard?" he brought out between bouts of laughter. "You could call that shit fiction at best and utter nonsense at worst. Yes, Lucifer is an archangel, and yes, he was banned from heaven not to mention that he created the demons, but his banishment was because of a quarrel with Michael that got out of hand. So, what makes you think that he's evil?"

Lily opened and closed her mouth not knowing what to say to that. All she thought she knew about Lucifer, all she learned during her religion lessons at school before she left to Hogwarts…what she knew, didn't paint the fallen angel in a good light. But now Loki said that everything that she thought she knew was false? It came as quite a shock, to say the least.

"Won't Harry be in danger when with him and as you said, he'll have to wait for some time before he can try to get out again," she finally said.

"Well, according to Crowley, who was the one who saw Harry in the cage when he went to talk to Lucifer, Lucifer isn't exactly happy to have an addition with him but he leaves Harry alone, they are basically ignoring each other," Loki said with a shrug. "He's safe, and that is what counts for me. The best is that Zachariah won't be able to get to him either."

"But can you be sure that it stays that way?" James spoke up.

Loki sighed deeply. "I doubt that something will change any time soon but I talked with Crowley, we agreed that it would be best if he regularly checks on them."
James began to pace. "I can only hope that nothing will happen. What if Harry cannot get out again on his own?" He asked with an anxious look.

"Well...," Loki began. "I honestly don't know. No one can get into the cage as long as it is sealed. We would have to wait until all needed seals are broken before I could get in there to get him out."

"So, if Harry cannot get out on his own he would be stuck in there for Merlin knows how long? What about the difference in the speed of time? What if we need weeks or months to break all seals? How long will that be for my baby?" Lily now was really freaking out.

"It would be years for him, and I honestly don't know what I would do then. But what do you expect me to do? As I said no one can get in there, this has never happened before! Lucifer's cage is bloody impenetrable!"

Loki heavily sat down on the sill of the shop window behind him. Everyone could see how worried he was again after having realised just what that little trip could mean for Harry. Loki didn't want to imagine what might happen, should Harry not be able to get back, it could be as he said years for Harry before he might be able to get out again.

Madame Bones, who until now stayed in the background, stepped forward and looked at each of the assembled people.

"You said, that this Crowley told you that Harry would be back soon so I'd suggest you calm down and only start to worry if Harry doesn't manage to show up within that time frame. As I see it there is nothing we can do anyway for now and panicking doesn't help us solve it," she explained. "You have done everything in your power, and everything else is out of your influence."

"But...," Loki began letting his head fall into his hands. "I...Zachariah...now that...hadn't I met Harry...hadn't I dragged him into this mess...."

Now Bones looked at him in surprise before she crouched down before the pagan god to be able to see his face. She gently pried Loki's hands from his face so that he was forced to look at her.

"When you showed up in my office for the first time all those months ago I thought that you came here to produce chaos before you would leave again and I would be lying if I said that I didn’t want to see you back rather sooner than later. Then I asked around a bit and learned what you not only did for Harry but also for others, and I knew you weren’t half as bad as you were painted. Sure, chaos follows you wherever you go, but you care. I can see that you care about Harry a lot, Merlin a blind man would be able to tell, so excuse me for my language but what you just said is complete shit," she sternly told him.

"I think I can speak for everyone here when I say that I wholly agree with Ms Bones. Yes, Harry might not be stuck with Lucifer if he never met you and yes maybe he would have had a safer life but have you ever considered what he would not have?" James asked him. "Lily and I would still be dead, Sirius in Prison, Neville's parents in a magical coma, Severus, Sam and Dean I don't even want to begin with, and then there is you. Yes, we could continue musing about how everything might have played out without your meddling, but that doesn't help us any with the current problem."

"James's right!" Sirius added. "I'd say we should get ourselves together, hope for the best but prepare for the worst."

Loki tentatively began to smile. "Thank you, thank you all and Sirius is right, we should pray that Harry manages to get out by himself but prepare to break the remaining seals as quickly as possible."
"That is the spirit," Madame Bones said with a smile of her own while standing up. "And should you need help, the DMLE will gladly assist you, and I think I even might be able to rope the Unspeakables in, in the worst case."

"Lucifer, I need to talk to you because I have valuable in...," a voice from outside the cage said but stopped once she reached the barred window, and the speaker was able to look into the cage.

"Eh, what the hell?" Came the not very eloquent addition when said person, who turned out to be Crowley, saw Harry and a girl roughly the same age who had to be Lucifer – who else would be in the cage…well beside Harry – sitting in front of a laptop and staring at the monitor. They both were apparently watching a movie if the sounds were anything to go by.

Crowley couldn't decide what was stranger about that picture, that Harry obviously somehow managed to get into the cage or that he was currently sitting together with Lucifer in front of a laptop watching a movie.

Harry, on the other hand, growled lowly when they were interrupted but swiftly paused the video to turn towards the demon.

"I'll handle this," he said to Lucifer in a low voice, he certainly did not want Lucifer to learn certain things and therefore ruin his prank. "Crowley, what do you want?"

"I came to talk to Lucifer but what in the name of the seven circles of hell are you doing here?" Crowley asked shocked and confused.

"Talk about what?" Harry inquired, coming to stand in front of the barred window and directly facing Crowley.

"You actually. I talked with M...," he began but quickly was interrupted by Harry.

"Why would Dumbledore send you to Lucifer to talk about me?" Harry asked with a pointed look.

Crowley rose an eyebrow but didn't question Harry on his odd behaviour. "For us, it seemed to be the better option that I told Lucifer something about you that if he learns half-truth from other sources. However, that now seems to be a moot point."

"Indeed, I already told Lucifer everything," Harry said with a low snicker.

"What have you planned?" Crowley demanded to know, he knew that smirk on Harry's face, and it didn't bear anything good for everyone involved.

"Oh, you know...the usual, pranking people, annoying angels, poking sleeping dragons. You can actually help if you want to," Harry retorted after a moment. "You can tell Loki where I landed and that Lucifer is annoyed by it but wouldn't harm me, only that we ignore each other. Besides that don't you dare telling anyone anything, not Dumbledore, not Loki and not Lucifer, did I make myself clear?"

Crowley looked at him for a very long moment surprise and suspicion flickering over his face.
"What do I get out of that?" He finally asked.

"I don't know? Not getting pranked by me?" Harry replied with a devious smirk.

"Why should I be threatened by you? As if you can do anything noteworthy," Crowley said annoyed, pranks were like flies…they annoy you but besides that they are harmless.

"The MACUSA would disagree. You know your contracts really need a makeover, wouldn't you agree? I thought something like a frilly pink with little unicorns or little butterflies dancing over flower meadows," Harry mused while Crowley suddenly looked horrified.

"You wouldn't even get to them," he said with determination.

"Really? I got in here, didn't I? Anyway, you'd also be able to get one over Loki so what is it now?"

"Point taken," Crowley conceded. "Okay, I'll play along, but if you're the reason that the apocalypse comes over us, I'll hold you personally responsible for it."

"Ah, I highly doubt that and remember, not a word to anyone."

Crowley huffed. "Was that all?"

He wanted to go back to his study and possibly have a drink…or three…perhaps even ten and it was nowhere near noon yet, it seemed that Harry was becoming even worse a headache than Loki. Not only did he learn the tricks of the trade from said pagan god but he also seemed to be able to get anywhere and everywhere he pleased though he had no idea how the boy did it.

The only entities that were able to bypass everything were God, Fate, Destiny and Death and he had no idea how Harry fit in there. So yes, he was very much inclined to not antagonise the boy too much because if his information were correct he had plunged MACUSA into a state of chaos that would take weeks to sort through and he didn't want to imagine what Harry would be able to do if he got to the demon-contracts. Now, that was a truly horrifying thought.

"Yes, actually for interrupting us in the middle of the battle for Helm's Deep you could bring us a video projector, you know one that is enchanted to not need any power source!? Oh, and some popcorn, popcorn would also be nice," Harry now smiled broadly.

Crowley chuckled while shaking his head. "Movie nights with Lucifer? Very well, you'll get what you want but don't you need some real food?"

"No, I have enough food in the bag I always carry with me to last me at least a week, so no worry there."

"Okay, but for hell's sake, please keep him away from things like South Park."

"Do I want to know how you know about that?"

"Now I'm intrigued, what is South Park?" Lucifer suddenly asked from behind Harry, she had wondered what took Harry so long hence why she came over to look whether everything was alright.

"A comic series I'm definitely not going to show you," Harry instantly replied while Crowley looked horrified.

Lucifer rose an eyebrow but didn't say anything further to that. "So Crowley, what did you want?"
She instead questioned the demon.

"Nothing important and it seems the matter has resolved itself. I'm off then to get you the projector, and you two behave...I don't want to come back and find one of you dead or doing...worse," Crowley admonished them.

"What should we do?" Harry asked confused.

"Harry, you're thirteen if not officially but don't think that I don't know what boys your age get up to," he chuckled.

It seemed that Harry didn't get the hint at first, but soon his face lit up.

"Oh...OH...no I think Lucifer is safe from me in that regard," he retorted, his face a bright red. "Now stop it!"

That made Crowley laugh. "Your face right now was very well worth it."

"Get me that projector before I decide that pranking you is also very well worth it," Harry growled in return.

"Okay, okay, I'm off!"

With that Crowley left the two to their movie. It took him about two hours to return with the projector and enough popcorn to last them a few days including the needed tools to make it. All in all, it made Harry extremely happy and less inclined to tamper with the contracts to the relief of the demon.

Harry and Lucifer, on the other hand, used the time they had to watch movies and talk about books and other things they were interested in. So, it was no wonder that Harry told her that he was quite good at healing magic, which surprised Lucifer. Lucifer promptly took it upon herself to teach Harry a spell or two, and if that delayed Harry's time until he recovered enough for an attempt to leave, neither of them complained.

Lucifer had to admit, that she liked Harry's company and she wasn't sure whether she preferred if Harry would successfully leave or not. She didn't want to lose the first tentative friendship she developed for a long time now. On the other hand, she knew that Harry's friends would be worried and she didn't want to imagine what would happen if Harry wasn't able to get out. Then there was also the point, that the seals were breaking and her freedom in reach, not to mention that Harry had invited her to join him in Hogwarts. That actually made the thought of him leaving her in the cage much more bearable.

What she wasn't prepared for though was Harry's question when he finally recuperated enough to attempt to leave.

"Can't I take you with me?" He asked while getting ready to leave – he had spread his things all over the place over the week he now stayed with Lucifer.

"Unfortunately not. It took everything out of you for you alone to get in here and getting out won't be any better. Now imagine having to drag someone with you, you'd probably kill yourself with only trying. That isn't even putting into consideration that the cage was designed for me especially," Lucifer said with a sad expression before she smiled slightly. "But thank you for the offer, and I doubt that I'll be in here for much longer. I've survived until now, I'll survive until the seals are broken."
Harry smiled wistfully at her but nodded, Lucifer had a point, while he walked over to the laptop to put it in his bag when his face lit up.

"I have an idea," he told her with a broad grin. "Though I don't know whether it will work with the time speed difference."

"What have you thought of?" Lucifer asked curiously.

"You know there are chat programs that connect different computers and therefore people with each other. I don't know whether a video call would work, but we could at least write with each other. The only thing I'd have to do is leaving the laptop with you, but once I have a new one I'll add you to my friend list, and we can chat. Not to mention that you can view a few more movies if you want to or browse the internet for other things," Harry explained to her.

"You're right, that is ingenious actually. I have to admit that humanity has developed a few very fascinating things while I was locked away and I can't wait to see what else they came up with," Lucifer mused.

Harry chuckled lowly, who would have thought that Lucifer would begin to like humanity only because he accidentally landed in his cage.

"Yep, we're not all just crap," Harry grinned broadly.

"No, you aren't," she conceded with a smile

"Well, wish me good luck, and I hope to see you again when you're out."

"Good luck and write me, or I might come after you once I'm out," Lucifer replied mock threateningly.

Harry nodded and with a last smile at the archangel turned girl he prepared for the act he would have to play once faced with his friends again, took a deep breath and teleported away, leaving a sad Lucifer behind who instantly turned towards the laptop to distract herself. She never thought that she would feel lonely in the cage until she met Harry Potter.

Not much longer!

When Harry opened his eyes again – he had no idea when he closed them, to begin with – he saw that he was standing in the middle of Diagon Alley precisely at the same spot he left a week ago. Okay, it was a week for him but probably only an hour or so for everyone else, but that was mere semantics.

Harry just wanted to turn around to see where everyone went off to when suddenly a body slammed into him from behind and embraced him in a bone-crushing hug.

"Harry, we were so worried," said person muttered into his back, identifying herself as Hermione.

Harry tried to turn around in her embrace to be able to look at her but quickly gave up because she didn't budge one inch.
"Hermione, nothing happened. I'm alright, and now I'm back," he told her in a soothing tone and, did he hear her sobbing? At least he didn't faint as he had when he arrived in the cage even if he felt drained.

"Nothing happened? NOTHING HAPPENED?!" Hermione began to shout. "You ended up in Lucifer's cage, this is not nothing! Heaven knows what could have happened to you there."

Right at that moment, two other arms looped around him. "Hermione’s right, that was incredibly stupid of you. What were you thinking?" Loki asked worriedly but much calmer than Hermione.

One after another the others also came into view, and Harry could see how worried they all were, his mother even had tears flowing down her cheeks.

"As if I intended to end up there," he huffed. "I hadn't even aimed for Hell. Don't ask me how or why I landed there and it wasn't as if I had much choice."

"We're just glad that you managed to get out again, we already planned for you not getting out again," Sirius spoke up with a small smile.

"Never give us such a heart attack again, okay kiddo?" Loki added.

"I try not to, that is all I can promise," Harry replied.

James snickered lowly. "With how you attract trouble it is probably all we can ask for. Now, I think we're still missing the books, and I think Hermione will be less inclined to kill you for your stunt if you get her something nice to read."

Harry laughed. "That is a fair price I think," he said before he winced. "I need a new laptop. Lo, is there any chance that we can throw in a quick trip to America before school starts?"

Loki though looked confused. "What happened to the one I got you?"

"Those thrice damned wards on the cage fried it...."

The pagan god rose an eyebrow but nodded in the end. "We still have a week before school starts back up so enough time to get you a new one and maybe the others want to accompany us?" He asked towards Hermione, Neville and the twins, knowing very well that Sam surely would come with them if only to get a few new books on obscure magic.

“I’d have to ask my parents but besides that…why not,” Hermione answered, still clinging to Harry’s arm as if he’d vanish any second.

“My parents probably won’t say no to anything you’d suggest,” Neville joked.

“You should ask them nonetheless,” Loki scolded him.

“Of course,” Neville replied in a manner that clearly asked the pagan whether he thought him stupid.

“With that settled, let’s get some books,” Hermione exclaimed excitedly, finally letting go of Harry.

“At least that idiot Lockhart his gone,” Loki muttered but followed the girl.

Together they walked into Flourish & Blotts to get the last items on their list, which included the entire stack of books from a certain blond ponce.
It took Harry until the evening of that day until he remembered that yes, he had a smartphone and yes, messenger apps work on that damned thing.

They had returned to Potter manor after they finished their shopping trip where they had dinner before Harry excused himself, his exhaustion slowly taking over. So, he retired to the room he got assigned – his room...his very own place! – and began to rummage in his bag for his night clothes when his phone fell out. He blinked a few times before he hit his forehead with his flat hand. How could he have forgotten about that?

Once he stopped cursing under his breath for his obliviousness, he grabbed the phone, jumped on his bed and quickly installed the needed app. When he opened the app, he already saw the waiting friendship request – he gave Lucifer the alias she would find him under before he left – and had to snort. The fallen girl, how unimaginative. Anyway, he had an archangel to chat with and so he quickly typed in a greeting before putting the phone aside for a moment to get dressed for bed. A quick trip to the bathroom later and he already had an answer waiting.

“Took you long enough!” was the retort.

Harry could only snort at the apparent impatience. “Already missing me?”

“You wish....”

“Maybe!” Harry typed with a broad grin.

It seemed to Harry that Lucifer didn’t know how to react to that since she changed the topic.

“What took you so long?” was the question.

With that, Harry sat down and told her about what happened once he was back in the alley and whatever else happened afterwards. They talked for some time when a knock echoed through the room. The door opened to reveal Loki who looked worriedly over to Harry.

“Hey, everything alright?” he asked Harry while walking over to Harry.

Harry on the other hand quickly told Lucifer that he had a visitor before he placed the phone on the bed next to him. Loki rose an eyebrow when he saw that.

“So, your laptop got fried by the wards on the cage, but your phone is still working?” he asked in disbelief.

Oops! Harry looked at Loki sheepishly for being caught with the lie.

“Yeah, actually...” he said while looking at his hands in his lap. “I didn’t want to admit it earlier not to worry you even more, but it was Lucifer who destroyed the laptop when I annoyed him too much with it.”
Harry looked up with an apologetic smile.

“You annoyed Lucifer?” Loki asked incredulously.

“Hey, I was in that damned cage for over a week, I was bored!” Harry retorted.

“You… I don’t know what to say,” Loki said while throwing his arms up in bewilderment. “I’m just glad that you’re alright. You are alright, aren’t you? Don’t lie to me!”

“I am alright, Loki. Lucifer didn’t touch me or do anything to me, he just smashed my laptop. Looks like he isn’t a fan of brass music,” Harry told him with a grin, no actually he found out that Lucifer was more the classic music type and surprisingly Medieval Rock though Harry had to admit that it was somewhat soothing.

That made Loki laugh. “Only you would even think about annoying Lucifer with such music. However, I suggest you sleep soon you look exhausted.”

Right at that moment, the mobile vibrated, and the display showed a new message. Before Harry could do anything, Loki had snatched the phone and was reading the message. Harry pouted but didn’t say anything, knowing very well that it would be futile to try and stop Loki and since they hadn’t written about anything that would give away the identity of the person who was corresponding with Harry it wasn’t as if there was any reason to try.

“Girlfriend?” Loki asked with a mischievous grin.

“Not in the way you think!” Harry exclaimed and embarrassedly tried to get his phone back but to no avail.

With horror, he watched how Loki wrote something and sent the message.

“You hurt Harry and you’ll wish that I never find you!” Loki wrote.

It took a moment, but soon the reply showed. “Who are you?”

“Name’s Loki and Harry’s under my protection so consider this my one and only warning,” Loki typed away.

“Should I feel threatened?”

Loki laughed upon that and threw the mobile to Harry who swiftly caught it.

“I like her,” he told the boy with a snicker.

Harry quickly checked what they had written and sighed in relief when he saw that it was only Loki’s protectiveness showing. That was also what he wrote Lucifer.

“Anyway, I just came to check on you, but now I leave you to get some sleep,” Loki said while ruffling Harry’s hair much to the boy’s disgruntlement before he left the room.

However, Loki was right. While he already had been exhausted at the end of dinner, he now was nearly falling asleep where he sat and so after telling Lucifer that he would go to sleep, he did just that and was out cold the second his head hit the pillow.
The last week of the holidays was spent with an impromptu trip to America after Neville and Hermione had asked for permission, the twins, unfortunately, having been grounded for sneaking off. Harry got himself a new laptop, well more like a tablet with a keyboard, and when Hermione learned that yes those would also work in Hogwarts – why she hadn’t realized that until now was anyone’s guess since Harry hadn’t really hidden his – she promptly wanted one too, so much better for keeping one’s notes organized.

In the evenings Harry would get out his new tablet and write with Lucifer until he was so tired that he was nearly falling asleep over their conversation. One might wonder how they could fill so much time with simply writing with each other and how they had so many topics to talk about, but it was surprisingly easy. They spoke of magic, books, movies…whatever struck their fancy at that moment and it never got boring.

Lucifer had to admit that humanity developed so many fascinating things that she doubted it would become boring anytime soon, especially since she got access to the internet. Sure, she had read books before that the demons brought her but with the internet she had so much more information she could read up on that, even with the higher speed of time in the cage, she wouldn’t be able to read it all. Science and Physics in especially were so complex that it took all her attention as not to miss anything and it made her even more surprised that humanity – even if they were only just beginning – understood the laws of the universe though they put it into a different language than she was used to. She also talked with Harry about it, and while the boy didn’t understand much of the maths behind it, he had a surprisingly good grasp of the concepts. So no, talking with Harry never got boring.

However, now Neville, Sam, Hermione, Harry and Loki were sitting in a compartment of the Hogwarts Express, eagerly awaiting the new school year and whatever mischief it would bring while Puck was sitting on the racks and munching away on some berries, the Snitch lazily hovering next to him. Hedwig had been staying with Fawkes and Michael since they went to Amerika the last week neither wanting to fly there nor being teleported, so she was still at Hogwarts. The twins in the meantime had wandered off to visit their year mates whom they haven’t seen all summer.

It was now about fifteen minutes ago that they had said goodbye to their families and friends – surprisingly even Dean, Alastair and Mary had come, though maybe not so surprising since Sam was leaving for Hogwarts as well – and about five minutes since they left the train station. They were talking about what they expected to learn this year when a confident knock pulled them from their conversation and towards the door which revealed a young girl – probably a year below them – with hair even blonder than Malfoy’s, wearing a bright blue dress and a bottle cap necklace. She had silvery eyes that seemed unfocused and was carrying a magazine.

“Hey, is this the Fun Vee? I was told I would find it here,” she said in a soft dreamy tone.

Everyone except Harry stared at her as if she lost it. Harry, on the other hand, started to laugh uproariously once he fully progressed the question.

“Most certainly,” he finally said when he calmed down again. “Leave morals and rules at the door, and you’re welcome to join us!”

Now it was Harry whom everyone was looking at, questioning his already barely existing sanity.

“What?” Harry asked when he saw that. “Anyone who can aptly quote a good movie and especially
Iron Man is alright in my eyes.”

“When did you watch Iron Man? Without me!” Loki growled.

“With Fenrir when you were off to hell knows where,” Harry huffed.

“A nice movie and besides, morality is an illusionary construct created by society and what they think is right or wrong. Rules and laws are made to enforce those morals,” the girl replied with a soft smile. “That doesn’t mean that we should kill each other though, that would really be a bad idea and such a waste of fun.”

That made Loki laugh. “You’re right, I like her!” he brought out between bouts of laughter.

“Thank you. My name is Luna Lovegood,” she told them with a bright smile while sitting down on the floor in front of the now closed door. “It is nice to see that the Wrackspurts are leaving you all alone, but with how positive you are it is no wonder.”

“What are Wrackspurts?” Hermione asked curiously. “I never heard of them.”

“Oh, they are invisible and tend to fly in people’s ears and make their brains go all fuzzy. Nasty little buggers but positive thinking keeps them away.”

Hermione blinked a few times but didn’t comment any further.

“So you’re a first year?” Harry asked, receiving a nod from Luna. “What house do you want to go to?”

Luna seemed to think about that for a moment while Puck swung down from the rack, swiftly landed in her lap and offered her a few of his berries.

“Thank you,” she told the Demiguise before popping the berries in her mouth. “They are delicious.”

Harry, on the other hand, was surprised over Puck’s behaviour. Until now the Demiguise only deemed Loki and Fenrir beside him worthy enough to acknowledge them not to mention going anywhere near them.

“Puck seems to like you,” he said. “Normally he doesn’t go near anyone.”

Luna hummed lowly. “Originally, I wanted to go to Ravenclaw,” she suddenly confessed ignoring everything that just happened much to the other’s confusion. “But then I was told that it is full of Nargles and that Gryffindor is mostly protected from them, so I’m thinking about joining you in your house.”

“Okay, now you lost me completely, what are Nargles?” Hermione questioned confused.

“Naughty creatures, they steal your things and hide them, but up to now I always got my things back. They also tend to call me Loony and other nasty names,” Luna said with a shrug.

“I can’t imagine why,” Hermione muttered under her breath but Harry, who sat next to her, heard her nonetheless.

“Hermione!” he exclaimed in shock over what his friend just said, he would never have imagined that Hermione would pick on someone even if that someone was a bit strange.

“No, she’s right,” Loki added only to earn himself an even more shocked looked mixed with a bit of betrayal from Harry and Sam while Neville cocked his head in curiosity, that was until he continued
with his thought. “But…there is more to it, isn’t it?”

Luna and Loki looked at each other for a long moment, Loki contemplatively while Luna just smiled.

“You’re a seer, aren’t you?” Loki suddenly asked, while Luna’s smile only broadened in reply. “It makes sense,” he continued to explain. “True seers tend to hide their ability because more often than not they are chased for their ability, you know…the personal gain of having a seer on your side. Dear Luna here just chose a bit of lunacy combined with strange creatures no one ever heard of. That way everyone thinks she’s a bit crazy and is less likely to guess the real reason. Take the Nargles for example…to me it sounds they represent bullies.”

“May that be as it is, that doesn’t give you the right to be degrading to anyone, Hermione, only because they are different to the norm,” Harry now rounded on Hermione who gasped in shock over the seriousness in her friend’s voice. “Or do you want to call me a freak too only because I’m not your average wizard?”

Harry had been called freak by his relatives for most of his life. He hated it equally as he despised it when his friends did it to someone else. He knew how it was to be degraded for something he had no power over, and he certainly did not want to impose that feeling on someone else, no matter whether said person chose to be different or just was different.

Hermione, on the other hand, could only gape at Harry not knowing what to say to that. That was when she registered what she had done. Tears began to well in her eyes. She knew enough about Harry’s past to know how much it must have hurt. Merlin, she hadn’t been treated any different at school before she had learned that she was a witch and went to Hogwarts and now she’d done the same thing, she felt horrible for it.

“I…I didn’t…I’m… I’m sorry Luna,” she tearfully brought out. “I…I don’t know…why I said that.”

Harry looked at her shocked and feeling a bit guilty, he had wanted to make her think about what she said, not making her cry. So he did the first thing that came to his mind and pulled her into a hug.

“I’m sorry, I shouldn’t have been so harsh. It’s just…,” Harry shrugged helplessly.

“It is a sore spot, I know,” Hermione replied. “I know how it is to be shunned for something that is out of your control. That actually makes this all that worse. I hated them for doing it to me, and now I’m doing it to someone else.”

“Then it’s a good thing that you have friends to remind you of it, even if they are sometimes not the most sensitive about it,” Neville said with a small glare at Harry that made him look down sheepishly.

“Thank you,” she said with a tentative smile, whipping her tears away before she turned to Luna. “I’m really sorry, and I hope you can forgive me for my thoughtless comment.”

Luna smiled serenely at her. “Why should I throw away something that will become a great friendship because of one thoughtlessness I even provoked?”

Hermione’s smile broadened. “You’ll fit right in with us. One-part crazy, one part funny and definitely not boring.”

“Do you want to say with that, that I’m crazy?” Harry asked her in a hurt tone, but the grin betrayed him.
“You, my dear Harry, I would never call a *freak* as you dared me to earlier but crazy is something entirely different,” Hermione retorted while poking him in the chest. “The banner on the White House that has yet to come off, the MACUSA…shall I go on?”

“I very much resent that,” he exclaimed. “I’m delightfully creative! Do you know what really *is* crazy? The Americans actually started a petition for Loki to become their President.”

“You’re joking!” Loki said with horror. “You have to! Me and President…NEVER!”

“Never say never,” Luna piped in with a hum only to receive a look of utter and complete horror from Loki that made her laugh. “Calm down, I can appease you…this isn’t a fate that will befall you.”

“Oh, thank you, that wouldn’t have ended well for everyone involved,” Loki sighed in relief.

“You couldn’t be any worse than the current one,” Harry mused. “I don’t know whether it is the blond hair colour – present company excepted – that makes people act like a four-year-old whose candy was stolen, but I seriously doubt that anyone could be worse.”

That brought an idea for Harry. He watched Loki contemplatively, who was currently sucking on a lollipop before snatching it away. Loki instantly narrowed his eyes on Harry and began to hex him until he looked like a rainbow.

“Oh, I have to correct myself,” Harry said while laughing. “You *would* be worse! You wouldn’t just try to build a fence to keep the hypothetical offenders out you would outright hex them.”

“You should have known better,” Sam said amused.

“Hey, I was proving a point here. At least it was worth it, I now have a lollipop.”

Harry was about to pop it into his mouth when it vanished from between his fingers and reappeared in Loki’s hand who stuck out his tongue towards him. He took that as his cue to hex Loki back before snatching the lollipop again. They continued their little battle for a few minutes until the lollipop suddenly vanished and didn’t appear in either of their hands. Confused they looked at each other wondering where the candy had disappeared to when they heard a content hum and someone noisily sucking on something. Both heads snapped towards the noise only to find Luna sitting there and contently sucking the lollipop.

“You know when two people quarrel, a third rejoices,” she said smugly.

“Definitely fitting in here,” Sam countered in amusement which made them all laugh.

“I’ll call you Little Loony Luna from now on,” Harry fondly said with a broad grin.

Luna seemed to think this through before she nodded with a smile. “I like the sound of that.”

After that, they fell into a comfortable conversation. That was until someone knocked on the door and it was not the trolley woman.
Chapter 45: Draco Dormiens Nunquam Titillandus

Everyone looked up when the knock echoed through their compartment, to see who would disturb them other than the trolley lady who wasn’t due for another hour or so. When the compartment door opened it revealed a very familiar blond Slytherin though surprisingly without his goons.

“Malfoy?” Harry asked surprised. “What do you want?”

“Uhm,” the blond began a bit intimidated, knowing only too well that one wrong word would get him pranked before the year even began. “Could I perhaps talk to you, Harry? Alone?”

Harry blinked a few times in surprise especially since the blond used his given name and not a simple snarked “Potter”. However, in the end, he nodded wanting to know what Draco wanted. Yes, curiosity might kill the cat, but Harry couldn’t help himself, he was intrigued why Draco would willingly come to their compartment in full knowledge that he might get pranked for disturbing them.

“Sure, why not.”

He stood up and followed the other boy out of the compartment and down to another empty one. Harry wasn’t worried in the slightest, what could Draco do to him in the worst case? Trying to stare him to death? No, compared to all the other threats out there, and who were hell-bent to get him to do their bidding, Draco was like a kitten, so not dangerous at all.

“What do you want?” Harry asked while flopping ungracefully down on the seat before placing his legs over the others so that he was with his back to the door and facing the window. Though at the moment he was looking at Draco expectantly.

“I wanted to know whether it is true,” Draco stated while gracefully sitting down opposite of Harry.

“Whether what is true?” There were so many things that would fit the question behind that statement that Harry didn’t know what Draco meant.

“What my father said about you making a deal with a demon,” Draco deadpanned.

“Oh that, yes that is true though I thought that it was obvious from my reaction,” Harry replied with a shrug.

“I…I couldn’t believe it. Actually, I still have a hard time to believe that you really did that. Do you have an idea what such a deal entails? You damned yourself to eternal torment for what? Getting your parents back? Is that really worth it?” Draco exclaimed.

That however equally shocked and surprised Harry, was Draco worried about him? It sure sounded like it.

“And here I would have thought that someone from a dark family would be less…fearful towards it,”
Harry said with a snicker. “However, it is quite questionable what is worse…what Hell can do to me or what I can do to Hell.”

“What you can do to hell?” Draco rose one of his finely sculpted eyebrows.

“Crowley was quite willing to do what I wanted him to do after I pointed out that his contracts needed a make-over,” Harry now grinned broadly.

“Crowley as in king of the Crossroad-demons? No, no, wait, don’t answer that…I don’t want to know…you’re probably the most insane person on this planet. There is a reason for why making a deal is deemed the darkest of all arts. No witch or wizard that has some self-respect would so much as think about making a deal with a demon. Merlin, they are the reason for why we have such a bad reputation with the muggles,” he shook his head in disbelief.

“That as it happens just shows how insane Voldemort was,” Harry mused.

Draco flinched at the name but now looked confused.

“What has the Dark Lord to do with that?” he asked.

“What don’t tell me you don’t know,” Harry retorted but only received an even more confused look. “You really don’t know…huh, that is a surprise. Voldemort aka Tom Riddle aka the Dark Lord or however else you want to call him also made a deal with a demon before he came up with the oh so great idea of splitting his soul to evade hell.”

“You want to tell me that the Dark Lord not only made a deal but also then created Horcruxes to get out of it?” Draco’s face was now one of utter disbelief though the thought stirred something in his memories. “You would know that how? Not that I believe you.”

“First, I’m surprised that you know what a Horcrux is….”

“I love to read, and our library is quite extensive,” Draco said with a smirk. “Admittedly it isn’t much that I know, just what they are and how to recognise one.”

“Oh…well, second, I know it because that idiot is part of my deal, I get what I want for delivering him where he belongs,” Harry continued, but it seemed that Draco was lost in thought.

“Oh…OH…oh no, this is bad, really bad,” he began to mutter his face contorted in a deep frown.

“What?” Harry suddenly sat straight because he didn’t know what to think about Draco’s behaviour. “What’s wrong?”

“Say, did my house-elf Dobby reach you?” Draco asked, his eyes wider than usual and a hint of panic in them.

“A house-elf? No, when did you send him to me?” It was now upon Harry to look confused, why would a house-elf make Draco that panicky?

“As soon as I returned home that day we met in Diagon Alley, he should have reached you…I wonder where that little blighter went off to,” Draco distractedly answered with a certain amount of worry in his voice.

“That would explain why he couldn’t reach me…uhm…could you perhaps try and call him? I have a bad feeling about that,” Harry sheepishly admitted, if his assumption were correct then they would be in for a surprise.
Draco didn’t know what to think about that but nonetheless called for the house-elf. It took a few moments before said elf stood before them wearing a fitting leather tunic that was cut to cover him but allowed for maximum agility. The elf also had a wicked looking knife stuck in the belt that held the tunic, and he didn’t look thrilled to be called by Draco.

“Master Draco, how can Dobby be of help?” the elf asked with a surprised look before he looked down at the floor. “Dobby is afraid that he couldn’t finish its task yet.”

“D-Dobby?” Draco stammered, wondering whether this really was the same elf that he knew since he was a baby and that he was used to seeing in a pillowcase and less…confident. “What happened to you?”

Harry, on the other hand, looked sheepish. “Well, that could be my fault…well…partly…actually not really but…yeah…,” he didn’t know how to explain it.

“Your fault?” Draco asked looking back and forth between the elf and Harry.

In the meantime, Dobby had turned around and suddenly began to squeal like a fanboy.

“Harry Potter!” he said in a high-pitched voice with so much reverence in the voice that Harry suddenly had the urge to back away from the elf who now began to ramble about how great he was.

“Okay, might someone please explain to me what just happened?” Draco asked still a bit panicky not that he would ever admit it.

Harry took a deep breath. “Maybe I should, but only if you Dobby, please sit down there and stop worshipping me as if I’m some god,” he wearily watched the elf as it sat down next to Draco but still looked at him as if he was Merlin reincarnated. “Better…Draco, the thing is that shortly after you and your dad left, I was ambushed by Zachariah…an angel hell-bent on forcing me to do his bidding. Long story short he also wants Riddle’s soul. When he ambushed me, I teleported away, and I don’t know how, I don’t know why…well, let’s just say I landed somewhere no one…and I mean absolutely no one is supposed to get into. That place is located in hell. I have the suspicion that Dobby must have felt the direction I left into, tried to follow me, and he began to look for me in hell.”

“Is what Harry just said right?” Draco asked Dobby.

“Yes, Master Draco, Dobby was searching everywhere for Harry Potter, but he wasn’t able to find him,” Dobby answered with his head hanging, tears welling in his eyes and he looked a bit fearful. “Dobby has failed Master Draco.”

“Don’t worry, you did everything you could, and I’m just glad that you’re back,” Draco said, his relief obvious. Dobby had been his personal elf since he was a baby and the one being he spent the most time with, so it had worried him greatly when he hadn’t returned. “I have to admit that I like what you’re wearing but please…please don’t let my father see it, okay?”

Harry followed that entire thing with unconcealed interest. Draco behaved so differently from the aloft composure he usually showed when they met, he was seriously concerned about the wellbeing of his elf. Not only that but also the entire conversation he had with the blond, it was as if he wanted something big from him but didn’t know how to ask and now tried to play nice as not to put him off before he could ask. All of this was so out of Draco’s character that Harry was itching to directly question him, but he knew that Draco was a Slytherin and it was doubtful that blunt questioning would get him anywhere.
“Your father?” Harry piped in.

Draco looked at him for a long moment, obviously contemplating what to say when he sighed deeply.

“My father, he was a staunch follower of the Dark Lord, did you know that?” he asked, but Harry only shook his head. “Not only that he was also his right hand. He believed everything that the Dark Lord preached, that everyone and everything not a pureblood is beneath us. Would my father learn about what I asked Dobby to do…he would not only kill Dobby but severely punish me. Do you know what awaits me once I reach maturity?”

Again, Harry shook his head.

“I would be expected to follow in his steps and bow down to…to that Riddle, but I don’t want to,” Draco began to ramble, to Harry it seemed that suddenly the dam had broken and now everything that worried the blond poured out. “I don’t want to. Sure, nearly everyone you’d ask in Slytherin would tell you how great it is to serve him…what an honour. But is it really? Being tortured to the brink of insanity when you fail or for no apparent reason at all, is that really worth it? My mother also isn’t happy about it but what is she supposed to do? If she tries to get away from my father she’d not only disgrace the Malfoy family but also the Black family, she’d be left without anywhere to go…. There is no way out of it….”

Harry attentively listened to Draco’s rambling, and yes it was rambling, even if the blond would never admit it. It seemed to him that all this was something that had been on Draco’s mind for a long time now, but he just never had anyone to talk about it. His mother might have listened, but he certainly couldn’t talk about it at home where he had to fear to be overheard or anywhere else for that matter. That, on the other hand, his friends at Slytherin indeed were a bad choice for that kind of topic went without saying. However, the last part let him sit up a bit straighter.

“Black you said? My godfather is a Black, say who is the current Head of the House of Black?” he asked when it came apparent that Draco was finished for now.

“Your godfather Sirius Black is my mother’s cousin. Since he is the oldest living male Black, he is currently the Head of the House of Black. The next in line actually would be you even with you being further away from the Black family line than me but if I’m not mistaken your godfather named you his heir,” Draco explained surprised that Harry didn’t already know all of that.

“Wait…I’m a Black?!?” Harry exclaimed.

“You didn’t know?” the blond asked stunned. “Your grandmother was Dorea Black, she married Charlus Potter. James Potter is her son. We’re third cousins once removed.”

Harry slumped back in his seat in shock and surprise and didn’t seem to move for a few minutes obviously thinking through what he just learned. The longer he thought about everything, the more determined his face became. In the end, he smirked in a way that didn’t speak of anything good for the receiving end.

“You are family, and that is all I need to know,” he finally said while looking Draco straight into the eyes, green eyes meeting mercury silver and Harry knew that it was the right choice to make. “What if you send Dobby to my family for now? I write a letter to my parents to send with him that would explain everything so that they know what is going on. Dobby would be safe there and out of your father’s reach. You should also write a letter to your mother, tell her that if she really wants a way out of her marriage that she should contact Sirius, I don’t doubt that he’d love to help her if only to pull one over your father. I might even get the goblins in on that…yes that would be a good idea, they are
extremely fierce, and it is unlikely that they like your father much.”

“You…you want to help me?” Draco questioned in utter disbelief. “Why? Why help me, my mother and Dobby?”

“You mean besides the fact that we will hit one of Riddle’s followers with it?” Harry replied with a grin. “Your father might have evaded prison after the war, but you know there are things far worse than prison and his punishment for walking over everyone else is long overdue.”

Not that he would tell Harry that but when the other boy had smirked a few moments prior, Draco had mentally berated himself for showing weakness in front of him, but he would never have thought that it was directed at his father Lucius and that Harry would try and help him. Any Slytherin would have killed for such an opportunity, but Harry instead gave the prime example of a Hufflepuff. However, he had to admit that the other boy’s plans were very cunning and Slytherin in nature. If he would be honest, this entire thing was nothing but Slytherin…with a bit of Hufflepuff…okay a lot of Hufflepuff as Harry’s next statement would show.

“As I said, you are family and family is supposed to help each other. I know how it is, wanting to get away from the family you’re forced to live with without any way of escape, my life before Hogwarts hadn’t been any different in that regard. Loki was my help, and now I want to help you.”

Draco snickered lowly. “I don’t know whether you’re more Slytherin or more Hufflepuff.”

Harry on the other hand just shrugged. “The hat said that I’m equally fitted for all the houses and the only reason for why I landed in Gryffindor was because Loki threatened the hat.”

Now Draco outright laughed. “Why doesn’t that surprise me?”

They fell into a comfortable silence for a few minutes when Harry remembered something.

“Earlier you said something about something being really bad, what was it? What was the reason that you sent Dobby after me?”

The others were sitting in their compartment wondering what took Harry so long. They had left over an hour ago, and they began to worry whether or not Harry managed to get into trouble…again. The only consoling thing was that Loki could assure them that Harry had not teleported away or that Zachariah got to him. So, they sat there silently except for Luna who began to read her magazine while humming lowly.

That was until suddenly the door opened and she fell backwards because she had leaned against it. Looking up at Harry from the floor she smiled broadly.

“Hey Harry, the others were worried that Draco hexed you. You didn’t hex him, did you Draco?” she asked the blond that stood right next to Harry.

“No, I didn’t hex him, and you are?” Draco replied, raising an eyebrow.

“That is our dear Luna, she starts Hogwarts this year,” Harry explained while he helped the girl up
before he stepped around her and sat down on his place.

It would have gotten too full in the small compartment, had Loki not expanded it with a snap. So now there was enough space for Draco to sit down between Hermione and Harry.

"I must say that you have strange friends," Draco said, comfortably leaning back. Harry looked at him with a risen eyebrow, so he elaborated that. "Strange not in the sense of how your friends are but who your friends are. You must be the only one who doesn't care who or what your friends are."

"Oh yeah, we already established that I'm crazy," Harry laughed. "Isn't that right Hermione?"

"Absolutely, but...what are you doing here, Malfoy?" She replied. "Not that we're not glad that you're here or something...just wondering."

Draco looked at her haughtily while Harry began to laugh over how his friend went out of her way to not anger him again.

"Hermione, calm down! I already said I'm sorry and you don't have to be overly nice to everyone in fear of me, just be yourself," he shook his head. "But she's right, there is a reason for why he's here. He has to tell you something of uttermost importance. Draco...."

"While I have no idea where it is at the moment, I know how one of Riddle's Horcruxes looks like," the blond simply stated.
"While I have no idea where it is at the moment, I know how one of Riddle's Horcruxes looks like," the blond simply stated.

“Okay, not to interrupt you or something,” Hermione began confusedly. “But what is a Horcrux?”

Loki chuckled lowly. “It is no wonder that you have never heard of them, they are nothing a sane person would even contemplate making, not to mention actually going through with it,” he explained. “In short, when you make a Horcrux you split your soul into half and place one of the two pieces in an object. That way you’re supposed to become immortal because a Reaper can only send a whole soul on their way to either heaven or hell. However, said immortality is rather short-lived because it severely pisses off heaven and hell, not to mention Death. It is seen as a deed that is so despised by everyone that in most of the cases the person who committed it is directly sent to purgatory and let’s just say that it isn’t a nice place, even worse than hell. Riddle is a bit of an exception for it because Hell first wants to show him what they think of him trying to get out of his contract.”

“So, Riddle…You-Know-Who is still alive because he made one of those Horcruxes?” Hermione asked shocked.

Loki looked at Harry not sure how much to tell her, but Harry only nodded, not wanting to keep any secrets from his friends.

“Not only one,” Loki finally said. “As far as I can tell he made at least five. Had he only made one he would already have been dealt with, but with more, it is getting complicated especially since he managed to hide them from everyone. That is also the reason for why Zachariah so adamantly tries to get to Harry. As far as I know, Raphael ordered him to get Riddle’s soul pieces because he needed help from a few demons who demanded the complete soul as payment. Zachariah, however, didn’t want to do the deed himself because he can’t find them and currently is occupied with getting Lucifer out of his cage. Therefore, he forged a prophecy to bind a human to get him what he wants, namely Harry.”

“This is also where my contract with Crowley, the demon I made it with, comes into play. You see he also wants Riddle’s soul very badly to climb the ladder in hell and since I needed a cover-up for how my parents were resurrected, we came to the agreement that he would pretend that he’d been the one and I’ll deliver Riddle’s soul to him. We both get what we want, and I don’t have to fear being thrown into hell after ten years,” Harry added.

“Let me see if I got the entire thing right,” Neville muttered. “You now have to search for Riddle’s soul pieces, that are untraceable and could be literally anywhere because you needed a cover-up? How were your parents brought back if not through the contract?”

“Uhm, we actually have no idea how exactly they are alive again,” Harry sheepishly admitted only to receive a deadpanned look from Neville. “Okay, okay, I teleported out of heaven with them, and
they were alive again…body and all inclusive.”

“Okay, I’m not going to question how you even managed to get into heaven,” Draco began upon which Harry simply pointed at Loki. “But what the heck? I don’t know how many people over the ages tried to find a way to revive the dead and you just like that teleported out of heaven with your parents, giving them bodies in the process which is bloody impossible!”

Harry amusedly watched Draco rant about the impossibility of him teleporting someone out of heaven until he couldn’t stop himself and began to laugh.

“You know it is also thought to be impossible to enter Lucifer’s cage, and despite that, I took a week-long vacation there,” he said once he cooled down again.

“You’re joking, right?” Draco asked in shocked disbelief.

“Nope,” Harry said popping the ‘p’. “You remember? Zachariah that dick with wings ambushed me? The reason for why Dobby couldn’t reach me? Well, I was sitting in Lucifer’s cage at that time.”

Draco blinked a few times. “Okay, it is official. You’re the craziest person on this planet.”

“No objection there,” Harry retorted with a grin.

“That doesn’t solve the problem that you have to find untraceable soul pieces that could be disguised as literally anything,” Neville spoke up.

Draco, on the other hand, looked thoughtful. “No, he has not to,” he finally stated. “Listen to the wording, he has to deliver the soul not to find it.”

“To be able to deliver it he would have to find it first,” Neville retorted.

“Not necessarily, anyone could find it for him as long as he delivers the soul himself,” Draco said with a shake of his head. “That would actually explain why uncle Sev is asking around for things that once belonged to the Dark Lord.”

“And you’re alright with all that, Harry?” Hermione asked concerned.

Harry sighed. “Hermione, it is either that or having to fear that he suddenly springs out of the woodworks and tries to kill me. I mean he already tried once last year.”

“What?” came the simultaneous question from Neville, Hermione and Sam.

“You haven’t been with us yet at that time, Sam, but last year during the first Quidditch match Quirrell cursed my broom in an attempt to kill me. It later turned out that he had been possessed by Riddle’s main soul piece.”

Suddenly Harry had his arms full of a crying Hermione.

“Oh Harry, why didn’t you tell us earlier? I could have tried to find a way to locate them…or at least what they could be…or…,” she mumbled in his shoulder.

“Hey Hermione, it is okay. I didn’t tell you because I didn’t want to burden you with this, I have enough people who help me with this already and it isn’t something you should worry about. The only reason for why I told you now is because Draco informed me that it is highly likely that another of Riddle’s soul pieces has found its way to Hogwarts this year and I wanted to warn you. I don’t
want you to get hurt only because you didn’t know what you’re dealing with,” Harry replied softly.

“Harry James Potter, in the future you will tell us about such things! I don’t care if you think that you shouldn’t burden us with it, I don’t want you to hide anything from us. We are your friends and friends are supposed to help each other even if it is just morally and with listening to your problems,” Hermione scolded him while ignoring Harry hugging her. “And who knows, sometimes asking someone completely unrelated to your problems helps you see things from a different angle. So Draco, how does that thing look like?”

Draco first was surprised that Hermione addressed him but quickly regained his composure.

“It is a black book about that size,” he told her while showing with his hand how large the book is. “The cover is black leather, and the pages are empty. It looks a few centuries old and on the back is an inscription in golden letters reading Tom Marvolo Riddle.”

Loki hummed lowly. “Luna you don’t happen to know anything?” he asked the blond girl.

Luna, on the other hand, shook her head. “Sorry, that isn’t how my ability works. Most of the time I only see the decision that should be made like for example me coming to this exact compartment and what I should say. If I’m lucky I also see a reason like with whether I should go to Ravenclaw or join you in Gryffindor, but I never see the result. Actually, I’m kind of glad…how stupid would it be to skip to the end of the book to read the end without everything in between.”

“My seer abilities are extremely wobbly at best, especially since Loki cut the influence of the demon blood,” Sam admitted with a thoughtful face. “So, I’m also no help there.”

Everyone except for Harry, Loki and Luna looked at him strangely upon that admittance though in case of Luna it wasn’t because she already knew but because she didn’t care. She was strange in her own way so why should she judge someone else because he wasn’t normal.

“Strange friends indeed,” Draco muttered which made Harry laugh.

“Oh, my dear Draco, you have no idea,” he said with a broad grin when someone knocked at the door.

Luna turned around without standing up and opened the door to reveal the lady with the trolley. Though before Loki, who already jumped up in overexcited eagerness, could get out anything, the woman grabbed under her trolley and brought up a medium sized box.

“My dear, I already expected you to ask for a bit…more, so I took the liberty to prepare you a package,” she told him with a smile. “Here you go, everything you could ask for. That makes ten galleons.”

“Great, thank you,” Loki piped while counting off the money. “Here, ten galleons and one extra for the great foresight. Have a nice day.”

“What the heck? What do you do with so many sweets?” Draco exclaimed when Harry opened the box Loki had given to him.

“That won’t survive ‘till the end of the ride,” Harry laughed, but Draco only looked at him incredulously.

“Believe me, you’ll get used to it,” Neville said sympathetically while picking a package of Bertie Bott’s Beans.
They all fell into an easy conversation, not even questioning why Draco was suddenly a member of their group. If Harry decided that he trusted him enough to invite him it was good enough for the others. They knew that Harry didn’t trust easily even if it sometimes might seem that way, but his life with the Dursleys had taught him to be wary. Should Harry decide to explain his decision at some point, it was good with them. If not, they trusted Harry to know what he was doing...to some extent. That wasn’t even putting into consideration, that Draco obviously wanted to help Harry.

So, they included Draco as if he had been a member of their group since the beginning.

Draco at first rarely joined the conversation and opted to observe them. When Harry had asked him to join them Draco had actually been wary, not only would he be a Slytherin in the middle of Gryffindors but until now he had thought that Gryffindors were brash people who said what they thought. However, after observing them for some time, he had to revise his opinion, and he was surprisingly okay with it.

True, Gryffindors – at least those he was currently sitting with – most of the time didn’t do all that subtle talk Slytherins were known for, but that didn’t mean that they said everything openly. While the Slytherins hid the true meaning of what they said with well-chosen words, Harry’s friends did it in an entirely different way, with their body language.

Sure, one could argue that a Slytherin also used body language, but the purpose was a different one. In Slytherin, body language was used to convey one’s status, straight back and a slight arrogant posture of the head while the face was a blank mask. Beyond that, one would rarely find any outward signs with a Slytherin.

Those Gryffindors Draco was currently sitting with though used their body language as a way of communication. Sure, their choice of words was open and with hardly any hidden meaning to it, but it was how they moved and held themselves that gave the words an entirely different sense.

Draco was fascinated by all that. What he thought had been just the usual Gryffindorish *wearing the heart on a sleeve* mentality suddenly became something more...something he wanted to understand only if to understand Harry better. Thinking back to all their encounters he had to admit that he had thoroughly misunderstood them a few times, when Draco had thought that Harry and Loki were making fun of him it had only been their way of friendly banter, he now saw that.

As the time flew by, they talked about what came to their mind, when Harry suddenly interrupted them.

“Say Loki, what drugs have been in the sweets?” he suddenly asked.

“None, why do you ask?” Loki was a bit confused.

“Oh nothing, I’m just hallucinating that a blue car is currently flying next to the train,” he replied with a shrug.

Loki, who sat opposite of Harry, looked strangely at him before he also looked out of the window in the direction Harry could see and yes, there was a blue car flying next to the train, a blue Ford Anglia to be precise.

“Okay it seems that we have the same hallucination,” Loki admitted.

“Not only you,” Hermione added.

“I didn’t know that cars could fly,” Sam said.
“The better question would be what idiot is stupid enough to fly a muggle car where everybody can see him,” Draco muttered. “If it is a Hogwarts student uncle Sev will have a field day.”

“Oh, I have an idea!” Harry suddenly piped up and not soon later the car began to warp until it wasn’t a Ford anymore but the DeLorean from a particular movie.

“For the sake of my sanity tell me that this one can NOT travel in time,” Hermione groaned only to receive disbelieving stares from Draco and Neville.

Luna who still sat on the floor in front of the door snickered lowly. “She is speaking of a muggle movie called *Back to the Future* in which a muggle scientist develops a method to travel through time in a car such as the one you can currently see flying next to the train,” she explained.

“Muggles can do that?” Draco asked in shock.

Sure, he knew a bit about muggles and their technology – luckily his father never learned about that – but he was far from well versed. It was only because of the necessity to be able to blend in especially when his mother dragged him to one of her shopping trips to Paris. Narcissa – even if she had to hide it from Lucius – was smitten with Versace, Gucci and co. That was another reason for her to want to get away from Lucius, he would never accept her fable for muggle clothing even if she looked a thousand times better in them than in robes. It was just another thing on the seemingly endless list of things they had to hide from him but hopefully and with Harry’s help that would belong to the past soon.

“Nah, it’s just a story for entertainment purpose,” Harry added. “I really have to take you to a cinema during the winter holidays.”

“Cinema?”

“Do you at least know what a movie is?” Harry asked but only received a shake of his head. “That is a serious gap in education! Who’s up for a movie?”

“Which one?” Hermione asked.

“I’m voting for Iron Man!” Loki piped up.

“I would have suggested Back to the Future, but I’m also not against that one,” Harry shrugged, while he got his tablet out.

“Sometimes you gotta run before you can walk,” Luna said which made Harry laugh.

With a big grin, Loki spelled their compartment into something more fitting for watching a movie, transfiguring one side into a white wall while enlarging the entire thing and vanishing the benches. Instead, pillows suddenly appeared out of nowhere and all over the place, transforming the whole room into one comfortable to lie on area.

“We have sweets, we have one huge comfortable area to sit on…the only thing that’s missing is popcorn,” Sam exclaimed while flopping down onto a huge pillow.

Draco and Neville looked around them stunned but nonetheless sat down, getting comfortable. Right at that moment Loki, who had shortly vanished, reappeared with a projector and popcorn…lots of popcorn!

After starting the movie – and don’t ask where he got it from since it wasn’t even out on DVD – Harry got comfortable himself. They watched the film, and even Neville and Draco were thoroughly
entertained though Draco asked every other minute whether muggles were really able to do something like that and had it been a shock, that yes muggles had bombs that were able to level entire cities like London to the ground.

It was near the end of the train ride that Draco said goodbye to his newfound friends because he still had to maintain an image and that certainly did not include being seen with a horde of Gryffindors. Harry, however, promised him to talk with the twins and ask them whether they could make something that would help Draco getting away from Slytherin should the need ever arise. In the worst-case Harry would have to ask Loki but he didn’t want to burden the pagan with every little problem, he was a friend not a tool to be used every time he didn’t know the answer himself. Draco thanked him and wandered off to find his dorm mates.

The others in the meantime went to get changed, the girls shortly vanishing into the empty compartment next to theirs to have their privacy, while the boys changed in their compartment.

About five minutes before they were due to arrive at Hogsmeade Station, the twins suddenly showed up.

“Hey, we only came by because we wanted to warn you, Harry,” Fred said.

George nodded in emphasis. “Yes, we completely forgot to warn you but our sister Ginny….”

“She has a major crush on you,” Fred finished. “You see, from a very young age on….”

“Mother told her stories of how great you are….”

“And that you are like a knight in shining armour.”

“Her golden hero and somewhere down the line….”

“She developed the notion that one day she’ll be Lady Potter.”
The group of friends was currently sitting in the Great Hall and watching the first years being sorted. Sam, a bit bored, let his gaze wander when he realised something.

“Hey, where are Snape, Sprout and Dumbledore?” he asked the others.

Everyone simultaneously looked at the head table only to realise that yes, said teachers indeed were missing, interesting.

“I wonder what happened,” Hermione mused.

“They’re probably missing because of that flying car incident,” Harry said with a shrug.

“Flying car?” the twins echoed with a frown.

“Ah yes you missed that,” Loki replied thoughtfully. “During the train ride, we saw a blue Ford flying next to the train though we have no idea who flew it.”

Instantly the twins looked around, only to groan audibly when they saw that their younger brother was missing.

“That idiot,” George moaned.

“He will be expelled for that stunt,” Fred followed.

Harry though looked curiously at them.

“Why? What happened?” he asked them.

“It seems that our stupid brother Ron took our father’s car,” Fred explained.

“It is a blue Ford Anglia,” George added.

“Though we have no idea why,” they both finished.

“Huh,” was all Harry said to that, he didn't overly care about that idiot Ron.

They all watched the sorting when Luna was called out and with a spring in her step walked over to the three-legged stool. She sat down, and Professor McGonagall placed the hat on her head. It didn't take long until the hat groaned and called out Gryffindor.

With that Luna bounced over to them and sat down opposite of Harry, right next to Neville who made space for her.

Not much later the sorting came to an end with the sorting of Ginevra Weasley. Harry guardedly watched her how she walked over to the Gryffindor table and sat down a few seats away from him. He would have to be careful around her, not that he spurred her on in her phantasy of her becoming Lady Potter.
The twins took the end of the sorting as their cue to stand up and wave their wands in the air. Suddenly music started to play from seemingly nowhere, filling the entire Great hall. McGonagall, who was about to put the stool and the hat away, looked disapprovingly in their direction but did nothing to stop it, not that it would have worked anyway.

Don’t ever think you’re the first one who did it
Dos Bros, Dos Bros did it
And you wouldn’t believe who already knew
Dos Bros, Dos Bros knew it
They came, they saw, they took, they shook
No one can stop them go, go!
Don’t ever think so

(Dos Bros – The Bosshoss)

Quite a few of the students chuckled upon the twins' way of introducing themselves while those that never had any contact with the muggle world looked confused upon the choice of music not the music itself – that they were used to by now. Some of the professors looked surprised while others, like McGonagall, simply looked resigned.

From the outside they’re handsome devils
From the inside they’re true born rebels

Several students from different houses laughed upon those lines, and the twins even received a few wolf-whistles.

Don’t ever make Dos Bros your enemy
They’re unbeatable, they’re uncheatable
And if help breaks loose you will understand
It’s here to have friends in a rock band
They rule, you drool, they rock until you drop
No one can stop them, blow blow
Don’t ever think so

By now the twins had jumped over the Gryffindor table and now stood in the middle aisle, showing their prowess in charms by conjuring birds and other animals that jumped and flew over the tables and other students. After a short while, the animals exploded and showered everyone near them in sparks that floated to the ground before vanishing.

You better never ever mess with Dos Bros
Because you’re messing with the los Dos Bros
They gave the entire student body and professors quite a show, well except those who were missing because there was an idiot that thought flying a car to school was a good idea. The rest was thoroughly entertained, and even the teacher liked what they saw. That went especially for Professor Flitwick, who was excitedly bouncing in his seat. They ended their show with a formation flight of four little dragons, each having a different coloured tail trailing behind them in the house colours.

"Oh, what a marvellous display of magic," the small professor exclaimed once the twins were done. "Take ten points for Gryffindor each, and I hope to see something new next year."

"Filius," McGonagall said in a scolding tone. "You cannot be serious! Don’t encourage them."

"Minerva, what is your problem? This was entertaining, no one got hurt, and it was a great way to start the year," Flitwick replied, a few of the other professors nodding along.

McGonagall growled in exasperation but didn’t say anything further about that matter while putting the stool and hat away.

The twins in the meantime bowed to the hall that loudly applauded them.

“Thank you all.”

“We thought that this was a good way of introducing ourselves.”

“And giving a warning to the new students.”

“To never mess with the Dos Bros.”

“The infamous Weasley twins!” They finished together.

“The demons of Gryffindor!” Harry shouted.

Under heavy laughter and more applause, the twins bowed one last time before they hopped back on their seats, both sporting broad grins.

“Well done you two,” Loki praised them. “Well done indeed.”

This was a good start into a new school year.

In the office of the headmaster currently, three adults and one very intimidated student were silently sitting and apparently waiting for something. Dumbledore, who was sitting in his chair and slowly stroking Fawkes’ feathers looked disappointedly at Ronald Weasley, who sat next to a worried Sprout. The boy looked sullenly but also intimidated especially by the looming figure of a furious Severus Snape that stood behind him. Next to him stood two empty chairs.

It was a few minutes later, that the fire in the fireplace flared green and first spat out Arthur Weasley, quickly followed by his wife, Molly.

“Albus, I’m so sorry. I don’t know what my son was thinking about flying the car to school,” Molly began to wail before she turned to Ron. “And you…stealing the car! Your father is facing an inquiry
at work because of this…!

Coughing from Michael was all it took to silence the shrieking rant of Molly and brought blessed silence. How a woman could shriek like a banshee was beyond him, and he hoped that she wouldn’t start any time soon again.

“Please calm down Molly,” he told her and when it seemed that she wanted to reply something he looked sternly at her which seemed to do the trick. “Very well, I called you here because since Ron is underage a parent has to be present during any interrogation pertaining to the investigation. I would ask everyone in turn to relay his or her information regarding Ron flying in a car to school before I will ask a few more questions and come to a fitting punishment. Furthermore, I would ask you to stay silent while someone else talks, you’ll all have the time to tell me your point, so there is no need to interrupt each other, is that clear?”

Severus and Pomona only nodded, and it hadn’t been them Michael was concerned about but the Weasleys, especially Ronald and Molly.

“Good, I think the best will be to start at the beginning. Ron, why did you think that it is a good idea to fly in a car to Hogwarts?”

Ron huffed. “I missed the train,” was all he said to that.

Severus looked at the boy in disbelief. “You thought it aptly to steal your father’s car, fly in it to Hogwarts not to mention through the centre of London where no less than twelve muggles saw you?” he asked incredulously only to earn himself a sharp glare from Michael. “My apologies.”

“While I don’t approve of Severus interrupting you, he has a point there. Though I fear that the estimation of twelve muggles is incorrect,” Michael stated leaning forwards.

“My apologies for speaking out of turn again but what do you mean by that?” Severus questioned.

Michael merely opened the top drawer of his desk and pulled out what Severus could clearly identify as a laptop, probably one as he knew Harry owned. Opening the computer, Michael quickly began to tap away before he finally turned it around. On the screen played a video in which everyone could clearly see one Ronald Weasley ascending in a blue Ford before after a few seconds vanishing from sight. Severus looked at the screen shocked, but what shocked him, even more, was the number displayed beneath the video.

“One and a half million?” he choked out. “You’ve got to be kidding me!”

“Unfortunately not but don’t worry, Madame Bones already knows about this. They managed to cover it up with the shooting of a new movie. The most common theory on the internet is a new episode of the Doctor Who series,” Michael explained.

“That would actually fit, they tend to film a lot in London,” the Potions Master mused, receiving a strange look from Michael. “I happen to like the series ever since I was a child,” he said defensively, it had been Lily who brought him to it, and they liked to watch it together.

“Uhm, might someone please explain what you’re talking about?” Arthur spoke up for the first time, though curiosity had entered his expression.

“Of course. You see the muggles have long since evolved technologically beyond where a simple Obliviate could solve any sightings of magic. They can, as you saw, record everything and within minutes make it available to every other person on this planet. As Severus already stated, over one and a half million people already know that your son flew in the car through London,” Michael
explained.

Both elder Weasleys gasped in shock while the young one only looked at him blankly. It was glaringly apparent that none of them had known that. This was one of the main reasons why Michael had over the summer revised the Muggle Studies class. Unfortunately, he had to fire Professor Burbage because, while she was a good teacher, she had no idea just how advanced the non-magicals were now and that would become a problem, or already had as it seemed. The class was now taught by a muggle-born, and he even gave her the funds to buy the needed technology to show the students. He also had wanted to make it a mandatory class for everyone, but the board of governors had refused that, not that he wouldn’t continue trying. Michael really had no idea how Dumbledore could have let that subject decline so much, it was plain dangerous, not every incident could be covered up like the one with the car.

“But don’t worry the problem is being taken care of. Anyway, we got a bit side-tracked, Ron if you missed the train, why didn’t you write a letter or floo over? No one would have said anything if you had,” Michael asked confusedly.

“I didn’t want to,” Ron retorted sullenly before slumping in the chair with a huff.

Dumbledore knew that it would be impossible to get any further information from the boy, so he left it be.

“Arthur, Molly, you didn’t realise that your son didn’t make it on the train?”

To Michael, it looked like Molly wanted to let loose one of her tirades again but was silenced by a hand on her arm from her husband.

“We were a bit late today. The others barely made it in time, we simply thought that Ron was with them. That was until we saw that the car went missing. You see Albus, with five children it sometimes is hard to keep track of everyone,” Arthur explained with a solemn face.

“Was your car locked?” Michael inquired.

“No, why?” Arthur asked perplexed.

Michael had to suppress the urge to groan, that was grossly negligent. What if a non-magical had come across the car and found out what it was capable of?

“Okay Pomona, what can you tell me about the damage done to the Whomping Willow?”

The woman took a deep breath before she began to speak. “The damage is extensive but luckily not threatening. It will take a few months for it to heal but with care, it will. Severus will have to brew me a few potions, but I don’t think that it will be a problem,” she summarised with a brief glance at Severus who nodded towards her.

“Good, good, is there anything you want to add, Severus?” Michael addressed the last person.

“Nothing of importance,” Severus curtly replied though he gave the boy in front of him a glare.

Michael smiled thankfully at the man while leaning back in his chair, he didn’t want to be here forever. Musingly he stroked his beard while he contemplated what to do. On the one hand, it was a serious transgression that could have meant unknown troubles with containing the outfall, but on the other side, he was very well aware that Ronald was only twelve years old and probably didn’t really think about what could happen. So no, he wasn’t inclined to expel him from Hogwarts, but he needed to find a punishment that would fit the crime. That was when an idea came to him. Ron
obviously didn’t see the damage he had done by behaving so reckless so what better punishment than having to help reverse it.

“Please Albus, Ron is just a child, he didn’t mean…” Molly began to plead when Michael had been silent for too long but was quickly stopped by Michaels glare.

“I already came up with a fitting punishment and no, Ron will not be expelled,” he sternly said, which let Molly exhale in relief. “No, I decided that Ronald Weasley will have to help to reverse the damage he did. That means that you’ll have to serve detention with both Professor Sprout and Professor Snape and help them in every way they need you to when they need you to…even on Sundays if necessary, is that clear?”


“Would you prefer to be expelled?” Michael asked while looking at the boy from over his half-moon glasses, but he received no answer beside sulking. “Thought so, however, should I get any complaints about your working moral or that you didn’t show up…let’s just say that you won’t like the result. Very well, since it is late enough, I’d suggest that we close this. Arthur and Molly, it was a pleasure to see you again.”

“Likewise, Albus, and thank you for not expelling my son,” Molly said in a much lower voice now. “But should you put even one toe out of line again I will pull you from Hogwarts myself.”

Ron nodded weakly but didn’t reply. Molly and Arthur said their goodbye before they left through the floo. Not soon later Sprout also said her farewell. Together with Ron, whom she would escort to the Gryffindor tower, she also went, leaving behind Michael and Severus.

“Why do I have the feeling that Mr Weasley will find himself with detention at 5 a.m. on a Sunday in the foreseeable future?” Michael chuckled lowly.

“Of course, you don’t,” Michael now laughed. “Whiskey?”

Severus nodded, and Michael stood up, walked over to a well-hidden bar, picked up a tumbler and two glasses before he returned to his desked and filled them both with the amber liquid. One of the drinks he passed to the Potions Master while he took the other and sat down again.

“Any news on Riddle’s possessions?” he asked after taking a sip.

“Unfortunately, not really. I mean, I can make an educated guess on what some of them might be but not where they are,” Severus shook his head.

“And what are they?”

“From what I learned, Riddle was obsessed with the founders of Hogwarts and tried to collect their heirlooms, Hufflepuff’s cup, Slytherin’s locket and Ravenclaw’s diadem. Other than those I couldn’t find anything.”

“Don’t worry, this is already more than we had at the beginning of the summer. With time we’ll find them,” Michael replied.

“What if we don’t have the time?” Severus wondered.
“Crowley isn’t stupid, he knows that this cannot be rushed hence why he didn’t give Harry a time limit, not to mention with how protective my brother is. No, we have all the time we need.”

Severus didn’t look convinced but didn’t say anything further about that matter. After a few minutes of silence, he drained his glass and stood up.

“I’ll leave now, I have to make sure that the first-years settle properly and prepare for my patrol. Good night!”

“Good night, Severus.”

Michael watched the other man leaving before he leaned back in his chair. Fawkes instantly came flying over from his perch, trilling softly and soothingly.

“It seems that it doesn’t matter who they are, children are always the same. A lot of trouble but very well worth it.”
“So…Draco?!” Loki asked once they were back in their dorm.

Harry was currently unpacking his trunk and placed his clothes and other things in the appropriate places. Sam and Neville, who were also bustling around, looked up and curiously waited for Harry’s answer. Luckily for them, the rest of those who sleep in the dorm with them were still in the common room.

“Yeah,” Harry tentatively answered. “Do you have a problem with that?”

“Why would I?” Loki asked confusedly. “As long as you don’t do anything that I deem unforgivable, you could bring the apocalypse over us and I wouldn’t judge you for it. Okay, bad example but I think you get what I want to say.”

Harry snickered lowly while he nodded. “I doubt that it will happen but good to know. Anyway, did you know that Draco is my cousin?”

“No,” Loki mused surprised. “That is new to me. I wonder when the Malfoy family married into the Potter line.”

“It is actually the Black family that connects them,” Neville spoke up. “Dorea Black is Harry’s grandmother on the father’s side, while Draco’s mother is a born Black.”

Everyone looked at him surprised.

“What? I learned about it during my lessons as the heir to the Longbottom Family. Every heir to an old line learns about the connections between families. Actually, I thought you already knew this,” he sheepishly admitted towards Harry. “Sorry, I should have thought about it earlier.”

“Don’t worry Neville,” Harry told him with a smile. “You could have done worse things, and I know that it wasn’t on purpose.”

Right at that moment, the door to their dorm opened, and the twins followed by Hermione and Luna walked in. The twins sat down on Loki’s bed, while Luna joined Neville on his and Hermione went over to Sam’s.

“What were you talking about?” the twins piped up.

“Draco, he is my cousin,” Harry informed them.

“Wow, that is surprising,” Hermione exclaimed.

“Actually, not so much with all the interbreeding in the old lines to keep the blood pure,” Neville explained.

“Don’t tell me…they are actually marrying their own relatives?” Hermione asked incredulously. “Have they never heard of inbreeding and what it does?”
Neville sighed deeply. “Only with animals and they think that it doesn’t apply to them.”

“That is stupid at best and outright dangerous at worst. They can be glad that they have magic that saves them from the worst damage like deformations and such unless it is too extensive, but it weakens their magic nonetheless, in the worst case making them squibs,” Loki growled. “Keeping the blood pure…what a pile of crap. I mean there are four prime examples where adding the blood of a Muggleborn or even that of a muggle into an old line resulted in the most powerful wizard of that generation.”

“Who?” the twins inquired.

“Dumbledore, Riddle – yes he already was quite powerful before he made the deal, that was more about political power –, Snape and Harry of course. I mean think about it, Harry is capable in all three ways of channelling magic, Snape I know is at least versed in mind magic. The same goes for Dumbledore, about Riddle I think I don’t even have to begin with. Then there is Neville as well as the twins whose parents are not closely related, and they also can perform two different ways of channelling magic. Tell me one of those inbreeding morons that can do more than one.”

With a deep sigh, he let himself fall back on the bed.

“Idiots…all of them.”

“It seems that at least Draco and his mother want to change things,” Harry said with a snicker.

“That is true, he even watched a movie with us,” Hermione replied with a grin, she had been pretty surprised about that.

Harry nodded. “That and he and his mother want to get away from Lucius. I told him that his mother should contact Sirius if she really wants to get away from him, I don’t doubt that Sirius will love to help her. That reminds me, twins, is it possible for you two to create something that would help Draco to get away from the other snakes if he wishes to?”

“Really? This is interesting, I never thought that Draco would want to get away from his father with how he flounders around the Malfoy name,” Neville muttered.

“A notice-me-not charm?” one of the twins said in the meantime.

“Maybe also an illusion…some average Hufflepuff should do the trick,” the second added.

“Adding a slight Confundus charm so that no one thinks more about it.”

“Bound by a set of runes…what do you think?”

“Yep should be doable!”

“Perfect! How long do you think you’ll need?” Harry asked with a broad grin.

“A week give or take,” one of the twins said with a shrug.

“Very good. Anyway, it is getting late, and I’m tired so if you excuse me,” Harry told them before grabbing his shower bag and vanishing into the bathroom.

“I’ll leave too, good night,” Hermione said.

“Wait for me,” Luna piped up, and the two girls left to their own dorms.
The others also got ready for bed. Soon all of them were sleeping soundly.

When Loki was sure that everyone was asleep, he vanished from the dorm and reappeared right in the private study of the headmaster. Michael was sitting in front of the fire in an armchair and reading a book with a cup of tea on the table in front of him, though he looked up when Loki arrived.

“Hey brother, how are things going?” Loki greeted him while sitting down in the other armchair.

“Slowly, I want to make Muggle Studies a mandatory class from the first year onwards, but that Lucius Malfoy is blocking all of my attempts. Did you know that the Weasleys – it was Ron who flew the car – have never heard of the internet, or that the non-magicals can share videos of things like the flying car within minutes?” Michael complained. “Over one and a half million people saw the video where he flew over London. It was only thanks to Madame Bones’ intervention that everyone thinks that it was shooting for a film.”

“Not only that but all the inbreeding is slowly killing them. However, your problem might solve itself soon. Harry told me that Draco and his mother want to get away from Lucius. It will hit that blond idiot pretty hard when his own son and wife denounce him,” Loki said with a chuckle.

“That might actually help a lot. Lucius Malfoy is the main opponent to this and thanks to his money and influence…if he loses that the rest of the board might be more amenable to the idea. The children really need to learn more about the non-magical world, I fear what might happen if magic gets revealed too sudden.”

“Too true, the non-magicals tend to react violently to anything they don’t know or understand…. Anyway, the reason for why I came here was that Draco told us that he knows how one of Riddle’s Horcruxes looks like. It is a black book – like a diary – with Tom Marvolo Riddle written in gold on the back,” Loki explained.

“Good, that makes four items we know about,” Michael mused. “Severus earlier reported, that Riddle was obsessed with three items from the founders, the locket from Salazar Slytherin, the diadem from Rowena Ravenclaw and the cup from Helga Hufflepuff. Now we also know about the diary, that is at least one missing, not that we have any idea where those are, to begin with.”

“From what Draco told us, the diary is probably at Hogwarts in the hand of a child. Can’t we just search everyone and be over with it?” Loki nearly pleaded, he hated the thought that something so vile as a Horcrux currently was in the hand of a child… the things that could happen.

Michael took a deep breath before he solemnly replied. “Unfortunately, not without concrete proof but I’ll contact Madame Bones to see whether she has an idea how to handle this. Trust me, I’m as uncomfortable with this as you are.”

“When I find that damned book, I’ll dissect it and see whether I can find out what that idiot did to hide those soul pieces,” Loki growled lowly.

“If anyone can find out what he did it is either you or… Lucifer,” he added after a short pause, Michael still didn’t know what to think about everything that is currently happening but one thing was for sure, for all his immaturity, his brother was damned crafty.
“I can only hope that you’re right. Well, I think I’m off and see whether Sirius is still up and inform him about everything,” Loki said while standing up.

“You might want to inform Dean and Crowley too. It might be unlikely that they come across one of the Horcruxes but better inform them anyway.”

Loki nodded. “Will do. I might even ask the goblins whether they can help but don’t count on it, they take the security and confidentiality of their customers very seriously. So as long as the soul piece doesn’t threaten their security, it is highly doubtful that they’ll help.”

With a wave of his hand, he vanished. Michael returned to his book when the archangel realised that before leaving, Loki had transfigured his robes into a bunny costume. He sighed deeply and with a wave of his hands reversed the transfiguration, it seemed that his brother would never grow up.

As they agreed, Loki gave everyone an update concerning Riddle’s soul pieces. He even went to Gringotts but as predicted they wouldn’t give up any information pertaining to the content of the vaults as long as it isn’t a threat.

Time went by, and they had their first lessons of the new school year. It turned out that the blond ponce who gave autographs the day they visited Diagon Alley was now the latest DADA teacher. What was worse though was that Harry met his own personal paparazzi.

“H-Harry!” a boy a year younger than Harry and obviously in Gryffindor, called out to him when he and his friends – at least those in his year – were on their way to the great hall from Transfiguration.

“What is it?” Harry asked while waiting for the boy to catch up with him.

“Can…can I take a photo of you?” the boy asked, raising his camera in emphasis, a camera that wouldn’t have looked out of place at the beginning of the 20th century. “Name’s Colin Creevey by the way. It is so great to meet you, I heard everything about you…about that night when you defeated You-know-who and your first school year….”

“As long as I don’t find myself on twitter tomorrow I don’t have any objections,” Harry replied with a shrug, effectively interrupting the rant of the boy.

“Twitter?” Collin asked surprised and a bit confused. “You do know that muggle technology doesn’t work here at Hogwarts, don’t you?”

Harry rose an eyebrow before pulling his smartphone out of the back pocket of his trousers and showing it with a flourish to the boy.

“So sure about that one?” he questioned while throwing Colin the phone who barely caught it.

The boy though looked at him wide-eyed before he looked at the phone and with a disbelieving stare turned it on. His eyes went impossibly wider when he realised that, yes, muggle technology does work at Hogwarts under certain circumstances.

“Sure, it needs to be enchanted so that it can work here, but nothing is saying that it couldn’t,” Harry
explained.

“Had…had I known that. Professor McGonagall said that muggle technology won’t work here. I actually wanted to buy a really good digital camera when I heard that I’d come here but when she told me that I got the one from gramps,” Colin explained a bit sadly. “You see one day I want to become a professional photographer.”

“Why don’t we start now then and get you one nice picture of us all, what do you think?” Harry told him to lighten the mood. “A group picture of us all!”

“You would do that?” Colin looked like Christmas came early with how broad he smiled.

“Sure, why not. Anyone having objections?” he asked the others only to be met with amused silence. “Good then gather around!”

They all got together while Loki magically operated the camera.

“T-thank you all,” Colin stammered once he had his camera back. “You…I mean you wouldn’t mind signing it when it is developed?”

“I have an idea,” Loki piped in before Harry could reply anything, tapping the camera with his finger.

Suddenly a larger than normal picture appeared in his hand. With a flourish, he conjured a pen before he signed on the image underneath himself. When he was done he handed both to Harry, who blinked in surprise but also signed with his name. Afterwards, Sam, Neville and Hermione did the same and gave the picture to Colin who seemingly didn’t know what to say.

“There, one signed photo of us all.”

“What? Harry Potter gives out signed photos now?” another voice, they could clearly recognise as Draco’s, said.

“Problem with that or are you just jealous that you’re not also on the picture?” Harry retorted, turning around to see Draco standing in the corridor together with his bookends Crab and Goyle.

Draco, on the other hand, smirked, ever since he spent some time with Harry and his friends he could read them quite easily.

“You wish! As if I want to be on the same picture as you,” Draco replied with a sneer.

“Ah yes, we don’t want to ruin your all dressed up like a peacock appearance not to mention what dear daddy would say if you get caught on the same picture with heaven forbid…a Gryffindor.”

“You should be careful whom you antagonise, Potter, you wouldn’t want to learn what my father is capable of.”

That actually made Harry laugh. “Was that supposed to be a threat Malfoy? Every second sentence that comes out of your mouth is ‘wait until my father learns about that’…how about a real threat,” he told him with a smirk. “Never ever mess with the Los Dos Bros!”

Draco gulped audibly but other than that he didn’t show any outward sign that he took that as a threat, the amused glint in his eyes, on the other hand, showed his real thoughts about that. Though before he could reply anything, they were interrupted by yet another person.
“What’s going on here?” the person, who turned out to be Professor Lockhart, asked.

“Potter is giving out signed photos,” Draco answered with a smug grin.

“So, we finally meet, Harry Potter! Gilderoy Lockhart,” Lockhart exclaimed as if nothing pleased him more before grabbing Harry and pulling him to his side. “Come on, Mr Creevey, a double portrait and we’ll both sign it.”

Colin looked at Harry a bit unsure what to do while Harry rolled his eyes but smiled nonetheless. Another flashing of the camera later and Colin had a second picture of Harry, this time together with Lockhart. Right at that moment, the bell went, signalling the end of the break.

“Perfect, now run along, you don’t want to be late, do you?” Lockhart addressed Colin before he turned around and entered the building, Harry still held by his side and the others trailing after them. “Kind of saved you there Harry. If I might give you a piece of advice, be careful with giving out autographs, people might think you’re setting yourself up. Handing out signed pictures at that stage of your career isn’t advisable – looks big-headed. Sometime in the future, it will come in handy to have a stack at hand but as much as it pains me to say, for you that is not now.”

That was the moment they reached the DADA classroom, and luckily for Harry, he could get rid of Lockhart because he had to get to his place. Once everyone found a seat, with Harry and his friends sitting in the back as far away from Lockhart as possible, Lockhart smiled at them brightly.

“Welcome to Defence against the Dark Arts. My name is Gilderoy Lockhart, Order of Merlin, Third Class, Honorary Member of the Dark Force Defence League and five times winner of Witch Weekly’s Most-Charming-Smile Award – but don’t talk about that, I didn’t get rid of the Bandon Banshee with a smile,” he introduced himself.

Loki observed how every girl in the room was utterly smitten with the man, with the apparent exception of Hermione. Oh yeah, it had taken him three hours of pointing out the obvious mistakes in the man’s stories until she had to concede that they were just that…stories. Ever since she realised just what a pile of crap his books were, her view on him had taken a nosedive.

“Today we’re starting with a little quiz to see how well you read my books, that you all bought as I see, well done,” Lockhart continued in the meantime with a bright smile towards the girls who were fawning over him.

The man handed out the sheets before walking back to the front. “You have thirty minutes, start now!”

Hermione began reading the questions and looked more and more incredulous at the sheet in front of her.

“Is he serious? I mean…what is Gilderoy Lockhart's favourite colour? What is Gilderoy Lockhart's secret ambition? WHAT?” she whispered to the others who looked equally dumbfounded by the test.

That was when Harry sported a vindictive grin.

“Oh, I know just the right answer to that one!”
Chapter 49: Pixie Power

Exactly thirty minutes later, Lockhart went through the room and collected the tests under the cooing of the female students before he returned to the front of the class and began to shuffle through them.

“Tz, tz, tz, Mr Potter, my favourite colour is certainly not hot pink. Is that even a colour?” he scolded Harry.

“Oh, I would certainly say so, and I have to say…look at that, angry fans,” Harry replied with a broad grin.

Every single girl in the class bar one looked at him reproachfully because as soon as Lockhart had read the answer, both his clothes and his hair had turned…hot pink.

“What?” Harry asked the girls, having to suppress his laughter. “Suits him and certainly fits his secret ambition.”

“Becoming the next Gaylord?” Lockhart choked out, reading the answer to that question.

“Yep,” Harry retorted, popping the p. “With how you groom yourself…I mean look at you, you probably need even more time in the morning than Draco, and that definitely is an achievement…your greatest actually.”

Harry winked at Draco, who threw him a death glare upon the jibe at his appearance.

“Anyway, onto the practical part of this lesson,” Lockhart said, in a blatant attempt to get away from the topic and continued the lesson with lecturing on Cornish Pixies.

“Aw, he didn’t even read what I would get him for his birthday. But maybe all the better, it is supposed to be a surprise after all,” Harry mused.

“What did you write to that question?” Hermione asked curiously.

“There, there, that would be telling, wouldn’t it?” Harry replied with a grin that was purely evil. “So no getting rid of Lockhart until his birthday, understood Loki?”

Loki looked torn between pouting over the unfairness that he would have to endure that idiot for over half a year because his birthday was in January and anticipation for what Harry planned. In the end, he nodded with a huff.

“Very well, but only because I want to see what you concocted.”

By now, Lockhart had pulled a large cage, which was covered with a piece of cloth, out from under his desk and placed it on said desk.

“My job is it to arm you against the foulest creatures known and your worst fears but know that no harm will befall you while I’m with you. Remain calm, and nothing will happen to you.”
“If I’m getting any calmer I’ll fall asleep,” surprisingly Neville muttered loud enough for the entire class to hear him.

“You say that now but please don’t scream, it will provoke them,” he exclaimed.

With a flourish, Lockhart pulled the cloth from the cage to reveal about a dozen blue coloured pixies.

“Freshly caught Cornish Pixies!” Lockhart exclaimed.

Quite a few of the male students couldn’t help but snort, Neville with them.

“Yes?” Lockhart addressed them.

It was Seamus who dared to speak up.

“You call those…dangerous?” he asked in disbelieve.

“Don’t be so sure. Devilish little pests they are,” Lockhart answered while grabbing for the lock of the cage. “Let’s see how you can handle them.”

With a twist, he opened the cage door, and in an instant, the Pixies flew out of their confinement to instantly lay waste to the classroom resulting in a few of the students to squeal in surprise.

Unexpectedly though, none of the students and their belongings were touched by the little blighters, or not so surprising considering who was sitting in their midst. The little blue menaces probably instinctually knew not to piss off the god of mischief. Once the students realised that they calmed down again and smiled gratefully at Loki who grinned broadly over the chaos surrounding him.

Lockhart in the meantime looked in disbelieve at the Pixies who with delight destroyed his belongings while his students were amusedly watching. They talked with each other, pointing out things that the Pixies were doing when one of the Pixies managed to sever the chain that was holding the dragon skeleton in place under the ceiling. However, instead of crashing down on the students who ducked under their tables to avoid being hit, the skeleton nimbly landed before it began to dance “The Dying Swan” with the appropriate music playing.

“Peskipiksi Pesternomi!” Lockhart bellowed when he finally had enough of the pandemonium his classroom now was, pointing his wand at the Pixies but nothing happened.

On the contrary, one of the Pixies saw that and took it as its cue to seize the man’s wand and throw it out through the window. Lockhart looked at it in shock before looking at the class, bolting up the stairs in the back of the classroom and into his personal chambers, slamming the door close.

“Oh, that so NOT going to happen,” Loki said with a smirk and whistled sharply.

Each and every Pixy in the room stopped what it was doing and looked expectantly at the trickster. Loki though only pointed at the still locked door. The Pixies simultaneously saluted. With a wave of his hand, the door flew open, and the Pixies stormed the room behind it. Everyone could hear crashing, screaming and splintering of wood…and Loki’s, Harry’s and Sam’s laughter while Neville and Hermione snickered. Served the blond ponce right.

“So that this wasn’t a total waste of time here a few information about Pixies. As you could see, Pixies are blue and about eight inches high. They have no wings but can fly nonetheless. Pixies are highly mischievous and tend to grab people by their ears to lift them somewhere high,” Loki lectured. “If you don’t have the one on hand who created the species to ward them off – that’s me by the way…hi – stunning and freezing spells are highly effective.”
“You created an entire species?” Hermione asked in disbelief but also curious, while in the
background another very…girly…scream was heard as well as more crashing.

“Hey, I was bored and might or might not have taken enough care of how much magic I pushed into
the prank at that time,” Loki huffed.

“You can create new species?” someone else threw it.

“Yes and no,” Loki conceded. “Anyone powerful enough can create a new species from an existing
one…call it accelerated evolution. However, creating a new species from scratch, only the Primal
Force of Life can do.”

“Primal Force of Life?” someone wanted to know confused.

“How did we get from Pixies to the Primal Forces again?” Loki muttered. “Anyway, each universe
has three Primal Forces, Life, Death and Balance though some call the last one also Fate or Destiny.
Life is the one responsible for the creation of new life in the universe, populating planets, etc. Death,
on the other hand, is responsible for what happens with a soul when whatever is dying dies, heaven,
hell, or rebirth cycle respectively. The last one, Balance, on the other hand, is responsible for keeping
the universe in balance. You see, it is never good when the scale tips towards too light or too dark,
too good or too evil.”

“Why? What happens then?”

Loki hummed lowly upon that question. “Imagine a world where looking at someone just that bit
strangely would get you severely punished. Or one small smile would cost you your life.”

“Ouch.”

“Yep, that is the reason for why people like Riddle…the last Dark Lord…,” Loki added upon the
confused looks. “Will always fail. Sometimes it’s not because they are stupid, or their plans are faulty
but simply for a reason, that they are unable to work with the other side. Then the Primal Force of
Balance has to intervene…mostly by weaving the fates of single persons or a group of people to get
rid of the problem – hence why it is also called Fate or Destiny.”

“So, you want to say that if someone leads us who is able to work with both sides, that we would
flourish?” Draco said musingly.

“Yes, that pretty much sums it up,” Loki answered with a nod.

Right at that moment the bell went and signalled the end of the lesson. Some of the students groaned
as it often were when Loki lectured about something. As it happened, nowadays History of Magic
was one of the most love class in the history of Hogwarts since Loki took over. Surprisingly each
and every student that had to choose which classes to take for their NEWTs chose to continue
History which had never happened before with any offered class.

“Why don’t you take over DADA?” Neville asked half mockingly, half serious while packing the
small mountain that was Lockhart's books away.

“Not going to happen,” Loki instantly declined. “It is hard enough to keep one illusion going all day
long for History and having to maintain another is pretty nigh impossible.”

Neville nodded in acknowledgement. The rest of the students already left, only the four friends
remaining. Loki looked towards the door that leads to Lockhart's private quarters through which no
noise was heard.
“Ah well, I think he learned his lesson,” Loki said and whistled sharply.

Instantaneously the Pixies came flying only to stop shortly before him.

“As long as you behave yourself and don’t produce too much chaos you can stay here at the castle. But no malicious pranks or such that would endanger anyone is that clear?”

Loki had no problem with letting the Pixies live in the castle, and he doubted that his brother would say something as long as they didn’t hurt anyone. Besides that, Pixies were mostly harmless… mostly.

It was the next morning before breakfast and Loki was currently sitting in one of the armchairs in front of the fire in the Gryffindor common room. The others were still getting ready, and so he was alone, fiddling with the parcel in his lap. That was when the boy came down whom he was waiting for.

“Colin Creevey,” he called out. The boy walked over, surprise flittering over his face.

“Morning Loki,” he greeted the pagan tentatively. “Is there something I can do for you?”

“This is more about what I can do for you,” Loki replied. “Yesterday you said, that you want to become a professional photographer.”

Colin just nodded, not knowing what to reply to that.

“I have something for you,” Loki told him with a broad smile, holding out the parcel that was about eleven inches large in each dimension.

A bit confused, Colin took it and sat down on the chair opposite. “Thank you…I think.”

“Well, open it. I promise it isn’t a prank,” Loki said with a chuckle.

Colin carefully removed the brown wrapping paper to reveal a box that depicted a state of the art professional digital camera on the front. The boy looked at it in shock before looking up at Loki who was smiling broadly. With shaking hands, he opened the box to find that yes, it contained what was depicted on the front. A quick but nonetheless careful move later had the box sitting on the table and Loki with an armful of Colin.

“Thankyouthankyouthankyou,” the boy chanted over and over again.

Loki couldn’t help himself, he burst out laughing.

“You’re welcome. The camera is one of the best, hast unlimited storage capacity, doesn’t need to be recharged and you can connect it to any computer to download the pictures. It also comes with a small printer so that you can print the pictures fully magical and moving. However, and that is the more important part, any picture that you take with it that explicitly shows magic will only show to those that are closely related to you, so siblings, parents, and grandparents. For anyone else it will just seem that something went wrong while it was taken,” Loki explained once Colin calmed down enough to process what he was telling him.
“Why’s that?” Colin asked curiously while returning to the box and unpacking his new camera.

“Some non-magicals tend to react violently when confronted with something they don’t understand, it freaks them out. That’s why there are safety measurements taken, so they don’t find out,” Loki patiently lectured.

“So, if I let’s say photograph Hogwarts, I could show it other people that don’t have magic because it doesn’t show anything magical?”

Loki nodded slowly. “Yes, that would work, but I would ask you not to share anything that would reveal where you are. You see, while the castle itself is shielded from outside view, the surrounding landscape is not and nowadays it is quite easy to pinpoint a location by the landscape.”

“I think I understand and it isn’t that I wanted to post the photos on the internet…just want to send a few to my parents to show them what it is like here,” Colin replied before taking a photo of Loki with a grin.

“Morning guys,” Sam, who came down from the dorm together with Harry and Neville, greeted them when his eyes fell on Colin’s camera. “Birthday or is Loki just his generous self?”

“You know Loki,” Harry piped in. “He’s a big softy in that regard.”

That earned him a half transformation into a cat…cat ears, whiskers and a fitting tail which Colin instantly took a picture of.

“Oh, hello cosplay!” Harry exclaimed while looking at his tail, flicking it here and there. “Colin, I want copies!”

“Kitty, kitty, kitty,” Luna cooed, petting Harry behind his ears which made him actually purr. “I like the new look, it’s cute.”

“Cute or not, we should go to breakfast we only have twenty minutes left,” Hermione interrupted them after a quick peek at her watch.

It made Harry pout because Luna stopped petting him, but since he was quite hungry, he didn’t complain overly much. They all set off towards the great hall.

“Say, do you think that it was a good idea to give Colin the camera? I mean, I have no problem with him taking photos but what if the wrong kind of person sees them?” Harry asked Loki in a low voice so that only Loki could hear him. “You know what can happen when….”

“Harry, don’t worry any picture that shows magic or anything magical that cannot be explained by normal means, someone who doesn’t have magic or doesn’t know about magic cannot see it. I gave Colin the camera not only so that he can learn to work with it professionally but also so that those stuffed up pure-bloods see first-hand what muggle technology is capable of nowadays.”

“Sly, and I think Michael will approve, especially after the stunt with the car yesterday,” Harry chuckled.
The time went by after that, and soon Halloween approached with another feast that no one would forget any time soon. However, this time it was due to entirely different reasons than one might think.
As the first weeks went by, the twins managed to craft a medallion for Draco that would help him getting away from his house if he so desired, or to just talk to Harry without risking his reputation. It was a round silver medallion of about 2 inches in diameter with a circle of runes near the edge and a snake done in emeralds – Harry supplied them with those – in the centre. Embedded was a notice-me-not charm as well as an illusion that would let him look like an inconspicuous Hufflepuff. On top of that came for good measurement a small compulsion charm to not wonder about whoever wore that medallion when activated. Loki had helped them anchoring the entire thing with the runes and weaved a few more protection runes into it while he was at it.

The other noteworthy thing was Ronald Weasley’s detentions. It seemed that it wasn’t like Michael thought Severus, who had the boy up and about on Sundays early in the morning but Sprout. Every morning before breakfast she would check up on the tree and make sure that it healed properly. Severus, on the other hand, was more the ‘late in the evening’ type when he brewed the necessary potions.

In the first week Ron complained heavily about that and even tried to get out of detention, but that didn’t go over well when Michael called him to his office and told him in no uncertain terms, that, should he do it only one more time, he would be expelled. Afterwards, he, even if grumbling about it, came to every detention on schedule.

What really put a damper in his cockiness, on the other hand, was when one Saturday afternoon, in consultation with Michael and Amelia Bones – though the later only knew that something would happen, not what –, took Ron and Harry to London, Buckingham Palace to be precise.

They were currently sitting on a park bench with a good view on the building, Harry taking out the tablet he had taken with him in preparation while Ron wondered what they were doing here.

“What are we doing here?” Ron asked curiously, not that he would complain that they came here, he was actually quite happy to get out of the castle for a bit, and he had never been to this part of London.

“Wait and see, this is to show you just how dangerous it is to perform magic in front of Muggles,” Harry explained while he typed away. “How fast news gets shared between them.”

“You see Mr Weasley, when you flew that car over London it took only mere minutes for the news about it to spread around the entire planet,” Severus added.

“That is impossible,” Ron declared, but they could hear that there was doubt in his voice.

“And that is exactly what today’s excursion is for,” Harry said while clapping his hands before he went to work.

It wasn’t something spectacular but nonetheless effective. Within seconds, the front of the Buckingham Palace sported a new banner that read:
The result was instantaneous. People were suddenly crowding the building, pointing, photographing, and even filming the banner and the reaction of the guards, who tried to find out what was going on.

“See?” Harry asked. “And that wasn’t even something spectacular.”

He again typed away on his tablet, opening and reloading several sites he had opened beforehand while searching on others. Not even a minute later he had open what he was looking for.

“Here, not even two minutes after my little trick and you can find the first entries on the internet, the most used method of communication between Muggles,” he explained while showing Ron what he found on Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube.

“Seriously?” Ron exclaimed, looking at the screen in astonishment.

By now only a few hundred had seen the posts, but after a quick reload of the sites, the number jumped from a few hundred to several thousand.

“Yep,” Harry replied popping the p. “The people you see there gaping at the banner take photos or film it. Then they share it with friends and family, who in turn share it with their friends and families and so on and so on. Within minutes thousands of people have seen it, who also share it. Summing it up, within an hour – if it was something that interests the masses, and magic definitely is – millions know about it as it was the case with you flying the car. Oh, look at that I even made the news!”

Harry had also scanned the sites of the newspapers and news channels and oh surprise BBC had interrupted their regular program to send the breaking news. It seemed that they had been at the Buckingham Palace for a report on the royal family but now were using the opportunity for a live report.

“I’m currently standing here in front of the Buckingham Palace where something surprising has happened mere minutes ago. It seems that the infamous Apprentice of Loki struck again, this time here in England.” the reporter was telling into the camera before it changed to a picture of the banner. “He hung up this banner with means unknown up to date. It is also still unknown who exactly this Apprentice is and what his motives are….”

However, what made Harry cringe was the dress the reporter was wearing, bright yellow. Therefore, Harry looked around until he spotted the news team standing a bit to the side. With a broad grin, he waved his hands through the air. Suddenly and in front of the still broadcasting camera, the colour of her dress changed to a bright red with golden seams. Besides that, she also wore a sign around her neck that read:

Bright yellow is so not your colour – Loki’s Apprentice
Ps.: My motives are pranking people, creating a bit of chaos, and generally having fun!
(I’m Loki’s apprentice for a reason)

That got him even more of a reaction because the comment section beneath the live feed literally went head over heels over that stunt, one couldn’t even read them with how fast new ones were posted, pushing the old ones down.

“This is crazy,” Ron muttered while watching the comments scrolling over the screen.
“You had to do that, hadn’t you?” Severus growled.

“Don’t tell me that you liked her dress,” Harry retorted while changing the dress to emerald green with silver trimming. “Better?”

“That’s beside the point,” he deadpanned before he sighed. “It is your head Madame Bones will have.”

“Doubtable since I didn’t reveal the magical community itself. Right now, people begin to believe that the gods of old are not just a concept but very real. Did you know that the number of people following Loki more than tripled since I began advertising him?” Harry explained when a thoughtful expression entered his face.

“What have you concocted now?” Severus inquired.

“Something that should keep Bones off of me,” Harry replied before he stood up, handed his tablet to Severus and before the man could do or say anything, he walked over to where the news team was still broadcasting.

“…and no one managed to get a picture of said Apprentice, so it is still a mystery who exactly is behind those banners,” the reporter told her viewers. "And the changing of my dress."

“Hey guys!” he greeted the film team.

The reporter looked at him strangely and a bit peeved, that he dared to interrupt her since she was broadcasted live, though she didn’t say anything lest she got into problems.

“Who are you?” she asked him politely, but he could see that she wasn’t happy.

“Name’s Harry Potter and after you complained that no one ever got a picture of me I thought, why not introducing myself,” Harry replied with a broad grin. “Hello, I’m Loki’s Apprentice!”

The reporter couldn’t help herself, she snorted upon that revelation.

“We are really to believe, that an eleven-year-old boy is the apprentice of Loki?” she asked him in disbelief.

Harry’s only visible reaction to that was that his grin broadened. When he saw what was going on, the cameraman chuckled lowly. It was only thanks to the reflection in the camera lens that the woman realised what just happened, her hair had turned a vile shade of green.

“As I said, I’m Loki’s Apprentice, and for the protocol, I’m technically thirteen,” he answered, ignoring all the cameras that went off around him.

The woman cleared her throat before she went on. “Obviously, my apologies for questioning your claim,” she said to him. “So, you’re working together with Loki? He really exists?”

“Of course, he exists,” Harry exclaimed indignantly. “As far as I know each and every god you might ever have heard of exists though the only one who is truly still active – except a few in Asia – is Loki. However, until lately he was more active in America than Europe.”

“A few people were wondering…how is Loki as a god?”

“For me, Loki is far more than just a god I follow, he is my friend. He saved me from an abusive family, gave me a real one, friends and so much more. I mean, don’t be mistaken, he isn’t a saint but
as long as you abide by his rules and don’t piss him off…,” Harry explained with a shrug.

“What might pissed him off? Just so that our viewers know what to avoid,” the woman asked.

“First and foremost, he hates child abusers. In his opinion, there is no good reason to beat a child and should you have ever laid a hand on a child…pray he doesn’t find out. Furthermore, bullying someone is also on his list of what you should never do. Hitting on someone only because he is weaker, has a different world-view, or whatever other stupid reason you might come up with…a big no-no. Other than that? Have fun! Play harmless pranks, do whatever makes you happy…life is too serious as it is,” he told her. “As long as it doesn’t hurt anyone, it is a free game and if you bring some arrogant idiot down a peg or two with it…all the better.”

“Is that the reason for why the banner on the White House has yet to come down? How did you even do that?”

“Really? I’m the apprentice to the Norse Trickster God, and you’re asking me that?” Harry asked incredulously. “Anyway, it is getting late. I have to get back to school. It was nice to talk to you, but I have to leave now. Have a nice day and to all the viewers out there…have fun!”

Without another word and before the reporter could reply anything Harry vanished into thin air only to reappear next to Severus and Ron who were looking at him incredulously.

“Why is it that I get admonished for flying a car through London while you can perform magic in front of so many Muggles without anyone saying anything?” Ron finally asked once he came out of his stupor.

“That is easily answered Ron,” Harry said while flopping down between Severus and the other boy. “I just told the entire world that not only the gods the people once believed in are in fact real but also that I’m an apprentice to one. When I now perform magic in front of a Muggle, no one will bat an eye about it and write it down to that fact. The magical world, on the other hand, is safe from being revealed through it. You, on the other hand, don’t have such a safety net to fall back onto. When you perform magic in front of Muggles, they will instantly be suspicious about you and investigate, consequently finding out about the magical world.”

“I hope that this little excursion showed you how foolish it was to fly with the car to Hogwarts, Mr Weasley,” Snape spoke up. “Not that I’m overly happy with you either, Harry.”

Ron watched the quite large crowd, which had formed first thanks to Harry’s banner and then later even became larger when surrounding people had realised that the interview Harry gave was indeed live and therefore came to see the real him. However, now that the spectacle was over, the crowd was slowly dissipating. This afternoon had been quite the eyeopener. Until today he had thought the Muggles as backwards and had smiled at his father’s fascination with them but now? He could see why his father was so fascinated with them. Merlin, they could get information all around the world within minutes, while the wizarding world still relied on owls!

“I’m sorry,” he finally said in a solemn voice.

“Next time think about the consequences before you act,” Severus told him upon which he nodded. “Good, now come, we have to get back to Hogwarts.”

With that, Severus set up some wards that would allow them to safely apparate away without drawing the attention of the still lingering Muggles. Once that was done, he grabbed both boys at their shoulder and apparated them back to Hogwarts. Ron quickly thanked them for the trip before he turned around and walked towards the castle lost in thought about what he learned today. Harry, on
the other hand, stayed with Severus, waiting for the boy to be out of hearing range.

“Are you sure, that you’re a Gryffindor?” Severus asked sardonically.

That made Harry laugh. “The hat contemplated putting me into Slytherin, but I think the threat of Loki hexing him stopped him from doing so.”

Severus shook his head. Together they walked down the way towards Hogwarts.

The results of his little interview – the one Amelia Bones and Michael nearly got a heart-attack over until Harry explained them his reasoning and that it was to keep the Muggles from investigating why exactly he could perform magic – was manifold. For a start, hundreds of self-proclaimed experts came crawling out of the woodworks and discussed in talk-shows the upward trend in paganism. Even the pope gave a statement over how that went against one of the Ten Commandments.

Another thing was that after people realised, that yes, Loki cared about his followers, he had a rise in people praying to him for help.

Especially children who lived in an abusive household began praying to him. In the end, there were so many that Loki had no other choice than to open up an orphanage for those who had no family to go to, making sure that they had everything they needed, mainly help to process what they had been put under.

That in exchange, made Crowley an extremely happy man because Loki employed him to deal with all the legal work. Crowley found a diabolical pleasure in suing the former guardians of the children to hell and back.

Overall, Loki couldn’t decide whether to curse Harry for all the extra work or thank him that he gave the children the confidence and a way to get out of their personal hell.

Another quite surprising side effect had come about a month later in the form of a sleek eagle delivering a letter to Harry. Harry, curious to whom the bird belonged, untied the message and began to read it.

“Fancy that, an invitation for tea from the Queen for Saturday afternoon,” he muttered in awe.

“Wait what?” Hermione exclaimed before snatching the letter from Harry, completely ignoring her now baby blue hair she got in retaliation. “The Queen invited you for tea?”

"Yes, she did, want to accompany me?” Harry asked in a sweet tone.

"You cannot just bring someone with you,” Hermione disputed.

"The last line,” Harry told her with a broad grin.

Hermione scrambled to read the bottom of the letter, which she hadn't gotten to, too shocked over the idea that the Queen invited Harry for tea.

"Your friends are also welcome," she read out loud, her eyes going wide. "You mean I can come
with you and meet the Queen?"

Hermione seemed to be salivating over the fact, that she would be able to attend an afternoon tea with the queen, much to Harry's amusement.

"I hope that I don't have to go with you," Loki moaned, he hated this formal stuff.

"Actually, the Queen invited you specifically too," Harry retorted with a smirk.

Loki groaned and let his head sink on the table. It was Luna who patted him on the back consolingly.

"Drinking a tea with the Queen sounds like fun," she said in a dreamy tone. "Wearing nice dresses...."

"Hey, that sounds like a brilliant idea. How about I ask the headmaster for allowance to leave Saturday morning so that we can go shopping beforehand," Harry mused. "I don't doubt that a certain Professor would mind it overly much to accompany us."

However, this seemed to have put a damper on Hermione's mood.

"I don't have enough money," she moaned, her eyes misting over. "And nothing I own is good enough."

Harry, who saw that Hermione was close to tears took her hand. "Hermione, what kind of gentleman would I be if I didn't treat my two lovely ladies something nice from time to time."

It seemed that Hermione didn't know what to do or say to that except launching herself at him and hugging him close.

"Why do I have the feeling, that I should accompany you only to make sure that the Buckingham Palace still stands after you leave?" Neville moaned, but none of the friends doubted that it wasn't a hardship for him.

"Sam?" Harry asked.

"Sorry, but all this pomp is nothing for me but have fun," Sam waved him off.

Harry looked at the twins expectantly, but they both shook their head.

"Sorry but all the stiffness is nothing for us, too."

"We wouldn't be able to behave ourselves."

"And Neville's fears really might become real with us there."

The twins both grinned devilishly, and they all broke out in laughter. Soon they parted ways to go to their respective classes. However, what none of them saw were the hateful and envious glares a certain female redhead was throwing in their direction.
Saturday morning then found Harry, Loki, Neville, Hermione, Luna, and surprisingly – or maybe not so surprising – Draco, whom Harry had also asked, in a side alley to Diagon Alley where the most exclusive shop for clothes was located. They were in the company of Professor Winchester as well as the Potters and Narcissa, who agreed to help them with the shopping after Harry and Draco respectively informed them. Michael had gladly given them his consent, knowing fully well that they would be safe with his brother.

So now they entered said shop, Hermione and Luna looking around in awe of the finest materials on display while Draco seemed a bit bored, already used to this as a regular customer. Instantly an assistant walked over to them.

"Hello and welcome to Hemsworth's Finest Clothing how may I be of assistance?" the woman, who seemed to be in her mid-thirties, asked them politely.

"These young ladies and gentlemen need some clothes befitting a meeting with the Queen of England for tea," James explained with a proud smile.

The eyes of the assistant went wide on that proclamation, but she quickly got her bearings back under control and began bustling around.

"For the ladies, a nice long dress made of Acromantula-Silk should do the trick," she muttered while walking over to a stack of differently coloured silk. "Champagne-coloured for the lady with the brown hair and a light blue for the young lady with blond hair."

In the meantime, a measuring tape flittered around Hermione, taking her measures before switching over to Luna.

"Hey, I'm off for a bit, but I think I'll be back in about half an hour," James suddenly spoke up.

After everyone nodded, he left the shop. The assistant led the two girls into the back of the shop where she could fit them in private while waving another assistant to take care of the boys. Lily and Narcissa, who were talking animatedly about the difference between wizarding clothes and muggle ones, in the meantime, took it upon themselves to see what could be done about the girl's hair.

"So, let's see boys," the second assistant said, having been clued in what was needed by her colleague.

"I know what I want," Harry told her. "Emerald green long-sleeved button-down shirt with a black leather vest, black leather trousers, and a black short-sleeved open robe that goes to the knees. On top of that black dragon leather boots. The Potter coat of arms stitched in gold on both the vest and the robe."

"Quite specific, aren't you?" The assistant asked amusedly. "Very well, for your three friends, I also know the right thing."

In the end, Neville was dressed in a classic white button-down shirt with black trousers and black shoes. Over that came a burgundy red tie, a black closed robe with burgundy red trimming. The Longbottom coat of arms stitched on both the tie and the robe.

Draco also wore a white shirt but with a black vest over it and a long emerald green open robe with silver trimming and an emerald green tie, the Black coat of arms on his chest.

Loki, on the other hand, fought tooth and nail, but in the end, he had to bow down to Harry's retort that if he doesn't get fitted, he would have to watch out for laxatives in his sweets in the foreseeable future. A few minutes later then he wore a beige Muggle-style suit over a white button-down shirt.
with a white tie, he absolutely refused to wear robes.

It was right that moment that the girls emerged from the room where they had been fitted, and it took the boys' breath away. Hermione wore a champagne coloured floor-length dress. Her hair wasn't as bushy anymore and braided to the left side with small violet flowers woven into it.

Luna, on the other hand, wore a light blue dress that stopped short of her ankles and looked like water flowed down her body, shimmering differently with every movement. Her hair was pinned up in a state of ordered chaos with a sizeable blue flower adorning her head on the right side.

"Ladies, you look lovely," Harry complimented them once he came out of his stupor.

"I can only agree with that assessment, but something is missing," came James' reply from the door of the shop. "And I have just the right thing."

With that, he walked over to Luna first and stepped behind her before pulling a large box from his pocket. He opened the box and pulled out a necklace made out of aquamarines and placed it around the girl's neck, it perfectly complemented her outfit.

James repeated the same with Hermione only that she received a single diamond hanging from a silver chain with complementing earrings.

“Perfect,” Lily cooed over them.

“One last thing, Harry, this is something I should have given you some time ago but with everything that happened it slipped my mind,” James began, pulling out a small square box. “This is the Potter heir ring, and it is yours.”

With awe, Harr carefully picked the ring up and slid it on his right ring finger where it resized to perfectly fit him.

“Thank you!” Harry said to his father before he turned to the others. “Before we go, I’d like to take a photo of you all.”

“I have a better idea, come on, get together,” Lily interrupted plucking Harry’s smartphone from his fingers.

Harry grinned at his mother while he walked over to where the others already got together. Lily quickly took a photo before handing Harry his smartphone back. James in the meantime paid for the clothes, and a few moments later they all left the shop, it was time to get to Buckingham Palace after all.
The six teleported to the entrance hall of the Buckingham Palace, Loki taking Draco and Neville while Harry took Hermione and Luna. Though after the landing, Harry swayed a bit.

“Are you okay?” Hermione asked concerned.

“Yeah, it’s just that teleport with you two was a bit more strenuous than I anticipated,” Harry replied while straightening up. “Don’t worry, I’m alright.”

“Okay,” Hermione said, but her concern was still audible.

Luna and Neville looked around curiously, taking in the stylishly antiquarian furnished hall in. To the left and to the right stairs lead up to large double doors, which either lead to corridors or other rooms though they couldn’t see because the doors were closed. In front of them, another set of stairs lead to a large staircase. The walls were all white with golden ornaments, while the floor was covered with a royal red carpet. To the side stood dark wooden chairs and benches while in niches stood several different statues. In a large vase, a massive bouquet stood on display to either side. Also, to either side of the stairs to the staircase stood a guard looking straight ahead not even blinking at the fact that suddenly six children had appeared out of nowhere. They either had been forewarned, or they were used to it.

Draco, on the other hand, had his usual aloof pure-blood mask up though Harry could see that he also was intrigued and excited to meet the Queen.

They were beginning to wonder whether they were supposed to wait here or not when an elderly lady with curly white hair came down from the grand staircase followed by an in comparison large middle-aged man. She wore a long crème coloured dress. The friends instantly recognised her despite her not wearing her crown.

Luna, Hermione, Neville, and Draco curtsied to her with an awed “Your Majesty!”.

Loki though curtly bowed. “Queen Elisabeth,” he greeted her.

However, the most shocking was Harry’s greeting, he merely bowed his head towards her.

“Ma’am,” he said. “May I introduce you to Hermione Granger, Luna Lovegood, Neville Longbottom, Draco Malfoy, Loki Laufeyson and I am Harry Potter. It is a pleasure to meet you, and I have to thank you for your invitation.”

That made especially Hermione and Draco look at him in shock, but the others except Loki weren’t fairing any better.
“Are you insane?” Hermione hissed lowly. “Show the proper respect.”

Harry blinked at her before he began to laugh.

“Hermione, this has nothing to do with disrespect. You know very well that I don’t care about who you are or what social standing you have, I treat them all with the same respect no matter whether it is some random homeless person or the Queen of England. Besides that, I bow to no one.”

Hermione looked like she wanted to faint when they heard the Queen chuckling lowly.

“Mr Potter is quite right, Ms Granger,” she said in a soft but nonetheless stern no-nonsense tone. “It isn’t the way you bow that matters, it is how you mean it that matters. A person can fully bow before me, but when this person doesn’t mean it, it is nothing but an insult towards me. In addition to that, I was already well aware that Mr Potter is not like the people I normally convene with when I invited him. It is quite refreshing to see a young man as your friend to stand true to his very noble principle even in the face of possible punishment. There is already too much bias in this world, and if your friend really stays true to his statement, it is something I fully support.”

Hermione blushed and looked at the floor at that lecture.

“I’m sorry, I shouldn’t have assumed things,” she admitted.

“No harm was done. You’re young and bound to make mistakes. Learning from books gives us knowledge but learning from mistakes gives us wisdom. So, learn from your mistakes and try to avoid making them again. Now I suggest we relocate this meeting to the drawing room,” the woman suggested.

Harry placed a hand on the small of Hermione’s back and smiled encouragingly at her, which made her exhale in relief before they both together with the others followed the Queen and whom they assumed was a bodyguard, a magical one if the wand-holster strapped to his left forearm was anything to go by. They followed her through the left double-door and along a corridor past several old and probably priceless pieces of furniture and decoration until she opened the door to her right.

Behind it was a small drawing room – well, small for a palace – held in beige, deep red and white with golden ornaments. In front of a large marble fireplace stood two two-seater sofas and three armchairs around a coffee table. The couches and chairs were made from dark leather with red velvet cushions. The two girls sat down on the one couch while Neville and Draco shared the other one.

“Before we engage in any talk, we brought a present with us. I guess you want to ensure that it is in no way harmful?” Harry pulled out a small wooden box and held it out towards the man who had taken up a guarding position next to the door with an expectant look.

The man’s lips curled into a slight smirk, but he indeed pulled out his wand and began waving it in intricate patterns over the box before nodding towards the queen. Harry smiled at that and placed the box on the table in front of the woman next to her cup of tea a butler had brought in and served in the meantime.

The queen carefully picked up the box and opened it to find a brooch inside, that could also be worn on a chain around the neck. It was about an inch and a half in height and an inch wide, depicting the Windsor coat of arms. It was made out of pure gold with rubies.

“This was created in a joined effort. The runes etched into it provide protection against minor magical attacks,” Draco explained.

“Added to that is a protection against most known magical and non-magical poisons,” Hermione
“And I finished it with protection against any form of mind control. See it as repayment for having to bear with me,” Loki ended with a roguish grin.

Hermione together with Sam had actually studied the runes Loki had added to Draco’s medallion which brought them to the idea of the present. Loki then had pointed them towards a few books where they would find more about protective runes. With a few hints here and there they came up with the runic layout. Harry and Draco in the meantime had brewed the necessary potion with Neville supplying them with ingredients. Luna designed the entire thing, and the twins were the ones who in the end put everything together.

“This is truly a unique present and very well thought-out, thank you all,” she replied while carefully picking up the brooch. “I have to admit, that when I heard for the first time that Loki was meddling around at Hogwarts, not to mention obviously taking the Golden Boy of the wizarding world as his apprentice, that I was worried. What I feared the most was the resulting chaos but also that it would reveal magic to the world.

“Magic is something wonderful and to be treasured, but too many react violently to it because they don’t understand it or cannot control it.

“Then I saw what happened a month ago and I thought my fears would come true. However, it didn’t. You let them all believe that it was only a very few individuals that can perform magic and not an entire community. You effectively distracted them while showing that magic indeed is real and it intrigued me, you intrigued me,” she told them.

The six friends listened with rapt attention to the Queen talking. They all had a feeling that she usually wasn’t that open to strangers.

“My apologies, I hadn’t anticipated that my involvement would worry you in such a way. However, I swear to you on my pride as the Trickster God that I would never do anything that would endanger innocents, especially children,” Loki suddenly spoke up in a solemn tone.

The others looked at him in surprise because it was very rare that Loki apologised to anyone and really meant it. Typically it was only to placate someone, but this time it was different, it looked like he really respected Queen Elizabeth.

Said Queen chuckled lowly. “That I can believe and I trust you to a certain grade that you don’t act in an ill-advised manner. Actually, when I invited you, I expected to be greeted by teenagers who had little regards for rules and could endanger everything I swore to protect. However, seeing now five so lively but nonetheless well-mannered and educated young people, I’ve never been more relieved to be proven wrong.”

“If I may be so bold,” Harry spoke up while the Queen pause to take a sip from her tea. “I think I speak for all of us, and please interrupt me if I’m wrong when I say that we would never jeopardise the safety of the people, this country or this planet. What I did a month ago, I did to draw the attention of the media onto me so that the magical community can stay in the background.”

“And it worked splendidly, but I hope that you’re ready to deal with the fallout because you didn’t only gain followers with your actions,” the Queen replied.

“I can assure you that I’ll deal with any problem that might arise that you inform me of. Nobody shall say that I cowardly hide to leave others to deal with my mess,” he reassured her.
Queen Elizabeth looked at him for a long moment to determine his truthfulness, but in the end, she nodded. “That is good to hear. Now that this is sorted out, I hear that you’re no longer a Malfoy but a Black now?” she addressed Draco.

“It is true that as of yesterday the marriage of my parents got nullified with the help of Lord Black,” Draco answered before he got into a lengthy explanation.

It turned out that the Blacks had a stipulation in their family that the head of the family could insist on the nullification of marriage in the case that the one who married the Black in question wasn’t faithful. This was an extremely old stipulation in the statutes of the house that dated back to the time where the parentage of a child couldn’t be proven that easy as it is nowadays the case. So the stipulation was inserted to ensure that the heir was truly of their blood and not the result of a dalliance. Sirius had a feeling that this was then forgotten over time but never removed, which now proved to be invaluable. Why also the husbands had been included was also easily explained. From what Sirius found out, the Black family had been a purely matriarchic house at that time, and the head of the house found it wrong that only the wife had to be faithful while the husband could do what he wanted.

Naturally, Lucius had moved heaven and hell in a bid to try and prevent the nullification, but in the end, he had to admit defeat. Though the most significant blow came when his son told him that he didn’t want to have anything to do with him anymore. At the moment the man was trying to salvage his reputation.

After that, they switched over to several different topics such as how life at Hogwarts was, their favourite classes, what they did in their free time… the longer they talked, the more relaxed and open they became. The entire meeting was far less stiff and formal than they had thought, but that may be because it was a private setting, so none of them had to pretend to be overly formal.

They were enjoying their tea and the pastries that were served when suddenly a knock echoed through the room and a man entered without waiting for a response.

“Your Majesty, my sincerest apology for interrupting you but it seemed that the news got out about who your guests are. Outside quite a mob has formed consisting of both supporters of the old religions as they call themselves and the opposition. In between a man is claiming to be Odin, who demands that Mr Laufeyson faces him,” the man explained before giving some orders over an earpiece he was wearing. “I fear that the situation will escalate soon.”

Harry sighed while he rubbed with his left hand over his face. “Ma’am, if you excuse me please but it seems that I have to give some idiots the biggest dressing down in the history of dressing downs.”

With that he stood up and walked out of the room without waiting for a reply, leaving behind five stunned friends, a shocked to the core security officer, an amused bodyguard, and a surprised queen. Harry realised that everyone followed him but not before he already walked through the front door of Buckingham Palace with determination. He let his gaze wander over the masses that had congregated on the other side of the fence that was surrounding the palace.

Some of the demonstrators even held up signs either proclaiming Loki to be their saviour or the opposite. Some cited the ten commandments, saying that the Catholic religion forbids having other gods.

Harry turned around towards the bodyguard of the Queen and the security officer.

“Could you please only intervene when someone, not myself or Loki, is in danger?” he asked them.
Both looked sceptically at him, but upon a signal of the Queen, they both agreed.

With a smile towards his friends, who looked worriedly at him, he turned around again and walked over to the gates that were opened upon his approach while the people were still kept out. Harry again let his gaze wander when he saw that the visible Catholics were on the verge of attacking those who opposed them.

A sharp, magically amplified whistle had them all fall quiet and their ears ringing. Harry felt a bit guilty for the guards who were only doing their jobs, but there was nothing to be done about it.

“Okay, may someone please be so gracious and explain to me what the hell is going on here?” he demanded to know over the silence.

However, as soon as he spoke the last word, the shouts began anew. Some people were degrading him, calling him names, and demanding of him that he’d stop his pagan propaganda. The other side though proclaimed their love to him, a woman asking to marry him or shouting that they wanted a child from him. Especially the last one made him a bit nauseous, he was thirteen for hell’s sake.

When the shouting didn’t stop, he let another magically amplified whistle lose, annoyed of their behaviour.

“Seriously, your behaving like a bunch of children in a sandbox, fighting over the toy,” he growled.

“Said the child,” someone retorted.

“Exactly, I am a child. What is your excuse?” Harry replied with a grin which effectively silenced the man.

“Where is Loki,” suddenly another square-shouldered man with white hair and an eyepatch over the right eye, thundered who was only half a head shorter than Hagrid which said a lot.

Harry looked the man up and down. “Did I ask you to annoy me? Now shut up and stay silent!”

Odin spluttered upon that. “Do you have any idea who I am you brat?”

“Some idiot whose intelligence developed inversely proportional to his muscles? Ah yes, kidnapper and torturer of Loki’s children, so you currently rank on the second place of my least liked people right behind that feather-brained ass, Zachariah.”

“You! I’ll show you why it is a bad thing to get on my wrong side,” Odin roared again before he pulled back his right arm, the hand clenched in a tight fist and swung it at Harry much to the shock of the onlookers.

However, to Odin's growing frustration, Harry vanished when his fist was mere inches away from him and reappeared behind him as if there was nothing wrong.

“My, you’re really slow. Even my uncle was faster when beating me up and you want to be a Norse god? Pathetic,” Harry taunted the man.

Suddenly a spear appeared in Odin’s right hand, one which Harry was sure had some great fancy name that he couldn’t be bothered to remember.


Odin though swung around the spear and would have decapitated Harry, had the boy not
disappeared again and this time reappeared in the same spot. He repeated it a few more times with the same result.

“You know trying the same thing over and over again, expecting a different outcome is plain stupid,” Harry said with a sigh.

“I should have known. Someone who follows that bastard Loki cannot fight like a man but hides behind trickery. You’re just as much a monster like him, an abomination, a freak of nature just like his children!” Odin spat, completely ignoring the rising tension in the onlookers.

As much as their opinions over paganism differed, on one thing they agreed, attacking a child was nothing they condoned of.

Harry tensed minutely before he glared at Odin, his eyes hard. “What did you just say?” he asked in an ice-cold tone that let everyone bar Odin take a step back away from him.

“What? Did I hit a nerve?” Odin questioned with a smirk, placing the tip of his spear under Harry’s chin. “Who’s pathetic now?”

Harry however only glared at him until his lips curled into a grin and he vanished, this time together with Odin. Everyone stared shocked at the point they had been only mere minutes ago, wondering what just happened. The people began to talk to each other, questioning where Harry went and what happened to Odin, when said boy reappeared though without Odin.

“With that sorted now to the other problem…” he began but was quickly interrupted.

“What happened to Odin?” a woman asked.

“I dumped him somewhere, where he cannot annoy me anymore,” Harry deadpanned. “Now I have a question for you all. What is your problem? For once I am thirteen so as long as you’re not a paedophile or into raping underage children…no marriage or children. I mean this is wrong on so many levels….”

Quite a few of those who had proclaimed exactly that blushed and looked anywhere except at Harry.

“Anyway, the second thing…why did I have to come out here, interrupt my lovely meeting with the Queen only to prevent you from going down on each other? Can’t you just accept that there are people who have different opinions or beliefs? Not that they are so different, to begin with.

“Don’t think that I didn’t saw your anger when Odin attacked me. All of you, as it seems, detest violence against children. What about killing people? Rape? How you should treat other people? Instead of pointing out the differences, you should look for the similarities. Only because you believe in different gods you still live in the same countries, follow the same rules and laws. You both love your children, at least I hope so, and buy your food in the same market.

I don’t say that you shouldn’t argue, but please keep it non-violent because I would hate it if I got a call telling me that some confrontation escalated. Believe me, that would be worse for you than for me! Now if you would excuse me please, I want to get back to my meeting with the Queen you so rudely interrupted.”

With that, Harry turned around and walked over to where his friends were waiting together with the queen, guarded by four guards. Hermione instantly was all over him, making sure that he was alright and even the others looked at him worriedly.

However, it was only when they all were back in the drawing room, that they Queen finally spoke
“If I may ask, what did you do to Odin?” she asked him.

“Gave him to Alastair as a play toy with the instruction for her to find out where he hid away Loki’s sons Sleipnir and Jǫrmungandr. It is a high time those two can return to their father.”

After that, they talked for about another half an hour, but when it became apparent that all the teleporting took quite a lot out of Harry, they bid their goodbye and returned to the castle.

While Harry soon after arriving back at Hogwarts fell into a deep sleep, the media leapt at what happened that day.

Chapter End Notes

As I already received a few complaints on ff.net about the Queen's behaviour in this chapter I want to make a few things clear. She is meeting children in a private setting! So that's why she isn't overly formal. She also knows that Harry bows to no one and invited him anyway.

If you don't like it or think differently...sure why not but please accept that I picture her this way and that I won't change it.
Chapter 52: Halloween 2.0 – Hopefully Without any Incident

Some of those who read the newspaper watched the news or were informed of what transpired in front of the Buckingham Palace took Harry’s speech to heart. They began to look for similarities between the different cultures, religions, or other groupings instead of pointing at the differences. The hardcore fanatics, on the other hand, were even more aggravated though luckily, they were in the minority. Even the pope had to admit, however reluctantly, that God gave everyone free will and that they should respect the choices of others. That at least calmed the Christian fanatics, but it turned out that other groupings such as the IS were not impressed.

Harry, on the other hand, didn’t really care about their opinion of him as long as they didn’t hurt anyone though he had a feeling that it was only a matter of time until they did something…stupid. Ah well, he would deal with it when the time came.

At Hogwarts the time went by in peace though.

Hermione, Sam, and Draco were often found in some secluded corner of the library, studying things that were not on the curriculum after they were finished with their homework. Draco had to admit that both Sam and Hermione were highly intelligent and nothing like his father had made muggle-born out to be. Sure, they lacked the knowledge that was ingrained in every pureblood traditionalist, but that could be remedied, and he didn’t know how many intelligent discussions he held with the two. They were far better than any of the Slytherins in his year that was for sure.

Neville and Luna were more content with tending to either Neville’s plants that grew in a secluded area of the greenhouses which Sprout allowed skilled students to use for their own projects as long as they weren’t dangerous, or to the creatures living in the forest. Luna was absolutely fascinated with the Thestrals, but unfortunately, Neville couldn’t see them. However, Luna made up for it by describing them to him in every detail.

In the meantime, the twins and Loki pursued their creativity and either created new pranks – which were instantly tested on the more or less unsuspecting population of Hogwarts – or they created other things they thought useful and could earn them – mainly the twins – some money.

The professors most of the time condoned of it knowing that it was pointless trying to get them to stop as long as they ran any new product past them first to make sure that it didn’t endanger anyone or disturbed their classes.

To them, it was clear that they won’t be able to stop them from pranking others and left them be. This also gave others the incentive to live out their mischievous side and so it was hardly a surprise that Hufflepuff challenged Gryffindor for a prank war at one point. It was a surprise to the Gryffindors just how inventive the Puffs could be if they put their mind to it. In the end, it came to a draw but only because Loki had said that he would stay out of it to keep it fair, as long as he wasn’t the target of a prank, then he would retaliate.
Meanwhile, Harry jumped between the groups of his friends and joined those who stroke his fancy at that day except when they all met together to either play games, talk or just spend some quality time together.

What surprised everyone though was the change in one Ronald Weasley. It seemed that the detentions he still had to serve, in combination with the little demonstration just what his recklessness could have cost the magical world, had been an eye-opener. So, while his temper and snappishness considerably lessened, he became more pleasant to have around. He also finally accepted, that he probably would never become friends with Harry and began to form a tentative friendship with Seamus and Dean. Another change was his working moral considering classwork and homework. Sure, he never would be an overachiever like Hermione or Sam, whom together with Draco competed for the top spot – Harry just found it too much of a hassle to do more than necessary to get at least an EE –, his grades now at least reflected his abilities better.

Seeing those changes and approving of them, Loki also finally took pity on the boy and taught him a semi-permanent silencing spell he could place around his bed so that he wouldn’t have to sleep on one of the couches in the common room anymore when he threatened to wake the others with his snoring. Loki one day had had enough of teleporting him through half the castle and installed a little ward that, should he exceed a certain volume, would dump him in the common room. However, Loki made it clear that he should have thought about it himself and not rely on others for solving his problems.

So, September became October and quickly went towards November. However, before that could happen, one massive day stood in the path, one which everyone eagerly awaited and hoped that this time it went by without any incident.

Halloween.

The Day began as a typical day with classes and the only thing that didn’t go as it usually would was the DADA class, where Lockhart tried to force Harry into replaying a scene from one of his books. This ended in the man being assaulted by Puck with dung and colour bombs that made him stink to high heaven and look like a rainbow. Harry wondered where his familiar had gotten the bombs from, but if he had to guess, he would say the twins were behind that.

The rest of the class, on the other hand, found it highly amusing how Lockhart was flailing around, trying to find the invisible assailant to no avail. Most of the students had learned that Lockhart was a complete narcissistic fraud after the first few lessons with him and no one took him seriously anymore, so it was a welcome distraction when he was the target of the pranks. It was only because Loki was too interested in seeing what Harry had planned for the man’s birthday, that Lockhart was still in the castle and not running and fast. Another factor was the fact that Loki pretty much substituted for the non-existent DADA lessons during the history lessons, which he still split like he had done in the first year. Otherwise neither Loki nor Harry doubted, that Michael would have long fired the man and looked for someone more suitable but since the grades didn’t suffer, he was more than content with showing the man, that he wasn’t the great fighter he presented himself as.

Another thing is that Loki in preparation for the day used the history lessons to teach the students what really was behind the day called Halloween nowadays but is also known as Samhain. He told them about the demon called Samhain and how he was the reason for the celebrations as it takes place ever since he walked earth the first time. So is it that parents kept their children indoor and made them wear masks to hide them from the demon, while they carved pumpkins to worship him. However, the demon was exorcised centuries ago and was consequently trapped in hell because he could only be summoned once every 600 years.
However, all that was secondary to the great feast that would take place in the evening and that everyone was awaiting eagerly.

Michael and Loki had actually closed the great hall after breakfast to decorate it, and no one was supposed to see it before the feast. For lunch, they redirected everyone to a few large and unused classrooms, where the house-elves would prepare buffets for them so that they wouldn’t have to go hungry.

Now it was shortly before seven in the evening, and the students were crowding the entrance hall waiting to be permitted to enter the great hall for the feast. At seven sharp, the doors finally opened and the first thing that greeted them was a wall of thick white fog that wafted out through the door, momentarily preventing them from seeing anything until it lowered so that it stayed at knee height. What those who were the closest to the door saw took their breath away.

The entire floor was covered with the knee-deep fog. In irregular intervals, one could see the light shining through the mist, which later turned out to be carved pumpkins that were illuminated by small floating, glowing orbs. However, they weren’t regular pumpkins but enchanted ones that when someone came too close to them jumped up, growing a body made out of vines and ran around before settling somewhere again until the next person came close. When that happened the first time, quite a few screamed in shock and surprise but quickly recovered and marvelled over those pumpkins.

Then there were the tables. No longer stood there the four house tables but many round ones with a large candelabra in the middle of each in which black and blood red candles burned merrily. Each table was laden with food, which other than the previous year wasn’t only sweets but also healthy food though decorated fittingly to the theme as well as the drinks. So was the pumpkin juice coloured in a blood red and could have been mistaken for it if not for the pumpkin taste while the water was stained in slightly luminescent emerald green.

Another noticeable change was that the head table where usually the teachers sat also vanished and now made room for a raised stage upon which a live band consisting of six skeletons played, two of which played the guitar, one the bass, one keyboard, one the drums, and one sang. They seemed to play a mixture of music from the magical world and the muggle world consisting of rock, medieval rock but also everything else that fitted the theme of Halloween. Between the stage and the tables was room for those who wished to dance to the music and the area was separated from the tables by sound dampening charms so that the music was still audible there but not so loud as to prevent conversation.

Over everything floated even more carved pumpkins to illuminate the hall. Between and over the decorations also stretched cobwebs and bats flew over them in swarms.

Everyone wandered into the great hall, looking around in astonishment. The students gaped at the decorations, talking animatedly while walking over to the tables and sitting down.

Though to the surprise of quite a few professors, the students didn’t separate into their houses as they assumed but mingled with the each other. So, sat Slytherins between Ravenclaws, Hufflepuffs and even Gryffindors. It seemed that slowly but surely the prejudice and rivalry between those two houses lessened.

The group of friends sat together at one table, joined by Loki whom they hadn’t seen all day. They talked with each other all the while enjoying the feast that the house-elves prepared.

However, what none of them had anticipated was, that suddenly students all over the hall began to transform into varying creatures associated with Halloween. Therefore, it was no surprise that instead
of normal students suddenly ghouls, vampires, zombies, ghosts or even skeletons occupied the tables. It was a simple illusion charm but effective nonetheless.

Harry found himself transformed into a zombie while Luna became a vampire. The twins suddenly found them in long white ragged clothes and Sam was quick to explain that they became ladies in white – vengeful ghosts – or at least male versions of it. That was before Sam suddenly turned into a skeleton, closely followed by Neville. Harry found that highly amusing though he wondered how it worked when he jokingly tried to punch him in the stomach only to find nothing but air. Hermione in the meantime gave a perfect impression of a living scarecrow.

Loki looked over to the table where not only the teachers but also the headmaster sat and looked at Michael. When Michael, who felt being observed, looked up and caught his brother’s gaze, he nodded with a smile. Both of them had put a lot of work into this and now were proud of themselves that it was received that well.

The feast was in full swing, some of the students decided to dance, while others were content sitting at the table, snacking on sweets, and talking to their friends.

Harry had decided to be a gentleman and asked Luna for a dance even if he had to admit that he had no idea how to dance. Luna, who found that highly amusing, lead him to the dance floor. That had been about three songs ago, and while he was a bit insecure in the beginning, he quickly found it fun to learn how to dance from Luna.

They were soon followed by Neville, who had asked Hermione, and Sam, who had proposed a Hufflepuff, Susan Bones, who was the niece of Amelia Bones. The twins asked the chasers of their Quidditch team Angelina Johnson and Katie Bell.

At some point, Hermione switched with Luna so that now Harry was dancing with Hermione.

All in all, they had a lovely time, thinking that they were lucky, and the day would end without anything out of the ordinary happening, when suddenly a scream echoed through the hall, so loud that it was audible even over the music.

Instantly the teachers as well as Loki jumped up and ran in the direction where the scream came from. Everyone else though looked confused and a bit worried about what happened but dismissed it as someone having been surprised by the decoration or something like that. Harry when he grasped that this was serious, looked at his friend before also making his way towards the location of the one who screamed.

What greeted him, shocked him to the core. On the floor laid a fifth year Hufflepuff girl, coughing up blood and scratching at her throat as if she wanted to remove something.

Poppy, who was the first to arrive, quickly did a scan of the girl to assess what was wrong. A waiving of her wand later told her, that something was stuck in her throat and another quick wave removed the object and let it fall in a heap next to her head in a bowl Severus conjured. As it turned out the object was a bunch of needles. Poppy frowned but quickly went to work when another scream echoed through the hall.

Having the idea that it was a similar case and knowing that Poppy was still busy healing the girl, Harry turned around and jumping over everything in his way, sprinted to the other person who screamed. He found the exact same scene as with the Hufflepuff girl though this time it was a Slytherin boy from the third year. Harry knelt down next to the boy, held out his hands over the boy’s throat and pushed magic into it cancelling the illusion in the wake. Feeling, that this boy’s throat was also blocked by something he quickly went to work removing the object – this time it was
razors – and healing the wounds it created.

During all this, three more shouts for help arose. It was this time Severus, Michael and Loki who spurred into action having at least basic healing knowledge. However, it became quickly evident that the incidences became more and more, not to mention occurred faster than they could heal those who suffered from whatever this was.

At some point, Loki looked up and tried to find the source of the rising injuries when his gaze fell on the food. He could hit himself, it was so obvious because he lectured about the ritual several times over the last week after all. The ritual to summon Samhain. After quickly doing the math he knew that yes this was the 600th year since the last possible attempt and it seemed that someone was performing it. The fact that two Ley-lines crossed beneath Hogwarts and the high ambient magic let the effects of the ritual then reverberate as far as Hogwarts. So, with a flick of his hand, he vanished all the food and drinks in the hall.

When Michael saw that he threw him a confused glance before returning to the healing of the girl that currently lay in front of him.

“Samhain,” was all that Loki said so that neither he nor his brother had to stop what they were doing for looking at each other.

First, Michael didn’t catch what Loki wanted to tell him, but soon it dawned upon him and gave a recognising sound.

However, even with the food vanished, the injuries didn’t stop to pile up, and it was impossible for them to heal everyone in time if they had to run from patient to patient.

Seeing that it would take far too long for them to come to the injured ones, the other professors and even a few students of the higher year began to levitate those suffering to the closest one who was continually healing those who were brought to him. Others in the meantime levitated the tables away to make space.

With the injured students now laying in rows next to those who were continuously healing them, it became far easier for them to do their job. Once one was treated, friends took them away to sit them on a chair to make more room for the other injured students.

All the while, the prefects helped to keep everyone calm and out of the way, allowing only one friend to accompany each of the injured ones.

So, it was no wonder that they could heal everyone in record time. Though Madame Pomfrey made it clear that she wanted everyone who sustained an injury to show up in the hospital wing later to make sure that everything was healed perfectly and no other damage was done that hadn’t been found in the bid to get them out of a potentially lethal state.

Once everyone was healed, Harry slumped down next to Loki who also looked a bit worn out though not as severely as Harry.

“Healing so many is really tiring,” he moaned, he had healed at least ten people.

“You were brilliant, Harry, I’m proud of you,” Loki complimented him, draping an arm over his shoulder, and hugging him close. “I didn’t know that you became this good in healing.”

“Well, after the incident with the unicorn I read up on healing and began practising,” Harry replied with a shrug.
It was true that he had taken upon healing after the unicorn so that it wouldn’t tire him so much anymore and to be able to heal his friends should something happen. However, the most he learned about it while he stayed in the cage where Lucifer taught him. That though he won’t tell Loki because that would ruin his surprise/prank.

Just at that moment, the others reached him, and Hermione instantly began to fuss over them.

As if on cue, Sam’s mobile rang. With a scowl, wondering who that was, he picked up only to be greeted by his brother.

“Hey Sammy, not to be rude or anything but could you please give me Loki for a moment? We have news for him that he might find…interesting,” Dean told him without any preamble.

Sam frowned. “Dean, sure, wait a sec,” he replied before holding out the phone towards Loki. “Here for you. It’s Dean, he says he has information for you.”

Loki rose an eyebrow but took the phone and held it against his ear. He listened to what Dean had to say for about a minute, his face darkening with each second. In the end, he looked plain murderous.

“Give me a minute then I’m there and teach them a lesson the will never forget,” he snarled before he hung up. “They found the ones responsible for the ritual that had the audacity to reach to Hogwarts.”

Michael’s face also instantly darkened though he wasn’t the only one. “Go and give them what they deserve. No one hurts someone under my protection and gets away with it!”

Loki just wanted to turn around after nodding towards his brother and leave when he was held back by someone. When he turned around, he saw Severus standing right next to him.

“I’m coming with you,” he growled in a way that broke no argument.

For a long moment, Loki looked into his eyes before he nodded and grabbed his wrist. Not even a blink later they were both gone.

“Headmaster, I think we should send the students who weren’t injured back to the common rooms to get rest while I check those who were injured over one last time to make sure nothing lingered,” Madame Pomfrey addressed Michael.

“You’re right, this was an exhausting evening, and I think everyone deserves a good night sleep,” Michael said with a nod.

Harry sighed deeply and got up only to be grabbed by Sam and Neville when he began to sway.

“Yep, some sleep sounds really nice,” he muttered with a yawn.

With the help of his friends, Harry made his way to the entrance door while Michael dismissed everyone with a few reassuring words to get the rest they needed. However, what neither of them knew was that the day was far from over.
Chapter 53: Misfortunes Never Come Singly

Loki and Severus landed in a street of some American town right next to Alastair, Dean, and a very different looking Castiel. The angel didn’t have that look of an obedient little puppy anymore but looked a lot more confident and dare he say it, cocky. Sure, he still wore that beige trench coat but with the obvious hand-tailored suit the colour of freshly spilt blood he wore with a pristine white button-down shirt beneath it and a far more alert expression, he looked like…well, Loki had no words that would do him credit. One thing was for sure, wasn’t it for the fact, that two evidently extremely possessive demons already claimed the angel for themselves…he would certainly try to hit on him.

“Castiel, you look good,” Loki said with a seductive wink that frankly spoken looked strange on the face of a twelve-year-old boy. However, he drew back when he saw Alastair’s glare, protective indeed.

Around them, children, who were already costumed, ran around despite that it was only around noon where they currently were. The houses also were decorated with Halloween themed decoration and carved pumpkins that would light everything up once the sun set.

Severus, after they landed, instantly looked around and assessed, who or what might be a threat. Old habits die hard. However, on first glance, he couldn’t see anything that might be a threat if you didn’t count hyper excited children bumping into you.

“So, Dean, Alastair, Castiel, what happened and where are those bastards who performed the ritual?” Loki finally asked in a low, threatening voice, and though they all knew that it wasn’t directed at them, they shivered.

“Over the last two days, two people died. The first one two days ago was a father who ate some candy and ended up with razors in the throat and stomach, he died of blood loss. The second victim was a high school girl,” Dean explained. “She was on a Halloween Party last night and died during apple bobbing. The water didn’t let go of her anymore and began to boil. I think you can imagine how that one ended.”

“The first one resembles what happened at Hogwarts,” Loki mused and elaborated the statement upon the questioning glances. “This evening during the feast children suddenly started to scream. Some had needles, razors and other extremely dangerous things stuck in their throats. Luckily we could heal everyone before something graver happened.”

“No wonder you’re pissed,” Dean muttered. “Anyway, the culprits are two siblings. A witch and a wizard as it seems. Whether they made a deal with Samhain, some other demon, or are naturals, we don’t know. Both are from what we could get extremely old…like over 600 years old. The brother hid as a teacher under the name of Don Harding at the local high school while the sister went there as a student under the name of Tracey Davis,” he explained before he remembered something. “Ah yes, and they tried to make one or all of us the third sacrifice.”

Dean twirled a little hex bag around that Castiel had found in the wall of their motel room.
“It was made with the supposedly extinct herb *Gold Thread*, a centuries-old Celtic coin and the charred finger bone of a new-born,” Dean said, throwing the thing to Loki who inspected it more closely.

“This is powerful witchcraft. Severus, what do you think?”

The only thing from the hex bag Severus picked up was the herb, which he held against the light before biting off a bit, tasting it and spitting it out again.

“The herb indeed is known as *Gold Thread* though it seems that it isn’t as extinct as you think. This one is no older than a few months and in outstanding quality too. If they’re growing it themselves, I’ll certainly take a plant with me,” Severus replied, placing the rest of the herb back in the bag.

Loki chuckled lowly, Severus…always the Potions Master. “Well, as it seems only one sacrifice is missing. Where do they live?” he asked when he suddenly tensed.

Severus who saw it also placed his right hand on his left wrist where his wand was hidden from view in case that he needed to quickly draw it.

Not much later, a dark-skinned man with a bald head, and who wore a black suit, approached them. The man looked around in disgust as if he didn’t want to be here but was forced to, muttering under his breath something about mud-monkeys.

“Uriel, what do you want?” Loki sneered.

That drew the man’s – Uriel’s – attention to the group. When he let his eyes roam over the group in front of him, he seemed surprised to see Castiel standing there though he dismissed everyone else as inconsequential.

“Castiel, where have you been? You ignored our calls,” Uriel asked the other angel in a low tone.

Castiel chuckled lowly. “Sorry, Uriel but I now listen to a higher authority than Zachariah’s.”

“Raphael is the highest authority for you, and you know his orders, you have to follow them,” Uriel told him in a low voice.

“There are higher authorities than Raphael as you very well know,” Castiel growled, and he could feel how Alastair got agitated behind him. He could only hope that Dean was able to calm the other demon because he didn’t want to find out what Uriel would do should he find out that he not only was with a demon but also that Dean became one too. For now, they both had their auras hidden.

“Who? Michael?” Uriel questioned with a harsh laugh. “You’re delusional if you think that Michael has the time to concern himself with you.”

This time it was Loki who had to suppress his reaction though it was more one of amusement than anything else. Oh, the hilarity if heaven ever found out that yes Michael not only wasn’t in heaven anymore but also didn’t want to have anything to do with them anymore. Zachariah certainly messed up their plans.

Castiel though only shrugged. “I don’t know about Michael…,” he began but was interrupted by Uriel.

“What? God? He doesn’t care about us, has stopped doing so a long time ago or why do you think he left heaven? You’re even more delusional than I thought,” Uriel snarled.
“This is blasphemy, Uriel!”

“Blasphemy is that you seem to value those mud-monkeys more than your own kin,” Uriel now smirked.

“Uriel, you should really be careful what you say. Father created the humans and commanded us to love them. Or do you want to be declared fallen?” Castiel said in a threatening low voice.

“Ah, and who are you going to tell about it if I get you declared fallen?” his smirk widened.

“Anyway, I only came to tell you to leave the city. It will be destroyed soon to end the threat of Samhain. The seal cannot fall.”

“You’re going to blow up an entire city to get rid of one witch and one wizard? A bit overkill, don’t you think?” Dean asked in sheer disbelief.

“Believe me he smote larger cities for less. He is something akin to an expert in heaven, he was the one who dealt with Sodom and Gomorrah as well as Babel,” Castiel explained before he threw the other angel a dark look.

“Well, then you feather-brained douchebag, you can turn around and go back home because we have everything under control. We know who and where those are who try to summon Samhain,” Dean spat but was held back by Alastair so that he wouldn’t do something stupid like attacking the angel.

“I would listen to him Uriel,” Loki suddenly spoke up. “You see you’re the one who is currently standing between us and doing our job. So, if you would be so kind and move your ass out of our way, it would be appreciated.”

“What does a mud-monkey child know about such things?” Uriel said with a sneer.

“My name is Loki, you ignorant idiot,” he grumbled.

“I hope that isn’t supposed to tell me anything…” Uriel began but fell silent when Loki pointed an angel blade at him, to be precisely the one that once belonged to Lucifer though how the mud-monkey got it he didn’t know.

“What did you want to say?”

Uriel did the wise thing and simply vanished without another word, he had to talk to Zachariah. Several things were amiss here, and he didn’t want to make any move without talking to his superiors first.

Dean stared at the point where Uriel stood previously before looking to Loki and back, not able to believe that Uriel just left.

“I get the impression that nearly every angel is a dunderhead,” Severus spoke up for the first time since arriving. Until now he had just loomed behind Loki.

“That you can say again. I didn’t ask earlier but you’re Severus Snape, aren’t you?” Dean replied upon which Severus nodded. “Nice to meet you, Harry told us quite a bit about you. But back to business, namely two idiots who hurt children with that damned ritual. They live down the street, and we followed them there to make sure they are at home, ready to go?”

Both Loki and Severus nodded, and so the five set off towards the house they knew the perpetrators were living. Once there, Severus just waved his wand at the front door which made it slam open and
into the opposite wall. He knew that this probably warned the occupants that something was amiss, but it would also shock and surprise everyone in reach of the door so that the chance that they’d be attacked lowered.

They walked in and quickly scanned the house, but no one was to be found on the ground floor or the first floor. So, they walked over to the door to the cellar, and after slowly and carefully opening it they walked down the narrow, steep stairs one by one with Loki making the front and Alastair the back.

After walking down, a short corridor the reached a large room in which an altar stood at the far end. From a wooden beam at the ceiling chains hung down with which someone evidently had been bound. However, whoever – and they suspected it had been the woman Tracey – had been tied there, managed to rip the chains apart and get out of them.

It was the picture of Tracey attacking the man Don though that spurred them into action.

Alastair had the woman quickly pinned to the wall and looked at her threateningly. What became instantly clear though was, that Tracey was possessed by a demon and considering who they wanted to summon, Alastair was quite sure that it was Samhain.

Severus on the other hand quickly stunned and bound Don.

“So, the seal has been broken?” Dean asked while walking over to Alastair.

“Looks like it,” Castiel answered.

“I suggest you go play with Samhain while Severus and I take care of the idiot here. But please be careful, I have no idea how powerful Samhain is,” Loki proposed.

Alastair on the other hand snorted. “Samhain is nothing more than a nuisance, he is only dangerous when he has his legion of undead,” she told him with a shrug.

“What does a bint like you know? You’re nothing compared to Samhain,” the man snarled.

Alastair turned around to him, and her eyes flashed white while he shoved the other demon, who tried to break free, against the wall again.

“I’m Alastair, Chief Torturer of Hell. Do you really believe that some low-ranking demon like Samhain is a threat to me in any way?”

“Oh yes, you found yourself in quite a predicament. You see, your little ritual not only killed three people – not that I care much about your sister since she was working together with you – but you also hurt children, and that is nothing I can tolerate,” Loki told him with a broad grin that spoke of untold pain. “And before you go on about how not threatening a child is, remember that not everything is as it seems to be.”

With that Loki sent a wave of pure magic at Don who instantly began to scream. Severus took that as his cue to also point his wand at the man and cast several curses of his own.

“Hey, we take this bitch with us, giver her and…well her former soul a lecture on why it was a terrible idea to perform the ritual. You’re staying here?” Dean asked over Don’s screams.

“Yes,” Loki replied, popping the p. “We’ll send him after you once we’re done. One thing before you go…did you manage to get something out of Odin?”
They all could see how hopeful Loki was to maybe finally be able to find his two missing children. All the more Dean hated to be the deliverer of bad news.

“Sorry Loki, but Odin is staying silent on the matter of your children but don’t worry, with time he’ll tell,” Dean told him apologetically.

“Have you ever contemplated the use of Legilimency to gain the information you want?” Severus suddenly asked.

Dean and Loki looked at Alastair, but the other demon just shook his head.

“Neither Dean nor I am magical in the way you need to be to be able to perform the spell. So, the hard way it is,” she explained.

Castiel though hummed lowly. “Maybe not. I don’t know this Legilimency, but we angels are able to enter one’s mind and directly extract the information we need.”

Loki could have hit himself, he had completely forgotten about that particular ability since it has been such a long time now that he used any of his angelic abilities and reading people’s mind wasn’t one of his favourite pastimes anyway. However, he would let Castiel have a shot at it because it was something that would reveal his true nature for sure and that wasn’t something he wanted if it could be prevented.

He just wanted to ask the angel whether he would give it a try when Castiel continued. “When we’re in hell I’ll see what I can do.”

“Thank you, this means a lot to me,” Loki replied with a small smile. “Now let’s get going, we don’t have all day.”

“Okay! We’ll let you know how it went with Odin.”

With that Alastair vanished together with the other demon, closely followed by Dean. It was only Castiel who seemed to hesitate a bit but, in the end, he also followed the two.

“Vengeance demon indeed,” Loki muttered with a chuckle over the eagerness with which Dean wanted to show the demon and the bint that already was in hell just what he thought about their actions hurting children, and probably not to mention Odin.

However, Loki was oddly touched by how much they cared, he had given up hope to see his missing two children a long time ago but now? Maybe... just maybe he might be able to see them again after all.

Severus and Loki who were left behind instantly went to work, showing the idiot Don what they thought about hurting children. The screams were heard for hours to follow, and if they didn’t get sleep that night, it was very well worth it. No one hurt children the way those two had and lived to tell the tale.

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It was thanks to the difference in the speed of time that Castiel landed in Alastair’s torture chamber
far later than Dean and Alastair. He looked a bit reluctant for what was to follow but was determined to see it through, the two humans and the demon had hurt innocent children so in his eyes they deserved what they got. Added to that was that he wanted to help Loki and try to find information about his children in Odin’s mind.

“Hey Castiel, is something wrong?” Dean asked concerned. “You don’t have to stay if you don’t want to.”

Sure, they corrupted the angel, but they never did anything that he didn’t really want, Dean’s consciousness forbade him to go further. That’s why he would never force the angel to do anything he didn’t want to, he liked him too much for that. Besides the fact that it was just plain wrong, it was far more satisfying to be able to say that they convinced Castiel to do things on his own free will.

Castiel looked at Dean for a long moment before he shook his head.

“It’s okay Dean, I don’t have a problem with staying with you, but I won’t help you with the woman or the demon,” he said.

“No problem, you know that we’d never force you. Another thing, you said to Uriel that you listen to a higher authority now. Would you mind explaining what you meant?” Dean wondered, not that it was bothering him, he was merely curious.

Castiel stayed silent for a long moment, obviously contemplating what and how much to tell Dean. In the end, he took a deep breath and decided for the truth, he owed them that much.

“It’s just…I met father some time ago,” Castiel admitted.

“What? When?” Dean exclaimed shocked.

Dean had to admit that this admission worried him quite a bit, not because it was God whom Castiel met – and consequentially also them since they rarely left the angel’s side and if they did then only for a short time – but more the influence that meeting might have on the angel. It had taken a long time for them to get Castiel to open up and enjoy life. But if he now closed up again only because he feared his father…let’s just say that Dean wouldn’t be happy about it.

“I’m sorry, but I cannot tell you,” Castiel said in an apologetic tone. “But don’t worry, he was…different than I thought. Father knows what you became and he…approves of my choices. He actually said that he thinks that it is a good thing that I’m…with you and Alastair.”

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***Flashback start***

Castiel watched how Dean and Alastair left Chuck Shurley’s house – he had asked them to give him a few minutes alone with the man – before he turned around to the man. Somehow, he had a feeling that the man was more than he let on to, far more.

“You’re not just a prophet, are you?” he asked the man though he hadn't anticipated his reaction, the
man chuckled.

“I have to say that you're far more observant than anyone gives you credit for,” Chuck replied with a soft smile.

“Then who are you?” Castiel asked suspiciously.

“Why asking a question of which I suspect you already know the answer?” the man asked with a counter question and a smile.

“Father?!” Castiel exclaimed in shock but also wonder and awe.

Chuck’s or better yet God’s smile only widened. Castiel on the other hand just gaped at him. That was until he realised something and looked towards the door through which Dean and Alastair had vanished.

“You’re worried, aren’t you?” Chuck questioned with a low chuckle. “Worried what I might think about with whom you share time, space and…bed?”

Now Castiel’s head snapped towards Chuck in shock and horror at the prospect that his father knew.

“But Alastair…she…”

The other man chuckled again. “Why would I have a problem with her?” he wondered but only got a confused look in return. “You don’t know? There truly is more amiss than I first assumed. You see, Lucifer created the demon race upon my order. The world needs balance. Ever heard of the Ying-Yang symbol?”

This time Castiel nodded slowly.

“This symbol is a perfect visualisation of how the world should be. Light and dark, good and bad…all in ideal balance, otherwise the world would quickly collapse. That is the reason for why I instructed Lucifer with the task to create a counterpart to the angels, and I have to admit that his solution is ingenious. He not only managed to create a new race from the souls that were rejected from heaven but also prevented them from being destroyed. That was something that pained me greatly, but at that time I couldn’t come up with a sufficient way that they wouldn’t be destroyed.

“Anyway, your relationship with Dean and Alastair actually represent this balance pretty well. Alastair, who is the one who acts when needed and isn’t above using any means necessary and you providing the moral compass and stopping her from going too far.”

“What about Dean?” Castiel wanted to know.

“Dean is the neutral element, the line that connects the black and the white. Without him, it is doubtful that you’d be in the relationship you are currently in. Both sides can exist next to each other without a problem, but it needs a binding element for them to become a unity.

“For your fears, I gave everyone the freedom to choose what they want to do and so you can – like Gabriel did – choose what to do with your life and if you want to be with Dean and Alastair, I’m the last person who objects.”

For a few minutes they both stood there, Castiel lost in his thought while Chuck gave him the time and space to process everything he just told the angel.

“Thank you,” Castiel finally said in relief that his father didn’t think any different about him, though
one thing confused him. “But Gabriel is dead, is he not?”

“Oh, Gabriel is very well alive but where he is, isn’t my secret to share,” Chuck replied with a mischievous smirk. “However, I would ask you that you don’t tell anyone about what I told you or where I am, it might endanger my plans.”

“Oh, of course, father. If I can be of help…,” Castiel told him, looking a bit like an overeager puppy who wanted to please its owner.

Chuck laughed upon that display much to the indignation of Castiel. “For now, just help to get Lucifer out of that damned cage without endangering people. I would do it myself, but that would raise questions I’m not ready to answer yet.”

Castiel nodded solemnly.

“Now, I suggest that you follow your mates before they wonder what takes you so long. Should you ever have the need to talk, my door is open for you.”

Chuck watched how Castiel nodded once again and with a goodbye he left the house. With a smile, Chuck, who stood up at some point, sat back down at the kitchen table.

However, his smile quickly vanished. The meeting with the three had shown him that a lot more was amiss than he initially thought. He had left heaven and this universe because he had some other business to tend to, but he hadn’t expected to return to this mess.

There was no other way, he would have to adjust his plans, or he feared that the war he worked so hard to prevent would break out anyway though probably between entirely different parties. That wouldn’t do at all, but before he could adjust his plans accordingly, he needed more information.

With a sigh, he stood up again and vanished to try and get the information he so badly needed. It was true that he was nearly omnipotent but certainly not omniscient.

*** Flashback End ***

"I'm surprised, I never thought that your dad would be okay with it," Dean admitted.

"You have no idea how worried I was when I realised who he was," Castiel said looking at the ground in front of him. "When I saw him, I feared that he would order me to stay away from you but...I could never...I would never stay away from you. I really have fallen, haven't I?"

When Dean heard that he stepped in front of Castiel and gently pushed the angel's head up so that he had to look at him.

“Should anyone ever try to declare you fallen I’ll gladly show them that they’re wrong. Besides, who’s going to call you upon you staying with us?” he asked while slowly stroking with his thumb over the angel’s cheek.
“Raphael, he’s the leader of the garrison I belong to. He can get me thrown out of heaven,” Castiel muttered in reply.

“Why do you care? I mean you have two people who love you the way you are, you have a home with us, and most importantly your father is, from what I got from your statement, happy for you. Sure, you stayed in heaven for most of your life, and I know it sucks if you shouldn’t be allowed back but be honest, is it really so bad?”

Castiel smiled tentatively.

“I guess not,” he said while his smile broadened. “Thank you.”

“Besides, I have a feeling that should Raphael really throw you out, that your father will not be pleased. Anyway, I think you wanted to help Loki finding his two missing children,” Dean told him, throwing his arm over the angel’s shoulder and leading him towards the holding cells. “I think helping two children getting back to their father will help you feeling better.”

Castiel perked up upon that. Yes, helping children would certainly lighten his mood. So, with new vigour, he walked next to Dean towards Odin’s cell. His father had been right, being with Dean and Alastair was a good thing, he could see that now and was a bit ashamed that until now some doubt had still lingered when both Dean and Alastair had never been anything but gentle and understanding with him.

Harry with the help of Sam and Neville as well as followed by Luna, Hermione and the twins slowly but surely made his way towards the Gryffindor common room to get his well-deserved sleep. Having to heal so many really took a toll on him and he doubted that he would even be able to get changed before collapsing onto his bed.

However, their return to the common room came to an abrupt halt when the hallway was blocked by students of different houses talking to each other and gaping at a wall.
Harry groaned when Luna suddenly held a vial with a potion out for him which apparently contained a Pepper-Up Potion. He only looked at her strangely, but she nudged him to take it.

“Believe me, you’ll need it,” she said with a small smile.

“If you say so,” he muttered but took the vial and downed the potion.

Once the potion took effect, he sighed in relief and straightened up, not needing the support of his friends anymore, for now at least.

“Thanks,” Harry told her with a smile before he turned towards the masses of students that was blocking their way. “Now I hope that you have an excellent reason to keep me from my well-deserved sleep or I’ll be extremely pissed and believe me you don’t want to know what I’m capable off when pissed.”

In response to that threat – and yes it was a threat because you’ll never know what a prankster might come up with in retaliation if you pissed him off, especially when said prankster was trained by Loki himself – quite a few that stood close to him shivered and took a few steps away from him. Seeing, that Harry wasn’t joking, a passage formed that led through the masses of students towards the other end, where Harry could already see something being written on the wall in blood red letters though he couldn’t read what was written over the distance. So, knowing that the students indeed had a good reason standing in this particular hallway and talking to each other – as long as it wasn’t an elaborate prank –, Harry set into motion and walked over to the wall. However, any thought that this might just be a prank went out through the window when he read the words.

THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS HAS BEEN OPENED. ENEMY OF THE HEIR, BEWARE.

What made him really gasp in shock and horror though was the sight of Mrs Norris hanging from a torch bracket beneath the message, stiff as a poker. Slowly he edged towards the cat before carefully taking her down, he simply couldn’t let her hang there any longer. Cradling her close to his chest he gently patted her head. Mrs Norris normally didn't let people pet her, but Harry had always been the exemption to the rule.

He thought she was dead but nonetheless, he pushed a bit of magic into her to make absolutely sure, so it came to quite a surprise that she wasn’t dead, but it was like she was...frozen or something like that. Pushing even more magic into the body of the cat he began to try and battle whatever held her in the state she was in. It took him several minutes, and it looked like he either wasn’t powerful enough or too exhausted because he couldn’t lift whatever curse had befallen her and he felt his magic drain faster and faster even with the Pepper-Up he had drunken.

Harry was about to give up, when suddenly a flash of fire appeared on the torch bracket Mrs Norris had hung from not too long ago and gave way to Fawkes. The Phoenix instantly leant over the cat and let one tear fall on her body. It only took mere seconds and a bit of help from Harry’s magic before the cat began to stir and meow lowly. Harry smiled when Mrs Norris turned in his arms and shook his head as to get rid of any lingering dizziness. At first, the cat tensed but relaxed again when
she realized that it was Harry who held her, purring in content.

Filch came rushing down the corridor when he heard that something had happened and was about to shout at the students lingering in the hallway when his gaze fell upon Potter who currently took down a cat that hung down from the torch bracket. He blanched and came to an abrupt halt when he realized that said cat was his Mrs Norris. What had Potter done to his beloved cat? But then again, he had never done anything to her. Actually, he was the only one in his entire years he had her now, who was able to get near her, not to mention pet her without getting mauled in the process.

So, no...he doubted that it had been Potter. But then who had attacked his cat and what happened to her? Was she dead? Oh, Merlin he hoped not, he loved his cat, and should she be dead...he didn’t know what he would do. She was all he had, no one else ever wanted to have anything to do with him.

That was when he saw a bright flash above the two and Fawkes appearing. The bird leaned forward, and a single tear fell upon Mrs Norris. He wondered what would happen when he heard a low meowing and saw her stirring in Potter’s arm.

Filch stumbled a step forward before he caught himself and rushed to his cat’s side. He heard Potter thanking the bird before he turned towards him.

“Here, she should be alright now, but you should her get checked by Madame Pomfrey anyway to make sure that the entire thing didn’t hurt her,” the boy told him while he carefully held Mrs Norris out to him.

Stunned, he reached out and took his beloved cat, petting her on the way.

“T-thank you,” he stuttered out, too glad that his cat wasn’t hurt to keep up his scornfulness.

“No problem,” Potter replied with a smile and a last pat on the cat’s head.

Harry thanked Fawkes for his help before he carefully handed the cat over to her owner. When he was sure that the cat was safe, he turned around to the masses of students with a scowl on his face. He just wanted to address the students about the writing and the cat, when Fawkes landed on his shoulder and nipped his ear hard enough to hurt but not hard enough to draw blood. Harry had to fight the urge to cover his ear with his hand because that would throw the bird from his shoulder and that he didn’t want even if it had bitten him.

“What was that for?” he exclaimed instead.

However, it was Luna who gave him the answer to that. She walked up to him, took his left hand,
and held it in front of Fawkes with the back of the hand upwards. As soon as the hand was in place, Fawkes dropped another of his tears right on the middle of his hand.

Luna guided his hand towards his mouth.

“Drink,” she ordered him.

Harry looked at her incredulously but did as he was asked. Instantly when the tear touched his tongue, he felt a thousand times better than before. He was invigorated and also his exhaustion quickly left him.

“You are a strange girl, I hope you know this,” he told her with a smile before he turned towards Fawkes. “Thank you!”

With a soothing thrill, having done his part, Fawkes took off and sailed in the direction where the rest of the students stood and observed everything. When Harry looked after the bird, he saw that the masses had parted again to make space for Michael, who quickly walked towards them followed by the other teachers. Fawkes though swiftly landed on Michael’s shoulder and got patted by the angel.

“I have to say, you are remarkable,” Michael praised him once he came to a stop in front of him and his friends. “Healing Mrs Norris even with the aid of Fawkes is not an easy feat.”

“Remarkable or not, I’d love to get to know who thought that this was a good Halloween joke!” Harry exclaimed. “Petrifying and hanging a poor cat from a torch bracket is certainly NOT funny!”

“Are you sure that it wasn’t you in a bid to train to become the next Dark Lord?” Draco who only just arrived taunted him playfully.

However, Draco actually took a step back when the cold hard glare from Harry fell upon him. Oops, Harry was furious. Draco just wanted to apologize and take back what he just said so carelessly even if he didn’t really mean it, but that was when Harry’s glare softened before it morphed into a smirk. To be honest, Draco found the smirk far worse than the glare before, it spoke of nothing good, for any of them.

“The next Dark Lord you say?” Harry asked, his smirk broadening before he turned towards his friends – well, technically Draco was also his friend, family even, but no one else knew that except his friends.

“Did you hear that? I’m the next Dark Lord!” he exclaimed as if Christmas had come early and fallen on the same day as Eastern and his birthday. Suddenly he frowned though. “But if I’m to be the next Dark Lord I have to look the part. I mean what Dark Lord runs around in school uniforms…school uniforms,” he mused.

Harry began to pace while everyone else just stared at him in surprise, shock and disbelief as well as if they questioned his sanity – well, it was questionable whether he had any, to begin with.

“No, I need new clothes…and maybe a new style?” Harry muttered and waved his hand over himself.

Instantly his clothes changed into a stylish suite like Crowley used to wear. However, it seemed that two girls had completely different images in their mind.

“Harry…Harry…Harry…you have no sense of what looks good on you,” Luna spoke up while shaking her head and quickly dragging Harry away from the masses of students, closely followed by Hermione, before she drew her wand.
The twins, anticipating what the girls were up to, conjured a few partitions to give them some
privacy. Everyone else stared with bated breath at the partitions, eager to get to see what the two girls
were up to – even the teachers waited patiently. They could all hear muttering as well as a few
complains, that were quickly shot down but besides that nothing could be seen.

It took the girls about fifteen minutes, but finally, they vanished the partitions and gave way for the
first glances on Harry. Luna looked happy while Hermione had a smug smile on her face.

The biggest surprise though was Harry himself. He now wore a floor-length open robe in a deep
darker shade of pink – not that ghastly overly bright shade a certain professor preferred though one
had to wonder where the man currently was since he wasn’t with the other professors – that looked
surprisingly good on him. Along the seams and edges went black frills that if you looked close
enough were made of many little skulls.

Under the robe, he wore a black button-down shirt with small silver skulls as buttons and a tie the
same shade as the robe.

On top of that came a top hat in the same deep dark pink with a black hatband. At the front, a bit to
the left were two real-looking, though shrunken human skulls together with three black velvet roses.

In his hand, Harry carried a sleek black cane with a silver skull as a handle, which had two emeralds
in its eye sockets.

The twins whistled when they saw him.

“You look great,” they said together.

“Yeah? A word to the wise though…do not let them give you a make-over,” he whispered to them.

“I heard that,” Hermione growled.

When Harry saw her glare, he ducked his head and spun out of her way before she could hit him,
which she definitely tried. Michael, who watched everything, chuckled lowly.

“So,” Harry said while thumping his cane on the floor. “Back to business. Who is the culprit?”

One of the students, a Hufflepuff Harry quickly identified as Justin Finch-Fletchley snorted.

“And what are you going to do if we don’t reveal it to you, oh great Dark Lord?” the boy mocked.

Harry snickered lowly. “Terrorize the student body, punish those who annoy me,” he told him while
taping with his cane once resulting in the boy suddenly wearing girl’s clothes much to his
embarrassment. “Oh, and definitely punishing those who deserve it. Maybe I should give you
Crowley’s phone number then he can tell you about the horrors…the nightmares I gave him. Just ask
him about the threat of **Frilly Pink with Unicorns**!”

Pink while riding on a unicorn? How…threatening.”

Harry’s face, on the other hand, lit up upon that question.

“That is a brilliant idea. You know I thought about some lame name like Voldemort…well not
exactly that name no, thank you very much, I mean do I look like I’m fleeing from Death? Zachariah
yes but Death? Nope! But you know what I mean. However, your idea is so much better!
Henceforth I shall be known as the Dark Lord Frilly Pink! Fitting don’t you think?”
However, many were staring at him as if he finally lost it which in return threw the twins into a fit of laughter.

“Their faces…,” they exclaimed. “Absolutely priceless!”

“As amusing this is,” Michael spoke up with a chuckle. “But I think we have more pressing matters at hand than giving a certain demon a heart-attack. I’ll ask only once, who did this?”

Michael let his gaze wander over the masses of students, but no one spoke up or stepped forward as the culprit. For a few minutes, silence reigned only interrupted by the still giggling twins when Michael sighed.

“Very well, you all should return to your dorms and get to sleep since it is already late. Harry, I’d ask you to stay behind for a moment,” Michael instructed them.

Harry nodded and stood to the side so that the others could get past him. Hermione, Luna, and Neville quickly excused themselves, as much as they wanted to stay with Harry, they were tired and wanted to sleep, the excitement had left them. Sam and the twins though, who were all used to staying up overnight, stayed with Harry.

Once the teachers and the four students were alone in the corridor, Michael turned towards Harry with a concerned face.

“How do you feel, Harry?” he asked him.

“Thanks to Fawkes I feel much better but thanks for the concern. If I might ask, what is the Chamber of Secrets?” Harry asked in return.

Surprisingly it was Sam who answered. “It is a hidden chamber that is said to be made by Salazar Slytherin guarded by a monster only he was able to control,” he explained. “No one knows where it is or how to get there.”

“This is correct Mr Winchester though the Chamber has been opened ones about seventy years ago. When that happened students turned up petrified and one girl even…,” McGonagall added but wasn’t able to end the sentence. “Albus, what if the same is happening again? I cannot bear to think what might happen this time.”

Michael stroke his beard in thought but couldn’t answer the woman’s question.

“So, let me get things straight. We have a chamber no one knows the location of with a monster that no one has ever seen, which is able to get through the school unseen and even kill people if we don’t stop it and fast?” Harry asked in shock and disbelieve. “Not to mention that the only person likely being able to give us any answers is a man who’s dead for a millennium now?”

“It seems to be that way,” Flitwick replied thoughtfully.

“This day certainly doesn’t want to end,” Harry groaned before he vanished into thin air.

“Why do I have the foreboding feeling that the foolish boy just left to find Salazar Slytherin?” McGonagall questioned no one in particular.

“Because you know that he thinks this is the fastest way to get this particular problem solved,” Michael answered with a shake of his head.
When Harry reappeared, he stood in a long hallway with white walls and digital displays in regular intervals showing all the same number. In the hallway stood people as far as he could see, it must be hundreds if not thousands of people standing in one line. Next to him stood a desk behind which a woman sat, polishing her nails. Her aura told him clearly that she was a demon.

“Where the hell am I?” Harry asked the woman confused, this was definitely not where he wanted to end up.

“Very observant, now draw a number and get in line,” the demon retorted without even looking up.

“Oh, thank you, Ms Obvious, I would never have thought that I’m in hell. The question is where exactly in hell am I?” Harry drawled not in the mood of playing the demon’s game, this day was getting too long already for his taste.

“Crowley’s office, now…draw a number and get in line,” she snapped at the end of her patience.

“What…Crowley’s office? Why did I end up here?” Harry muttered before he addressed the demon again, who was now glaring holes into him. “I need to talk to him.”

“Draw. A. Number!” she merely stated.

“Do you have any idea who I am?” Harry asked her with a smirk that spoke of nothing good for the receiving end of his annoyance.

“I don’t care. Only because you were some big number in life it doesn’t mean that it is the same in death. Here in hell you are nothing, a worm not worthy of my presence let alone Crowley’s!”

Harry couldn’t help himself but snicker while he placed his hands on the desk and leaned closer to the demon. “Oh sweetheart, I’m not even dead. Now, do the intelligent thing and let me through to Crowley or you’ll be the reason for what might or might not happen in the future.”

“Persuade yourself about that, but you’re not getting to Crowley unless you draw a number, get in line and wait for your turn. That is my last word.”

“If you now tell me that I have to get Permit A 38 before I can speak with Crowley, you will suffer,” Harry threatened her, but she only looked at him blankly obviously not getting the hint. “Very well, on your head may it be.”

With that Harry pulled out his mobile phone and after a quick scroll through the saved numbers he found Crowley’s and dialled it while smirking at the woman behind the desk. It only ringed two times before a grumpy Crowley answered.

“Potter, what do you want? I have work to do,” he grumbled.

“Hey Crow, the longer your little pet desk jockey-demon is keeping me from talking to you in person and private the more severe my retaliation will be,” Harry explained in a sweet voice, watching how the demon’s eyes in front of him widened when she realized that yes, Harry had a phone that worked and Crowley obviously on quick dial.

Crowley, on the other hand, swallowed hard and even audible over the phone before Harry heard
some shuffling on the other end of the line. Not soon later a pale looking Crowley appeared in a door behind the desk going even paler when he saw, that yes, Harry really stood there waiting to talk to him.

Hanging up the call, Crowley rounded on the demon that had desk duty.

“Why didn’t you instantly inform me that he is here?”

“What is so special about this boy?” the woman petulantly replied.

“Wha…this is Harry Potter,” Crowley deadpanned.

That seemed to ring a bell with the other demon because she now looked shocked and a bit fearful at Harry.

“P-please forgive me, I didn’t know,” she stuttered.

“Oh, Ms., one day…maybe not today, or tomorrow, or next week but one day, when you think… pray that I forgot about this day, that day my reply will come, and you will know that everything was your fault and yours alone,” Harry told her with a smirk that bordered on evil. “Because I don’t forgive, and I certainly do not forget.”

Crowley looked at Harry with a feeling of utter dread.

“We will talk later,” he said to the demon. “Come, Harry, I don’t think that you came here only to threaten my lackeys.”

With a last smirk, Harry walked past the female demon and followed Crowley into his office. It was a quite large room with one wall covered in dark wooden bookshelves that were filled to the brim. In front of a large window that looked out over a lake of fire, stood a massive desk made of the same dark wood as the shelves. On it stood a laptop as well as a stack of papers, writing utensils and several other knickknacks.

Crowley rounded the desk and sat down while Harry flopped down on one of the chairs that stood in front of it.

“So why did you come here?” Crowley finally asked. “And what is with this getup? Halloween costume?”

“Nope, I recently became the newest British Dark Lord, and my friends thought this a good Dark Lord-ish attire. However, I was looking for someone though I have to wonder what the queue outside is all about,” Harry wondered.

“Since Alastair went on holidays with Dean, we had to find some other way of torturing the souls of the damned, so we have them draw a number and wait in line only to repeat the process once they reached the desk,” Crowley explained with a shrug.

“Ah, the torture of having to wait in a line only to be declined, though I think there is a better way,” Harry said with a grin. “Why not having them to obtain Permit A 38?”

Crowley looked a bit confused, that was ringing some bells, but for the life of him, he couldn’t remember where he heard about that particular thing.

“Permit A 38?” he therefore asked.
The demon had to think about it for a minute or two, but in the end, he remembered.

“Oh, oh…OH,” he exclaimed. “That is devious and all around brilliant. I knew there was a reason I liked you.”

“Glad to be of help,” Harry said with a smile. “Anyway, I was on the…,” he continued when he had to yawn. “Sorry, been a long day and it still isn’t over. Damn those idiots. I really hope Loki is giving them hell before sending them…well to Hell.”

“What happened?” Crowley asked while typing away on his laptop.

Half a minute later, the door opened, and the woman from the desk walked in with a vial in hand, which she placed on the table before she left without saying anything. Crowley picked the bottle up and held it out to Harry.

“Here drink that it will wake you up,” he told the boy.

Harry carefully took the vial, opened it, and sniffed at it. It was a potion he didn’t recognize but he trusted Crowley not to want to kill him since it would hinder his plans and so he downed it without a second thought. He instantly felt how he became more alert and his fatigue vanishing. Sure, Fawkes’ tear had helped to invigorate him but even that didn’t last forever.

“Thank you. I had to heal about fifteen people because of the backlash of the ritual meant to revive Samhain,” Harry growled.

“You’re welcome. So, you want to tell me that the ritual affected Hogwarts?”

“Yep, during the feast in the evening suddenly dangerous stuff appeared in the sweets that were served…things like razors, needles, and such,” Harry told the demon while trying to keep his anger in check, only the knowledge that Loki took care of those idiots kept him from going after them himself.

Crowley winced. “Why do I have the feeling that I should call Alastair back for their arrival?”

“Don’t worry she’ll be here, she and Dean were the ones to tell Loki where exactly to find the ones responsible,” Harry said with a low chuckle. “However, I didn’t come because of that but because I am searching for someone though I have no idea for why I landed here when trying to teleport to him.”

“Whom are you looking for?” Crowley asked curiously.

“Salazar Slytherin, I need to know where the entrance to his blasted Chamber is,” Harry huffed.
"You certainly found him but why would you want to know where the entrance to the Chamber of Secrets is?" Crowley asked confused.

Harry, however, narrowed his eyes upon the question.

"How do you know what the Chamber is called?" he asked suspiciously when it dawned upon him, and his eyes widened in surprise. "You are Salazar Slytherin!"

It made sense, how he landed here of all places when he tried to teleport to the man, why Crowley knew about the Chamber and not to mention his early comment that he indeed found the man.

"Right in one but that didn't answer my question," Crowley replied, not even surprised that the boy had worked out who he once was, he knew that Harry was smart.

"Yes...that. Some idiot obviously thought it a good idea to open the Chamber and let whatever is inside it out and into the school. A cat was petrified, and the culprit left a bloody message on the wall next to it: The chamber of secrets has been opened. Enemy of the heir, beware," Harry recited. "We want to get in there to see what exactly happened and whether we can prevent another incident like this one."

Harry looked at Crowley expectantly. Crowley though hummed lowly while stroking his chin absentmindedly. Finally, he opened his mouth obviously to say something before he closed it again with a growl.

“For reasons I cannot explain to you, I cannot tell you what is hidden away in the chamber, but what I can tell you is where the Chamber is,” Crowley told him in the end, again stroking his chin.

Actually, this was ingenious. Unfortunately, thanks to someone he couldn’t name, he couldn’t tell anyone about what resided in the Chamber, no matter what he did. However, thanks to the fact that Harry was asking about the location and entry point of the Chamber and not what was in there, he could very well circumvent the spell, which was obviously keeping him from speaking about it, and give Harry a somewhat adequate answer.

“The entrance is on the left-handed second floor in a storage room at the end of the corridor. On the floor in the middle you should find a small carving of a snake in the upper left corner of the largest tile. However, there is a problem. You’ll need a Parselmouth to open the entrance and I currently don’t have the time to come with you and open it for you.”

“What is a Parselmouth?” Harry asked confusedly. “Besides, if what you just told me is correct, then the storage room has been replaced by a girl’s bathroom, the exact same bathroom that is at the end of the corridor with the message.”

Crowley began to swear so heavily that it would have put a seasoned sailor to shame, completely ignoring that Harry was a minor and certainly shouldn’t hear most of it, much to said boy’s amusement.
“Who the bloody hell thought it a good idea to place a bathroom there? However, the room should still be there, though with the remodelling of the room into a bathroom, I don’t know how the entrance has manifested itself. When I build it, I not only warded it so that anyone not a Parselmouth couldn’t get in, but also that in case that the room was changed, the entrance would change too to fit in,” Crowley now mused. “The entrance nonetheless should be marked by a small snake carving. Now, to answer your question a Parselmouth is what a person is called, who is able to speak Parseltongue, the language of the snakes.”

“Wait, there is a name for that?” Harry was surprised, not only about the fact that he wasn’t the only one able to talk to snakes but also about the fact that his ability had an actual name.

“Why am I not surprised that you are one?” Crowley deadpanned, how else would the boy know about the ability but not the name for it? “Did you really think that you’re the only one who can talk to snakes? Admittedly, people who can speak the language of the snakes are rare but not as rare as you might think. It was Lucifer who gave Eve as the first human the ability to speak with snakes, I think it was to mess with the little experiment that was going on at that time. When Adam and Eve later were thrown out of the Garden Eden and had children, the ability spread.”

“So, does that mean I…I’m related to them?”

“Not necessarily. I know of a man who was envious and wanted the ability himself. He made a deal for it, but whether he had children afterwards and passed it on, I don’t know. Then there were also the Greek gods Hermes and Asclepios who both possessed the ability not to mention Medusa. In Egypt, there are for example Ra and Wadjet, and I’m pretty sure that Loki also has the ability…you see many beings can converse with snakes.”

“This is one hell of messed up and nothing I want to think about right now…or ever,” he muttered, him being related to either a god or Adam and Eve? Not something he wanted to think about. “So, you say that since I’m a Parsel…whatever I’ll be able to get in there?” Harry wanted to clarify before he yawned.

“Parselmouth and yes. Just say ~open~, and well it will open,” Crowley explained.

“~Open~?” he asked in disbelieve. “You couldn’t come up with an easier to guess password?”

“Since it was highly unlikely that any Parselmouth would come by anytime soon when I chose it….”

“Right…well…thanks for the information but I’m off now. I’m dead on my feet and need sleep. Ciao.”

With a wave of his hand, Harry vanished, leaving behind a highly amused Crowley. That was until the demon remembered the threat the boy had issued because of the demon outside. Crowley called in said demon before he began laying into her. In the end, he decided that it would be a good idea for her to clean the hellhound pens for the next thirty years. Hopeful that Harry would forget about the incident, he finally went back to his work.

Harry reappeared in the same corridor where he had found Mrs Norris earlier that evening.
Michael was quietly talking with McGonagall while Flitwick was busy trying to get the blood off the wall, not wanting such a gruesome sight where students passed by.

“Professors,” Harry said to draw their attention to him. “The entrance to the Chamber is over there in the girl’s lavatory so if you guard it no one will be able to get in unknowingly. Tomorrow I’ll help you getting in but now I’m off to bed,” Harry told them with a yawn.

He vanished again before any of the professors could react or say anything and reappeared in his bed where he instantly fell asleep.

“Don’t worry, I’ll guard the entrance myself,” Michael said to the two remaining teachers, who looked at him to decide about the next steps. “I suggest that you also go to bed, it is quite late after all.”

“But what if whatever is in there gets out and attacks you?” Minerva asked in concern. “You could be hurt or worse…killed.”

“Minerva is right, you shouldn’t be alone,” Flitwick agreed.

Michael chuckled lowly. “I’m not that easy to kill and if what Harry just told us is correct then nothing can get out without someone going in and releasing it.”

Minerva looked at him for a very long moment before she sighed in resignation. She knew very well how stubborn he could be and didn’t want to argue with him, she was too tired for that.

“Very well but I’ll cast some alarms so that I know if something is happening,” she told him, she wasn’t happy with it, but that was the best that she would get, and she knew that.

“I’ll add my own, just in case,” Filius said while he went to work together with Minerva.

A few minutes later under the amused gaze of Michael, they were done.

“Albus, you’ll better be careful,” Minerva admonished.

“I will Minerva, now go to bed and get some sleep, both of you. You look like you’re about to topple over. So, off you go.”

“After I checked in with my ravens,” Filius said.

Minerva nodded along, they would make sure that the students were alright before going to bed themselves.

They both knew that Sinistra already checked on the Slytherins for Severus and Pomona was currently with her badgers, so it was only Ravenclaw and Gryffindor that needed a check-up. They would see it done before they went to bed.

With a last “good night” the two professors left to their respective houses.

It was the next day at noon that Neville and Sam finally decided that Harry slept long enough. He
already missed breakfast and they didn’t want to find out what Loki would do if he missed another meal. Ever since Loki learned of Harry’s less than stellar upbringing, he made sure that Harry ate regularly and enough for a boy his age. It was thanks to Loki’s nagging, that Harry was now a boy that looked his age and was healthy, but Loki never ceased to admonish him if he missed a meal.

That was why Sam now found himself in the unfortunate situation of having to wake the boy up. The problem was, that if you tried to wake Harry when he didn’t want to be woken, you most certainly ended being pranked and Sam was wary of what the other boy would do. Harry could be very creative when coming up with retaliation pranks.

Nevertheless, Sam gently shook Harry’s shoulder. It didn’t take long for Harry to wake.

“Go ‘way, wanna sleep,” Harry muttered and turned around to go back to sleep, he was still exhausted from all the magic he had to perform the previous day.

Sam though would have nothing of it. “Harry, you have to get up. Lunch will end in an hour and you already missed breakfast. Loki will kill us if we don’t get you up to get something to eat.”

With a swift motion, Sam pulled Harry’s comforter off him only to have to duck a few hexes sent his way. Luckily and with the constant training of dodging, Sam became pretty agile and now managed to dodge about half the stuff Harry threw at him. Most of the rest he could block with a shield. The problem was that Harry also got better and faster in his spell casting, not to mention his aim, hence why he suddenly looked like a punk.

“Okay, okay, I’ll get up…happy?” Harry growled when he saw Sam’s smug grin after said boy managed to hit him with a stinging hex.

Half an hour later the seven friends sat at the Gryffindor table.

“Where is Loki?” Hermione asked curiously, wondering whether the pagan god was even back yet, though with a look at the head table, she saw that Snape also was still missing.

“Don’t know, he wasn’t back when we went waking Harry,” Neville answered in between two bites.

“He was pretty pissed yesterday. If he hates something it is when someone hurts children, so I won’t be surprised if he doesn’t return before tomorrow,” Harry grumbled before shovelling some mashed potatoes in his mouth, he was still annoyed that he had to get up. “Not that I fault him for it.”

“By the way, you were great yesterday. How you healed all those other students…,” Hermione told him with a bright smile.

“Hermione, I just did what was necessary. Everyone would have done the same in that situation,” Harry replied with a shrug.

“Nonetheless you did save a lot of your schoolmates,” Michael suddenly said from behind him, he together with McGonagall stood right behind Harry. “That deserves the proper appreciation.”
“I didn’t do it because of the appreciation but because it was the right thing to do,” Harry huffed. “Anyway, can I help you?”

“Indeed, you can. If you’re finished with lunch I’d ask you to let us into the Chamber,” Michal explained him.

“Ah yes, there was something. Just give me a sec,” Harry muttered, shoving his now empty plate away while diving for his schoolbag he had carelessly thrown under his seat.

Sure, he didn’t have any class for today because Michael had cancelled all of them until the end of the week to give the students some time to recover and to get the whole Chamber thing under control, but Harry had taken the bag with him in hope of getting to the library later that day and some of the assignments done.

Once he had his bag, he stood up, threw it over his left shoulder, and walked towards the entrance doors of the great hall only to stop after a few feet. He turned around and looked curiously at his friends who also stood up and followed him.

“Do you really think we’ll let you go there alone? We want to see the Chamber too!” Sam deadpanned upon Harry’s questioning look.

“Yeah, we want…”

“…to see the chamber!” the twins added.

“You’re not going to do…”

“…all the fun stuff alone.”

Michael looked at them contemplatively before he sighed after a few moments.

“Very well but you’ll have to follow a few rules, or you’ll have to stay behind. First, you’ll always stay close to us, no detours. Second, only enter a room after we made sure it is safe and told you so. I don’t want you to get hurt,” he told them sternly only to receive a disbelieving glare from McGonagall. “Minerva, don’t you think that it is better if they accompany us where we can have an eye on them than them coming anyway and getting into trouble?”

“I would prefer them not to come at all,” she said in a stern tone.

Michael chuckled upon that. “You really believe that they would sit back when there is an unknown part of the school to explore? They are children and when we tell them not to come they’ll want it all the more. Not to mention that they’re extremely crafty, I somehow have a feeling that they would find a way in even if we ward off any entrance we find.”

McGonagall glared at him for another moment before she turned towards the children.

“You stray away from us, and you’ll have detention until hell freezes over,” she firmly told them.

“That could be arranged,” Harry replied innocently. “Though I fear that Crowley would be less than happy.”

McGonagall sighed exasperatedly. “And here I thought the Marauders were bad,” she muttered but set into motion and walked towards the entrance.

With a low snicker, Harry followed her, who in turn was trailed by the others. In the entrance hall,
they were suddenly joined by some Hufflepuff.

“Ah Mr Malfoy, you decided to join us?” Michael asked jovially.

Draco looked at Michael strangely because he obviously knew who he was but eventually nodded.

“You’re going to see the infamous Chamber of Secrets,” he replied as if it was out of the question that he would join them. “But Headmaster, could you please….”

“Don’t worry, your secret is safe with me,” Michael added upon which Draco looked relieved.

The group walked up to the second floor and past the point, where the previous night the message had been painted on the wall. But thanks to Flitwick’s and later Michael’s efforts it was even cleaner than it had been before the act of vandalism.

Together they entered the girl’s lavatory where they were joined by the half-goblin and looked expectantly at Harry, who looked around.

“Salazar said that this previously had been a storage room in which the entrance was hidden in the floor under a tile with a snake carving. However, since the room has been remodelled, the entrance also changed to blend into the surrounding. Ladies and Gentlemen, we’re looking for a snake carving!” he explained the situation.

Everyone spread around the room to search for said carving. A few minutes after they began searching, Myrtle suddenly flew out of one of the stalls.

“What are you doing here?” she asked indignantly. “This is my toilet.”

Michael, who already had the questionable pleasure of meeting the ghost, turned towards her.

“Mr Warren, we’re searching for the entrance to the Chamber of Secrets,” he told her, when he had an idea. “You might not happen to know something about it?”

The ghost shook her head. “The only thing I remember from when…when I…when I died are two large yellow eyes over there by that sink there,” she said sniffing over the memory of how she died.

With a last sniff, she began to wail and took a head dive into the closest toilet, nearly dousing Neville with the water. Only the fact that he anticipated something like that happening prevented him from the unwanted shower.

Hermione in the meantime, who was closest to the sink Myrtle had pointed at, had a closer look at it and found a small snake carving on the side of the tap.

“Professors, here is the snake carving we’re looking for!” she called out to get everyone’s attention.

Soon everyone was crowded around the sink.

“Good work Mrs Granger. Now, you all wait in the corridor until we made sure that it is safe,” Michael told them with a stern glare.

Everyone bar the teachers and Harry nodded and walked back into the corridor, not wanting to go against Michael. When everyone was in a safe distance, Michael nodded to Harry. Harry took a step back to leave enough room for the teachers and Michael to react to any threat.

“~Open~” he hissed at the sink.
As soon as the hissed syllable fell from his lips, a deep rumbling echoed through the room and the
sink began to sink into the floor, revealing a large hole in the floor. When the rumbling stopped, and
nothing lunged at them, Flitwick stepped forward and sent a small glowing orb into the black hole to
illuminate it.

It turned out that it was a large sewer pipe that went through the school.

"Ingenious," Flitwick said astonished. "If whatever is down there moves through the pipes it is no
wonder that no one ever saw it."

"But all the more dangerous for us, Filius," McGonagall replied. "How are we supposed to get down
there?"

"~Maybe there are some stairs hidden away?~" Harry, who stepped between the adults, hissed, not
realising that he was still speaking Parseltongue.

Upon the hissing from Harry, suddenly a lower rumbling echoed through the room and stairs shifted
out of the pipe's wall, right for a comfortable descending down the tube and into the belly of
Hogwarts.

"Ask, and it shall be given to you," Harry said amusedly.

"You read the bible?" Michael asked surprised.

"My former guardians’ way of trying to get the evil – magic – out of me. Their world view was very
twisted," Harry snarled. "Though I think the book is some loads of crap."

While Michael was highly amused by Harry’s view of the Bible, McGonagall and Flitwick were
shocked.

"What else did they do?" McGonagall brought out but feared the answer.

"Loki gave them a speed trip to hell and ensured that they landed with Alastair when he learned
about it, so what do you think?" Harry deadpanned.

McGonagall first blanched to the point that she looked like a ghost before her face gained a green tint
upon the implication of Harry's statement.

Flitwick, on the other hand, gasped in shock.

"Alastair you say?" he asked, holding a hand in front of his mouth.

Harry nodded while McGonagall looked a bit confused at her colleague.

"Who's Alastair?" She wanted to know.

"He's a demon and the Chief Torturer of Hell, he oversees the torturing of the damned souls and only
the worst of the worst end up on his racks," the half-goblin explained, knowing most of it because of
his heritage.

"She...but yes," Harry muttered.

McGonagall now looked positively ill before she jumped down Michael's throat.

"I told you," she nearly screamed. "I told you that they are the worst kind of muggles and what did
you do? You did NOTHING! You said it was for his protection but look what happened...look
Right now, she was a lion out for blood...Dumbledore's blood.

Michael sighed, this was getting complicated. For ones, Minerva had all rights to be enraged over what happened to Harry and where he had been placed, especially since she had vehemently complained about it. But on the other hand, he was not Dumbledore and certainly didn't want to take over the responsibilities for something the old fool had done. However, the only way to prevent her from blaming him was to tell her that he was in fact not Dumbledore.

He sighed again, it was becoming a tad too many people that knew about him for his liking. The risk of heaven finding out was getting higher and higher with every new person.

Michael closed his eyes and mentally shook his head over what he was about to do.

"Minerva, please calm down. Things recently became a bit more complicated, but I cannot talk about it...not here. I will tell you everything later but for now, we have to tend to more important things, don't you think so too?" He finally told her.

The woman looked at Michael for a long moment before she nodded. “But don’t think that you’ll get out of it,” she admonished him.

The archangel nodded at her in understanding, turning back towards the hole.

“I suggest we go first and the children follow once we made sure nothing harmful is waiting at the other end of the pipe,” he said, taking the first step down the stairs.

McGonagall and Flitwick followed him closely, warding every pipe that went off from the one they were descending in order to prevent anything from attacking them from behind or ascending to the school. Meanwhile, the twins stepped up to the hole. They looked into it and then at each other.

“What do you think will be down there, dear brother o’ mine?” Fred asked.

“Treasures of untold value?” George answered.

“Or just some dusty vault?” Fred finished.

“I think we’re about to find out,” Harry interrupted their conversation when McGonagall gave them the all clear.

Slowly they walked down the stairs one after another, and soon they stood at the foot of the pipe.

“This is disgusting,” Draco, who cancelled the illusion charm on himself halfway down the pipe since no one who didn’t know was there to see it, complained over the sewer water that piled on the floor mixed with other things he didn’t want to name.

“Mr Malfoy?” McGonagall asked surprised.

Okay, no one who didn’t know except the two teachers, one of whom was now looking at him surprised.

“The glamour was my idea to help him getting away from Slytherin from time to time,” Harry remarked.

McGonagall rose an eyebrow but opted not to comment any further upon it. Together they walked down the path that looked as if it was cut right out of the rock. They walked a few minutes when
they reached the other two who currently stood in front of something really large.

“*It is the shed skin of a snake,*” Flitwick explained. “*From what I could gather it is at least sixty feet long though we have no idea what kind of snake it is since normally no snake gets this large.*”

“You want to say that a sixty feet long snake is down here?” McGonagall asked incredulously while frantically looking around. “*What if it lurks around here in the shadows?*”

Michael though shook his head. “*Doubtable, we found a locked door a few feet down the corridor. It has snakes covering it, so I think it has a Parseltongue password like the entrance and since we sealed off any other way down here nothing can follow us.*”

Since the rest of the corridor was straight forward, there was no way, that the snake could lurk around somewhere, waiting to ambush them. So, Harry walked around the others and approached the large round door that had snakes coming from what Harry assumed was the hinge and that went across the door right until the stone surrounding it.

“You go and stay around the corner until we tell you otherwise,” Michael told the children sternly.

Luckily, they did so without any complaint, not wanting to be sent away completely. Once they were out of sight, Flitwick, McGonagall, and Michael all trained their wands at the door while Harry commanded it to open.

As soon as he did, a new snake emerged from the hinge and crawled around the door once and vanished in the hinge again while the other snakes receded enough to let the snake pass. Once the snake circled the door, a loud metallic noise echoes through the hallway, indicating that the door was unlocked and shortly afterwards swung open.

Michael carefully stepped through the door when it became obvious that no snake would suddenly attack them. He, together with the two other teachers perused the quite large hall that laid behind it only to find it empty. Once they were back at the door, they gave the children the all clear.

“But stay close to us we still don’t know where the snake is,” Michael warned them, and they all nodded simultaneously.

“Tacky,” the first twin said when he saw all the snake statues.

“Really tacky,” the second added.

“We’re really in the infamous Chamber of Secrets,” Draco said in awe, not knowing where to look first.

“This is a piece of history probably no one saw for a very long time,” Hermione mused. “To be able to see this….”

Sam in the meantime was a bit more composed, and Luna looked around with her usual dreamy expression.

“Loki will be so glad,” she said out of the blue, confusing everyone though no one asked, knowing that it would be futile.

Harry in the meantime looked around contemplatively, wondering whether there was another room or something like that hidden away.

“~Open~,” he tried but nothing happened. “~Hello, something here? Salazar Slytherin…beast of
untold power...open sesame!~"

Suddenly something began to rumble and after a moment it became clear that the mouth of the statue that was at the other end of the large hall could open and in fact was doing so right now. However, when Michael became aware of what was emerging from the newly opened hole, he did the only thing that came to his mind and he knew would be able to protect everyone. Within a split second, he turned around to the others, who conveniently stood close together, unfurled his wings and wrapped them around everyone before the beast could fully emerge from its resting place.
Everyone looked at Michael in shock and surprise. Well, Harry wasn’t all that surprised since he knew about the angel, but that didn’t stop the surprise, over him revealing it, from showing. Therefore it didn’t come at a surprise that he looked at the angel in disbelief.

The others, on the other hand, didn’t know what to think or say about the sudden revelation.

“Seriously?” Harry asked him, couldn’t he have come up with something less suspicious to shield them?

Michael looked at him and shrugged lightly, careful that his wings didn’t shift too much and resulted in a hole in the protection they provided.

“Well, we have a slight problem. The snake is actually a female basilisk,” he said as an explanation. “They can kill you by just looking you in the eyes.”

“Ah,” Harry replied while nodding in understanding.

“Not to mention that they are highly poisonous,” Flitwick threw in. “How are we supposed to get past it?”

“~Stupid angel! I’m not a basilisk,~” the snake, clearly a male one, hissed at the same time indignantly. “~I’m not even female.~”

“~Er what?~” Harry asked confusedly while trying to shift the feathers that were protecting him a bit so that he was able to look at the snake, completely ignoring Michaels attempts at preventing him from it. In the end, Harry had enough and just teleported a few feet to the side.

“~Hi, I’m Harry,~” Harry told the snake with a wave of his hand and a broad smile.

“~Hello Harry, you can tell that feather duster over there that I won’t harm anyone, especially not children,~” the snake huffed upon which Harry snickered.

“Oi, you can let them out. He said that he won’t harm anyone,” Harry called over to Michael who still shielded the others from the snake while glaring at him for going against him.

“And who says that he won’t attack as soon as I let my wings down?” Michael questioned.

The snake though seemed to have another idea, and with a quick flick of his tail, he pulled Michael’s legs from under him, sending the angel flying and heavily landing on his backside with an undignified and surprised squeal.

Harry who saw the archangel lying on the dirty floor with his wings sprawled around him, began to laugh and even the others couldn’t help themselves.

“Too bad that Loki isn’t here, he would have loved to see you brought down on your ass by a giant snake,” Harry said amusedly while Michael shot him a withering look that didn’t impress the boy in
The slightest.

The snake however suddenly brought his sole focus on Harry.

“~You know Loki?~” he asked insistently.

“~Sure, we all do,~” Harry answered truthfully. “~He normally stays with us, but he’s currently away punishing a few idiots. Why do you ask?~”

The question the serpent had presented him with confused Harry. Why would a snake that was locked away for nearly an entire millennium now want to know whether he knew Loki? Something was going on here of that Harry was sure, but he couldn’t pinpoint what it was, not yet anyway.

“~Where is he?~” the snake asked now clearly desperate. “~Please tell me where he is! Can you call him? I need you to call him!~”

Harry, who didn’t know what to think of the snake’s antics, looked towards Michael but the archangel didn’t even understand the snake, so it was a futile endeavour. Why would a snake so desperately want him to call Loki? That was when he remembered something, and he slowly looked back at the snake, whose head was hovering right in front of him. Something was nagging him about this. Not a Basilisk as Michael assumed at first and distinctly male. A male snake…Loki…a male snake connected to Loki…that was when it dawned upon him.

“You’re Jörmungandr!” he exclaimed in English.

Upon that exclamation, Michael’s head, who was currently cleaning his wings with the help of Flitwick, snapped towards Harry before he looked at the snake. The snake, on the other hand, nodded frantically while hissing again.

“Loki’s lost son,” Michael muttered. “But how did he end up here?”

“Jor…,” Harry said in the meantime to get the worked-up snake’s attention while placing a hand on the serpent’s head. “Jörmungandr, please calm down. I’ll call Loki, okay? But please calm down!”

“~Please…please, you’ll have to…~” Jörmungandr hissed, still worked up but slightly less panicky.

“~Jor, I will call him, you’ll just have to wait a few more minutes, alright? I have to concentrate on it to work, but he’ll come. I promise you he’ll come, and if I have to teleport to him and drag his sorry ass here, I’ll do so,~” Harry told the calming snake. “~I’ll have to meditate for a bit, okay?~”

“~But please hurry up.~”

By now the frantic need of the snake for Harry to call his father was replaced by excited anticipation and Harry could feel how he vibrated with excitement.

“Okay, I’ll have to meditate for a bit, I’ll call Loki,” he said in English for the sake of the others before he walked to the side and sat down at the foot of one of the giant snakes and leaned against it.

He closed his eyes and concentrated on Loki to send a prayer to the pagan turned archangel, as he taught him. It would take a few minutes, but he was sure that it would work.

In the meantime, the two professors, who accompanied them, rounded on Michael.

“You have a lot of explaining to do,” McGonagall demanded.

“I’m aware, and I’ll do so as soon as we’re back in my office. But first, let us reunite a lost son with
his father,” Michael replied.

“So he really is Jörmungandr?” Flitwick questioned. “The World-Serpent? I would have thought him larger.”

“Yes, I can feel it now that I know, he is Loki’s son. But some other magic is working on him though I have no idea what,” Michael mused.

“I have a feeling that we’ll soon find out,” McGonagall added.

Harry, on the other hand, came up with a few problems. He was ready to send a prayer to Loki, but every time he wanted to tell him to come because he found his son Jörmungandr it was like he ran into a wall and he didn’t get one word out. In the end, he decided to try and send out a small call for help instead.

“Loki, I need you!” he sent a bit more fearful than he originally wanted.

However, it did its job as Loki stood in front of him not even ten seconds later, his face contorted in worry.

“Are you alright? Are you hurt? If I get my hands on Michael…he was…,” he began to rant but didn’t get any further because he was suddenly wrapped in the thick coils of Jörmungandr, covering him from head to toe, which wasn’t that hard considering that Loki still looked like a child.

Loki instantly began to struggle and was about to let either a few well-placed curses off or something worse, when Harry decided that he needed to intervene or Loki would do something he would definitely regret.

“~Jor…Jor, please loosen you coils, or he’ll hurt you,~” he told the snake, hoping that he would listen to him.

Jörmungandr minutely tightened his coils but in the end, feeling what Loki was about to do, he loosened them enough so that Loki at least was able to look at Harry.

“What in the name of…” he cursed, still struggling against the coils surrounding him not even attempting to assess who or what the threat was.

“Loki calm down!” Harry called out to him, but it seemed that Loki just saw the threat and together with his prayer it was the only thing he saw.

When Harry had enough and was sure that Loki didn’t even listen to him, he shot a quick Aguamenti charm at him to get his attention. Loki spluttered when he was hit with the cold water but finally focused on Harry.

“Loki, are you finally paying attention or do I have to take more drastic measures?” Harry asked him sardonically.

Loki glowered at him but stopped struggling.

“Good, if you’d now pay a bit more attention to your surrounding you’d find that there is a perfect reason for why I called you and that there is no threat whatsoever,” he continued.

At first, Loki looked a bit confused especially considering that he was still trapped, but he heeded the advice and paid more attention to the surrounding he found himself in, or more precisely to the snake, which was holding him tightly. That was when it dawned him, and his eyes went comically
“Jörmungandr?” he asked with shock surprised and a great amount of relieve. “I-I…”

He fell silent and just wrapped his arms, which he got free with some difficulty, around the large head of the snake that hovered right next to him and openly began to cry.

“Oh Jor…I finally found you,” he brought out between sobs. “I thought I’d never see you again.”

They stayed like this for a long time and Harry, who wanted to give them some space, walked over to where Michael was standing with the other two professors and observed the entire thing when Harry realised that his friends had vanished.

“Uhm, where are the others?” he asked confusedly.

Michael looked around only to find that yes the children had vanished. He began to swear under his breath.

“Children…,” he growled.

He had feared that they would have gotten in here without supervision because in between Draco’s cunning, the twins’ inventiveness, Hermione and Sam’s knowledge and ability to research he didn’t doubt that they’d find a way into this chamber even if they warded off any entrance they could find. Then there was also always Harry, who could obviously teleport around any ward. That was also the reason for why he allowed them to come with them in the first place, to be able to have an eye on them and prevent them from getting harmed. However, now they managed to vanish while he had been distracted by Loki and his son.

Michael looked around in the hope of finding the missing children when he heard excited chattering coming from the still open mouth of the statue. He walked over there, closely followed by Harry, and into the mouth only to be met with a short corridor, which opened into a large but cosy chamber.

When he looked around, he found a large fireplace to the left in front of which stood a group of armchairs around a small coffee table. To the right stood several bookshelves filled to the brim with ancient books. Straight ahead was for once a large cushioned area that was obviously meant for Jörmungandr to rest on, as well as two doors, one of which currently was open and the children’s voices came echoing through it.

He walked over to the open door an looked in, to be greeted with a massive library. In between the high shelves, he found Draco, Hermione, Sam and surprisingly also Neville looking at the books in awe. Luna in the meantime stood to the side and watched them. The twins were nowhere to be seen.

Michael coughed lowly to get their attention.

“Didn’t I tell you not to stray away from us?” he asked sternly.

“Sir,” Hermione exclaimed excitedly. “These books here…they are amazing. So much knowledge is hidden away in here.”

It seemed that this was Hermione’s personal heaven and that it would be hard to get her out of here. Michael sighed.

“Nonetheless did you go against our agreement,” he scolded her. “You couldn’t have known what is in here, you could have been hurt. Give me one good reason why I shouldn’t send you back to your common room.”
Hermione’s eyes widened minutely before she looked sheepishly at the floor as did the others who had joined her when they realised that Michael had come looking for them, except the twins. That was when Sam took the lead.

“We thought that we should give you some space, so we went to investigate the space behind the statue,” he explained.

“But you couldn’t have known that it was safe for you,” Michael admonished.

“I went in first,” Sam told him. “Do you really think that I’d risk them getting hurt? Of course, I made sure that they only came in after I told them that it was safe and they didn’t touch anything.”

“Hey guys, you won’t believe what we found,” suddenly the twins shouted from the room through the other door before running into theirs.

However, when they saw Michael standing in front of their friends, they stopped and looked shocked.

“And what, pray to tell, have you found?” Michael asked them while rising an eyebrow.

“Uhm Sir, we found a potions lab in the other room, fully furnished and with ingredients in stock…” they told him, shrinking under his gaze.

Right at that moment, Flitwick entered through the mouth of the statue.

“Sir, Loki is asking for you,” he addressed Michael.

Michael looked at Flitwick before he looked back at the children. With a sigh, he made a decision. Releasing his grace, he scanned the rooms for anything dangerous, but it came back negative.

“Filius, would you please stay with the children? The rooms are clean, and nothing dangerous is in here, but I don’t want them left alone,” he first said to Flitwick before he turned to the children. “For you going against our agreement you’ll have detention for one week. What you did was reckless and extremely dangerous. Yes, Mr Winchester, I know that you’re normally an adult and used to dealing with dangerous artefacts, but nonetheless, you should have told us at least. This also goes for you Harry, teleporting out of the protection my wings provided was incredibly stupid. What if the snake was a real basilisk? You could be dead!”

The children all looked sheepishly at the floor but nodded and that included Sam. Harry though snorted.

“So what if I died? Do you really think that I’d stay dead for long? I mean who’s supposed to keep me? Heaven? I already ported out of that one! Hell? Do I have to remind you that I teleport there regularly?” he retorted with a mischievous grin. “And even if either could keep me somehow… I have a feeling that they would throw me out within hours.”

Michael had to admit that the boy had a point. He already proved that there was literally nothing that could keep him, not even Lucifer’s cage. Teleporting into and out of hell was a weekly occurrence for him as it seemed and heaven… yeah look how that one turned out, he still had no idea how Harry managed to revive his parents without repercussion.

However, all that didn’t stop Michael from sending Harry a glare that told him that he would still have to serve detention.

“Very well, you can stay here, but I warn you, don’t behave yourself and a week worth of detention
will be the least of your problems,” he sternly said.

“Yes Sir,” they chorused and with a nod towards Flitwick, Michael left to see what his brother wanted.

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**In the meantime**

Loki still was wrapped in Jörmungandr’s coils and hugged the serpent’s head close though slowly, but surely his tears abated.

“I don’t know how long I searched for you,” Loki finally brought out. “When Odin abducted you, and I couldn’t find you….”

“~It isn’t your fault, dad. Odin cast something upon me that made it impossible for you to find me,~” Jor hissed back.

“What spells?” Loki now looked alarmed.

“~I don’t know, but I can’t turn back, and no one can talk about me,~” Jor whispered while letting his head hang.

Loki on the other hand carefully pushed some grace into his son to see what was wrong with him only to run into some potent spells. So powerful actually that he wasn’t sure that he would be able to break them alone without severely harming his son. That was highly concerning because only very few beings were able to cast something strong enough to block him and Odin definitely didn’t belong to them.

Sure, Odin was very powerful in his own regards, but he was nothing upon an archangel, who were in one of the top spots of the most powerful beings in this universe right after the primordial forces and those beasts in purgatory.

But maybe his brother had an idea what it was that kept Jor from turning back. So he leant back and looked to where he last saw his brother when he realised that he wasn’t there anymore. Though Professor Flitwick was still there together with McGonagall and talking to her about the events of the last days.

“Professors,” he called out. “Could one of you please get Dumbledore for me?”

The two professors looked at him and nodded.

“Of course, I’ll get him,” Flitwick replied before he turned around and left towards where he knew the man had vanished.

Loki in the meantime turned back to his son and stroked his head.

“Jor…I promise you that I’ll do everything to free you. Then I’ll pay Odin a visit and show him exactly how I feel about him hurting you,” he whispered.

Jor though didn’t reply but nuzzled his father and hissed in contentment. They stood that way for a
few more minutes before Michael reached them.

“You wanted to see me?” he asked.

“Yes, Odin cast some potent charms on Jor to keep him from turning back and one so that no one can talk about him or his whereabouts,” Loki explained.

“That sounds like the Fidelius Charm,” McGonagall, who came over now that Flitwick left, supplied.

Michael in the meantime stroked his beard. “She is right, but then again we wouldn’t be able to see him if it really was the Fidelius Charm. I have to examine him to see what spells exactly are at work.”

Loki nodded. “~Jor could you please let go of me for a moment? Your uncle needs to examine you to be able to help you.~” he explained his son.

“~But he’s an angel,~” Jor replied fearfully, not letting go of his father.

“~I know that I never gave you a reason to trust any of them, but things changed, I trust him. He didn’t give away that I’m hiding when he learned who I really am but kept it a secret. Please, this is the only way,~” he told him.

Jor looked at his father for a long moment before he shifted his coils and finally let go of him. Once Loki took a step away, he nodded towards his brother, who instantly began to examine the snake. It took him a few minutes before he was done.

“This is interesting, if you dig deep enough into the enchantments you’ll find that they are backed up by an angel,” Michael commented on his findings.

“An angel?” Loki, who by now was wrapped in Jor again, asked. “That is why I cannot break them on my own. But that would mean it has to be an archangel and since Lucifer is still in his cage and I highly doubt that you came down to earth only to help Odin, the only one left is Raphael.”

“That indeed seems to be the case, which concerns me greatly,” Michael replied. “However, I’m certain that together we’ll be able to break the enchantments and free your son.”

“Then let’s do it,” Loki said, not wanting the enchantments on his son for longer than necessary.

Loki convinced Jor to let go of him and curl up three feet away from them. Harry, who had come to see what was wrong, and McGonagall also stepped away from them to give them enough space to work.

Once everything was in place, both Michael and Loki began to chant an old Enochian spell that would get rid of any magic currently influencing Jor. Michael took the lead in this while Loki just lent his power to support his brother.

It took them over ten minutes, but in the end, the spells fell away one after another. When they were done, both were exhausted, but Loki was grinning like a madman because his son was shifting from being a sixty feet long snake to a small boy of about the age of six.

As soon as Jor had transformed back to a boy, he ran over to his father and clung to him as if his life depended on it.

Loki picked his son up without any effort even with him looking like a child himself. With him in his
arms, he turned towards his brother.

“Thank you,” he said with a tearful but nonetheless happy voice.

“Thank you, uncle Michael,” Jor added, his voice rough due to not being used.

Michael smiled broadly at the boy and gently ruffled his hair.

“You’re welcome.”

At last, Jor looked around until his gaze fell upon Harry and he tried to reach out for him. Harry, who was unsure what Jor would want from him, walked over, only to be grabbed and embraced in a hug by the former snake, not to be released afterwards. He chuckled lowly upon the child antics but indulged him, he had been alone for far too long after all, and Harry knew how it was to be alone.

Right at that moment, Crowley suddenly appeared in the centre of the hall and looked around. When he saw the group standing to the side, he walked over, a small smile gracing his lips.

“So you finally found your son, I’m glad,” he said, not greeting anyone.

“And you are?” McGonagall asked imperiously.

“Crowley,” Loki growled before the demon could answer the professor’s question. “What do you want?”

“I came to check on Harry and Þormungandr…” he began but didn’t get any further.

“How do you know?” Loki asked shocked when it dawned upon him. “You! You imprisoned him down here! To think that I trusted you!”

The only thing that kept Loki from attacking Crowley was for once his son in his arms and Harry, who was still held tightly too.

“I didn’t imprison him down here you idiot, I saved him and gave him a sanctuary!” Crowley retorted.

This though left Loki dumbstruck.

“Say what?” he asked confused.

“I said I saved him. It was a few decades after we founded Hogwarts, that I went on a journey. Unfortunately, I was caught in a storm, and my ship got off course. I ended up on a small island at the coast of Spitzbergen. When I explored it to find food, and while waiting out the storm, I found a cave that was partly flooded. In the middle, on the only piece of land, I found Þormungandr buried under tons of rock, only his head showing. At first, I didn’t know who he was, but after a long conversation, he told me what happened,” Crowley explained.

“I knew that I couldn’t leave him there because he was starving, freezing and hurt. So I freed him and took him with me. He helped me repairing my ship and together we returned to Hogwarts. Obviously, Gryffindor was less than amused about me hosting a large snake. However, after I explained to him and the others the situation, they agreed, that we would have to protect him. So, together we created this chamber. A room where he can sleep, books to read, space to move and a massive forest to hunt in.”

“But why didn’t you tell me?” Loki asked, still hurt but the feeling of being betrayed by the demon
slowly left him, hell, the demon took care of his son when he couldn’t.

“I couldn’t! I mean at first I didn’t even know you and when I met you for the first time…the spell prevented me from saying anything about the whereabouts of your son,” he deadpanned. “Before you say anything, would you really have answered a call or come with me if I asked you to without giving you the why?”

Loki looked at the floor sheepishly. He had to admit that Crowley had a point, he hadn’t trusted the demon an inch until recently, and he seriously doubted that he would have gone with him, thinking that it was a trap.

That was when Jor leant back in his father’s arms and looked at him and decided to intervene.

“Don’t be mad at him, dad. Uncle Sal really cared for me,” he told him with a smile before waving happily at Crowley.

Loki looked from his son to Crowley and back. Seeing how happy his son was, he couldn’t help himself but smile too. If his son was alright with this, who was he to say differently?

“Thank you, Crowley, I really owe you one,” he told the demon who looked shocked.

“Will you look at that, the great Loki indebted to me,” the demon chuckled lowly.

Harry, who was still in Jor’s firm grip, saw how tired and exhausted the boy was.

“Guys, not to cut your little byplay short but Jor’s exhausted. I think we should get him to the tower and to sleep,” he interrupted Crowley and Loki.

Loki instantly looked at his son and noticed that Harry was right, his son was exhausted and dearly needed a good night of sleep.

“Harry’s right, I’ll teleport us back to the tower. Uhm, there is something…I left Severus with Alastair and Dean…could one of you get him?” he sheepishly admitted, he hadn’t thought about the professor anymore when he received Harry’s prayer.

“Don’t worry I’ll take care of it,” Michael said with a grandfatherly smile. “Get your son to bed and tomorrow I’ll send Pomfrey around to check his health properly.”

Michael knew enough about healing to ensure that someone didn’t die when injured but making sure that someone was healthy wasn’t his forte, so he gladly left that task to the resident healer.

Loki nodded and left together with his son and Harry, whom Jor didn’t want to let go just yet. They reappeared in their dorm and Loki wanted to place Jor on his bed while Harry wanted to walk over to his own to grab a book when they ran into a problem. No matter what they told him, Jor didn’t want to let either of them go.

Harry looked at Loki and shrugged not really caring if he stayed with them or not. In the end, Loki changed all their clothes with a snap and Harry summoned his book with a flick of his hand. Afterwards, they settled in Loki’s bed, Loki lying behind Jor, who was wrapped around Harry.

Within minutes, Jor was asleep while Harry read and Loki just bathed in the feeling of having his son back.
Michael, McGonagall, and Crowley walked over and into the chamber that was hidden behind the
opening in the statue. When they walked into the library, the children were still excitedly chattering
over the knowledge hidden within it, and even Flitwick was excited about it.

“Children, we’re heading back into the castle. I fear you have to come with us,” Michael said.

“But...but what about all those books? All this knowledge?” Hermione whined.

Michael looked around and hummed lowly before looking at Crowley.

“I don’t care what you do with the books,” the demon said with a shrug. “I only added them for
Jormungandr’s entertainment. They are enchanted to read the content aloud when you tap them on
the spine.”

“You added them?” Draco asked confused when it dawned upon him, and his face lit up in awe.
“Wait, you’re Salazar Slytherin?!”

“I was a long time ago, yes,” Crowley answered. “But not anymore.”

“But how can you still be alive?” Neville questioned.

“Who said that I’m alive?” Crowley replied with a chuckle while his eyes flashed utterly red.

When they saw it, Hermione’s eyes widened, while Draco and Neville actually jumped back. The
twins though were intrigued. Sam, who already knew who Crowley was, stared at him for shocking
the others.

“Crowley, I would ask you not to scare my students,” Michael reprimanded him sternly upon which
Crowley only scoffed.

“You’re a demon?” Draco asked in disbelief at the same time. “But how? Why?”

It seemed a perfect thing now that Loki taught them all about demons and other things. However,
he’d never thought that he’d meet one in person. Not only some random one but the one who once
had been known as Salazar Slytherin. Draco didn’t know whether he should be in awe over it or
wary because the man was a demon.

“Well, that happens when you're pissed drunk and don’t pay attention to whom exactly you’re
complaining about your problems,” Crowley explained with a sigh. “But that’s a story for another
time.”

“That’s right. So, since Crowley has no problem with it, I think that those books would make an
excellent addition to the school library, don’t you think so too Ms Granger?”

Hermione blushed that Michael was asking her but nodded eagerly, and it seemed that she wasn’t the
only one who was happy about that solution. Draco, Neville and Sam also looked eager to be able to
read some of the books. That was nothing on Flitwick though, who was bouncing slightly in anticipation, his Ravenclaw side coming out full force.

“Good, I’ll send a house-elf to deliver the books to Madame Pince,” Michael said. “However, for now, we’ll return to the main castle. I don’t doubt that you have a lot of questions and I’d find myself more comfortable in my office with hot tea.”

The others all nodded in consent. As lovely as it was to be in a long-lost thought part of the castle, for the discussion to come it would be far better to be somewhere comfortable.

So, together they all left the Chamber, Crowley sealing it again though changing it so that the teachers and headmaster would be able to enter any time they wish, and walked up the many flights of stairs to the headmaster’s office.

Michael meanwhile swiftly retrieved Severus, who was in an animated discussion with Dean and Alastair over how best to extract the information from Odin concerning Sleipnir’s whereabouts. They met the others in Michael’s office.

Once there, Michael called for a house-elf and instructed it to bring them some tea and biscuits before it was to go into the Chamber and retrieve the books there to be delivered to the library. He also wrote a short notice for Madame Pince so that she wouldn’t wonder where the books suddenly came from.

It took the house-elf only a few minutes to provide them with a large platter filled with several teapots, biscuits, cake and whatever else could be consumed with tea. Michael in the meantime conjured enough chairs for everyone.

They all settled down with a cup of tea and a plate with food for each and looked expectantly at Michael.

Michael sighed deeply. “Before I tell you anything, I have to stress that you cannot tell anyone about who I really am because should the wrong people get to know that I’m here it would not only put myself in great danger but also the children and in the worst case the entire world.”

Everyone nodded solemnly, wondering how one person could threaten the well-being of the entire world.

“Good. As you already know, I’m not Dumbledore. I’m the archangel Michael,” he told them while looking at their faces to gauge their reaction.

The reactions of the others were quite mixed with the mildest being Flitwick, who just looked as if Michael only confirmed his conclusions about what transpired in the Chamber, Jor had called him uncle Michael after all, and the three pairs of wings also had been a dead giveaway.

McGonagall, on the other hand, looked more surprised and a bit shocked. It seemed that while she had her suspicions about who Michael was, she still couldn’t fully believe it.

Hermione, on the other hand, gaped at Michael in awe. It wasn’t that she was overly religious and her parents hadn’t forced her to attend church, but it wasn’t that she didn’t learn all about it in school. Though Hermione didn’t really think that God really exists, for her he was more like an abstract concept, something people believed in to give their life purpose and meaning. Then again, she spent most of the time in school right next to the Norse god Loki, who also taught her and her classmates a lot about the supernatural side of the world. Sure, she knew that angels were real ever since that… idiot Zachariah tried to get Harry possessed by a demon near the end of the summer holidays, but
that she would ever meet an archangel, not to mention Michael, who was said to be the leader of heaven…no, that she’d never have dreamt of.

Draco and Neville both also were quite surprised though they were far more reserved about it while Crowley looked at Michael in barely concealed boredom since he already knew about the angel.

The most amusing reaction though that Severus, who also was already aware of Michael’s identity, observed was Sam’s. The boy spat the tea he was sipping right at that moment over Michael’s desk and began to cough heavily.

“What?” he finally brought out.

The only thing Sam could do was staring at Michael in obvious disbelieve, his mouth hanging open in shock. That was when he remembered what Loki told him about the cage and that Lucifer was about to get out of there. So, what did it mean regarding the Apocalypse that Michael was staying at Hogwarts? What about the children? Were they in danger? What was Michael even doing here?

“What are you doing here?” he in the end asked.

“Hiding,” Michael simply answered with a shrug. “Heaven is hell-bent on restarting the apocalypse, but I’m not in the least interested in fighting my brother. So, when I learned, what one of my other brothers did, I thought that if he can do it, I certainly can do it too. When I then also got to know how involved Zachariah was with Harry’s life, the decision of where to go was quite easy.”

“So, you don’t want to fight Lucifer and restart the apocalypse?” Sam asked for clarification.

Michael just nodded.

With the new information brought into the picture, Sam could clearly see that just maybe the Apocalypse had been cancelled, funnily enough, because Loki had been bored.

That was when Crowley suddenly began to laugh profoundly. He laughed so hard that his sides hurt.

Everyone else on the other hand only looked at him as if he lost it.

“And what, pray to tell, is so funny about this?” Michael asked imperiously.

“Oh, nothing of importance,” Crowley answered once he calmed down again only to receive a glare from Michael.

What happened was that Crowley remembered Harry’s prank that he had in preparation. Sure, for some time Michael thought that Lucifer might be inclined to come to Hogwarts because he was curious about Harry, but when Harry showed up in the cage, he told him that the curiosity abated. So, it would be highly amusing when Lucifer did show up at Hogwarts especially on Harry’s invitation.

He couldn’t wait for the day that Lucifer finally got out and wasn’t that a surprise? Not even a year ago he would have moved heaven and hell to prevent the fallen angel from getting out of the cage, but now it seemed to be the best thing that happened in the last millennium.

“Sorry, but I have no intention of bringing Harry’s wrath over me.”

That made the children in the room chuckle. To think that a demon was scared of Harry was amusing, to say the least.
Michaels glare darkened but eventually he let it go, knowing very well what chaos Harry could unleash and he didn’t want to give the boy the incentive to anger the wrong demon by pranking hell.

“Can you promise us, that there isn’t any danger to the children with you staying here?” McGonagall, who finally came out of her stupor, asked.

“Not more than there already is with Zachariah being after Harry,” Michael answered. “Only the people in this room plus Loki, Harry, Harry’s parents and Sirius know who I really am and I want it to remain that way. Should hell, or worse heaven, learn that I’m here...believe me then it won’t matter where I am hiding.”

Everyone nodded solemnly, neither of them wanted to imagine what earth would look like if Michael would have to fight his brother again.

After that, they talked for a bit more, mostly what it meant that Loki found his son again and what would now happen with Jor. Michael expressed his wish for Jor to remain at Hogwarts because he doubted that the boy would leave his father’s side any time soon.

McGonagall didn’t object to the idea, and so it was decided that Jor could stay with Loki.

“Another thing we should have an eye out for is a strange behaviour of one or more students. Someone opened the Chamber, and we still have no idea why,” Michael suddenly said.

“Indeed,” Severus conceded. “To me, it sounds as if one of Riddle’s blasted soul-pieces found their way to Hogwarts.”

Hermione seemed to be lost in thought when she suddenly spoke up.

“Wait, Draco told us that he fears that a black book found its way to Hogwarts and that it was a Horcrux,” she added.

“Yes, Harry already informed us about that but unfortunately we weren’t able to locate it yet,” Michael mused. “But I wonder why he burdened you with this knowledge.”

Hermione blushed lightly. “He wanted to warn us about it so that we would know what it is should we come across it.”

“This makes sense,” Severus said with a nod.

“A black book you say?” one of the twins suddenly asked her. They hadn’t been in the compartment when Draco told them everything, and apparently, Harry forgot to tell them.

“About this size?” the second twin asked, showing with his hands the size.

“Yes, that’s it. Do you know something?” Hermione answered with a nod.

The twins though looked at each other and held a silent conversation before they turned towards Michael.

“Since this summer, our little sister Ginny is running around with a black book that fits the description.”

“We thought that she began a diary or something like that.”

“But what if it is this Horcrux thing?”
“What if it is hurting our baby sister?”

It was apparent how worried the twins were about their sister and Michael had to admit that he was quite concerned too. If what the twins said was right, then their sister was in grave danger because she was writing in that book. They had to act and fast.

“Severus, Minerva, we’ll have to talk to Miss Weasley now and, should she be uncooperative, we’ll have to search her belongings. This is imperative because I fear that if it is indeed a Horcrux, she’s in grave danger. We’ll also have Poppy looking her over to see if she retained any damage from the prolonged exposure,” Michael commanded in a voice that broke no argument.

Severus and McGonagall both nodded.

“Filius, I’d ask you to accompany the children to the Gryffindor common room and stay with them until we have further information,” he then told the small professor before he turned towards the now heavily worried children. “You, I’d ask to stay with Filius. We’ll resolve the problem and inform you as soon as we have new information. Under no circumstances are you to search for the object yourself or approach Miss Weasley, is that understood? It could be detrimental to her health.”

They all nodded solemnly, knowing that it would be better to do what Michael said as none of them wanted to get Ginny hurt.

With that, they all left the office and went to the Gryffindor common room in the hope of finding Ginny there.

Harry had no idea when he had fallen asleep, but when he woke up, he found his book on the nightstand and Jor firmly wrapped around him and Loki. He had no idea how the boy was doing it, but it seemed to work. That was because Loki was lying on the other side of Jor and was currently reading. Jor was lying between them, his legs wrapped around Loki while his arms were wrapped around Harry. Everyone else already seemed to have left.

“Good morning Harry,” Loki greeted him when he became aware that Harry was awake. “I hope you slept well, it seems that my son won’t let you go anytime soon.”

“Too bad, I need the loo,” Harry grumbled.

Carefully he tried to untangle himself from Jor’s iron-tight grip, but unfortunately, the boy had other ideas. So, alas, Harry’s attempts at getting away woke him up.

“Where’re you goin’?” Jor mumbled sleepily.

“I just need to go to the toilet, I’ll be right back,” Harry said in a reassuring tone.

“NO!” Jor exclaimed and tightly clung to Harry.

Harry looked at Loki a bit lost when he had an idea.

“Hey, how you come with me, don’t you need a toilet too? Afterwards, we could have a nice shower, what do you think?”
“Toilet? Shower?” Jor asked confused.

When it became apparent that Harry didn’t know how to react to the questions, Loki explained a few things.

“The last time Jor was out in civilisation, things like toilets or showers hadn’t been invented yet. When you needed to do the bathroom deeds you went to a hole in the floor that led straight into the open. For washing yourself you used either water from the well, or you went to the closest river if you washed at all,” he told Harry.

Harry hummed lowly before he smiled at Jor.

“I have a feeling that you’ll love it then,” he said before he picked the boy up and walked over to the bathroom.

Jor on the other hand suddenly tensed when they walked away from Loki, who still sat on the bed. When he saw that, he stood up and walked over to the two.

“Jor, I found you, and you’re safe now. Now that I found you I won’t let anyone separate us ever again, and I trust Harry. I mean he brought me to you, didn’t he?”

Jor nodded tentatively.

“How about I leave the door open so that you can look and see that your dad is still there?” Harry asked him with a warm smile.

Hearing the suggestion, Jor beamed at him and nodded enthusiastically.

“Good, then come,” he said while continuing his way to the bathroom and the toilets.

Jor regularly glanced towards the door to see whether his father was still there but turned his attention to Harry, who patiently explained to him how the toilet worked. The boy fascinated watched how everything was flushed away. Afterwards, Harry guided him to the shower stall that was closest to the door so that Jor could watch Loki. Luckily, Loki’s bed was opposite the door so that it was in good view.

The boy was absolutely fascinated by the warm and clean water, and in his childish glee, he completely forgot his fears, at least for the moment. He happily jumped under the water jet and began to splash it around. It was lucky for him that the tiles were charmed against slipping because Harry didn’t doubt that Jor would have slipped and fallen by now, probably hitting his head in the process.

Harry couldn’t help himself and laugh about Jor’s antics. He never had the freedom to be a child and play around in a bathroom, so he gladly indulged himself in the childish game with Jor, and soon a water fight erupted between the two.

Neither boy relented with his attacks on the other, and the fight went on for over half an hour until they heard coughing coming from one of the sinks opposite of the shower stalls. Instantly they both ceased their attacks and looked at the source. Leaning against the sink and sporting a broad smile, stood Loki.

“Having fun, you two?” he asked amused.

Jor’s only reaction to that was to splash water at his father, hitting him right in the face. Loki’s face darkened before he shot a jet of conjured water at his son and with a laugh joined their game after vanishing his clothes.
They only had to stop because, at some point, Neville came into the bathroom and informed them, that it was lunchtime and that since they already missed breakfast, they should come down to the great hall.

Loki quickly cleaned up the mess they made, having flooded the entire bathroom by that time, and Harry and Jor promptly finished their shower. After drying themselves, they walked over and into the dorm. Harry quickly dug into his trunk and pulled out an AC/DC band shirt that he got during his holidays and some jeans trousers before getting dressed.

Loki in the meantime got his son and himself dressed. Once they were done, the three of them walked down to the common room, where they were greeted by their friends. Jor was hiding behind his father, but Loki didn’t want to have any of it, so he swiftly picked him up and sat him on his hip.

“Jor, these are our friends. This is Neville,” he said introducing the boy. “Hermione, the twins Fred and George, and last Luna and Sam.”

Jor looked shyly at them and waved his hand but didn’t seem to know what to think of all the people. Luna bounced over to him with a broad smile.

“My dear, I always wanted a little brother, and I have a feeling that we’ll get along splendidly. Maybe we can find us a few Nargles to prank later, what do you think?”

“Nargles?” Jor asked tentatively, but he stopped trying to hide away from the girl.

“Yes, nasty little buggers. They hide your things, are generally unfriendly and call you names, but pranking keeps them away. You see, they don’t like it when someone gets back at them for what they did,” Luna explained.

Jor’s face lightened up hearing that.

“I know what you mean. Dad also loves to give them some payback!” he piped. It seemed that he had caught on with what Luna wanted to tell him via her strange creatures.

“And I know just the right place for setting up the pranks,” Harry added.

With that, they set off towards the great hall for lunch. On the way there they told Loki and Harry what happened the day prior after they had left.

Ginny had been confronted by Michael, McGonagall and Severus and after pointing out just how dangerous the book was, she relented and handed it over to them. It was currently stored in Michael’s office under powerful wards.

Ginny also was checked over by Madame Pomfrey and other than that her magical core was a bit drained, she was alright.

Later that day then Loki met his brother and added the soul piece from the book, which was the largest they found until then, to the others in the pendant he was always wearing.

Hopefully, with that, the happenings on and after Halloween finally found an end and they could move on.

If that day also a few Ravenclaws, whom Harry had caught at bullying a first-year housemate, found themselves covered in a sticky substance and feathers...well they should have known that neither Loki nor Harry liked bullies. Jor though found it hilarious.
The next weeks went by and the first Quidditch game of the year approached fast. Luckily the weather held true, and the sun shone brightly that November day and so the friends now sat on the Gryffindor stands eagerly watching the ongoing match. Luna in a show of support for their team decided to wear a hat in the form of a lion’s head.

Currently, it stood at 90:70 for Slytherin, but that didn’t perturb them as they all knew that a game can change very suddenly, so it wasn’t as if Gryffindor was losing.

That was when Harry came flying over to them. It was fortunate that they sat in the front row seats right behind the railing so that Harry could hover beneath them and not hindering the view of anyone.

“Hey, enjoying the game?” Harry asked Jor, who was sitting in his father’s lap and excitedly bouncing up and down.

“It is great, so much fun!” the boy piped but didn’t take his gaze from the happenings over him.

Just at that moment, Gryffindor scored, and Jor jumped up, cheering loudly. The others though weren’t any better and also shouted and cheered. Harry couldn’t help himself, he laughed. It was nice to see that Jor began to enjoy life now that he was reunited with his father.

“Say, aren’t you supposed to find and catch the snitch?” Loki asked amusedly.

“Hey, I know where the snitch is at every time,” Harry retorted indignantly. “At the moment it is hovering right next to the left Slytherin hoop.”

“Thank you, Potter,” suddenly a voice from above them said amusedly, and they all watched how Draco sped away in the direction Harry had pointed out.

Harry laughed, winked at Jor and followed his cousin at high-speed. It took him a few seconds, but in the end, he managed to catch up with him, even with Draco flying the faster broom.

“You knew that I was there and did that on purpose, didn’t you?” Draco shouted over to him.

“I wanted to spice things up a bit, well and I wanted to see who of us the better flyer is,” Harry shouted back.
Draco just shook his head and leaned forward to gain more speed. Harry followed that example, diving when the snitch suddenly changed direction. They both flew through the narrow trench that surrounded the pitch, having to dodge wooden beams that supported the entire construction.

Both flew out of the trench and back into the open field. They were closing in on the snitch, and at that moment it was unclear who would catch it as they were dead even. Draco grabbed for the snitch at the same time as Harry did, when suddenly a Bludger appeared out of nowhere and hit Draco’s broom.

Thanks to the impact, Draco was thrown off his broom, fell about two metres before he collided with the ground, rolling quite a distance where he then came to a rest. Harry instantly turned around while putting the snitch he had caught at one wing in his pocket.

He swiftly landed right next to Draco, threw his broom to the side and knelt down right next to the moaning boy. With a few flicks of his hand, he knew what was wrong and had to suppress a gasp. Once he knew what was wrong with his friend, he went to work, healing the more severe injuries like the broken ribs first. Harry was just treating the broken arm when finally Snape, Pomfrey and a few other teachers arrived.

“He had several broken ribs, which I already healed, his forearm is also broken, sprained ankle and several bruises all over his body,” Harry quickly summarised, not stopping his healing of the broken arm.

Severus just nodded, began to dig into his potions bag that he was always carrying around and pulled out several potions he gave Draco.

Pomfrey in the meantime cast several charms of her own to see whether Harry missed anything. It wasn’t that she didn’t trust him, she was just thorough and needed the scan for her files.

That was when suddenly another person spoke up.

“A broken arm? I can fix that in a jiffy,” Lockhart said in an arrogant tone while squeezing himself through the crowd that formed around them.

“Touch him, and I promise you my retribution will be swift,” Harry growled without as much as looking up.

Lockhart blinked a few times but puffed up indignantly.

“I can understand that a boy like you is protective of his friend, but you have to see that I have much more experience with situations like this. It was in ‘Travels with Trolls’ where I had to heal a fellow traveller who had a close meeting with one of the trolls. It wasn’t a nice sight I can tell you,” the man recollected. “So, you see why I’m more qualified to heal the poor boy than you are.”

“Are you also more qualified than I am?” Pomfrey hissed. “Because I trust Mr Potter with the healing of Mr Malfoy, however, I don’t trust you to do as much as removing a splinter, not to mention healing broken bones.”

Lockhart bristled at that but relented, deciding that it would be a good idea instead to keep the mob away. Harry wondered whether he used up his remaining brain cells to come up with that idea, but he was glad nonetheless.

A few minutes and the administration of several potions later, Snape conjured a stretcher and carefully levitated Draco onto it. Afterwards, he levitated the stretcher and walked briskly towards the exit of the stadium closely followed by Pomfrey.
Harry also stood up and turned towards Madame Hooch.

“By the way, here’s the snitch,” he said while throwing her the ball.

“So Gryffindor wins,” she exclaimed.

“Yes, no,” Harry told her with a crooked grin. “Actually, Slytherin wins. We caught the ball simultaneously before the Bludger hit Draco’s broom. I only didn’t let go of it and pocketed it. And no matter whether you give us both the full 150 points or divide them up, Slytherin would still win since they scored more goals.”

Everyone that stood around him, which were the professors as well as both Quidditch teams, looked at him incredulously. Some of the Gryffindor team seemed shocked that Harry just handed the victory to Slytherin, while the Slytherins were surprised that Harry didn’t just claim that he caught the snitch alone.

That was when the twins walked up to him, and each threw an arm over his shoulder, sandwiching him.

“Fair is fair,” the first twin said.

“But you’ll have to bake us all a cake for losing against that blond ponce,” the second one ended, but it was without any bite to it, being friends with Draco themselves.

“As if I wouldn’t have baked one anyway,” Harry replied with a laugh.

“Good boy,” the left twin said while patting his head.

“Is Draco going to be alright?” Hermione asked worriedly, finally having joined them together with the others.

“Yes, I think Madame Pomfrey just wants to make sure that everything is healing properly and keeping him in her ward to observe him because of a concussion,” Harry summarised.

They all looked relieved that their friend would be alright and out of the hospital wing by evening or tomorrow morning the latest.

“Now that the game is over, I suggest that you get changed and back to the castle,” Hooch, who came from announcing the winner, told them.

They all nodded, Flint and Wood shaking hands for a game well played before the teams left to their respective locker rooms. Half an hour later they went to the castle, where Harry split off towards the kitchen. It didn’t take an hour before the entire house was in the magically enlarged common room, talking about the game and enjoying Harry’s cakes.

While some were peeved that Harry gave away the victory, they could see his reasoning about fair-play and therefore kept their complaining to a minimum.

Jor on the other hand excitedly babbled away retelling the entire game multiple times though no one wanted to stop him. They were all glad that the child was happy.

By now everyone was used to the six-year-old boy, and quite a few took a liking to the feisty boy. During classes, he always sat with Loki and Harry after a long talk with Michael. At first, the teachers had thought that it would be boring for Jor to attend the classes, but it became quickly apparent that while the boy looked six-year-old, his mind was developed much further and he
quickly grasped the taught material. What he didn’t understand, Loki explained to him.

Besides that, Jor also was uncomfortable with letting either Harry or Loki out of his sight for long though he wasn’t as clingy anymore.

Draco soon fully recovered from his Quidditch accident and time went on, classes were taught, and new spells learned.

Until Jor proclaimed that he was bored.

Had anyone foreseen what massive chaos would follow this exclamation, they would have run and fast. But as it is no one knew what that innocent and straightforward statement would trigger.

It was only two weeks until the winter holidays would begin and the friends were sitting in the Gryffindor common room in front of the fire, Draco having joined them in his disguise again. Though when Sam joked that he was becoming a Gryffindor with how often he was there, Sam learned just why Draco was a Slytherin, having been tricked into doing Draco’s history homework for the week. It was Saturday afternoon now, and they all were relaxing after having done their homework in the library. By this point it was a usual sight that they would sit together, helping each other when someone had problems with a topic.

“I’m bored,” Jor suddenly moaned. “It is the weekend, I want to do something fun!”

Harry, hearing that, suddenly had a contemplative look on his face while the others looked at him in trepidation. The last time Harry sported such an expression, everyone in the castle had problems getting back in their respective common rooms because all guardians suddenly asked the students to show an example of the character traits that were associated with the houses. The only ones who didn’t have a problem with getting into the common room were the Ravens as they were used to showing their intelligence by solving a riddle.

So it was to be feared that whatever Harry was concocting would be huge and possibly would make their lives harder in the foreseeable future.

“I have an idea,” Harry suddenly said with a bright smile, effectively ripping everyone from their musing about what he would come up with. “Luna, Hermione, I think you should grab the twins. They need a makeover.”

Hermione though just looked at him in confusion, but Luna seemed to know what he was after, jumped up and dragged her over to the twins before pulling them to the boys’ dorm. Everyone in the common room looked after them in confusion but shrugged it off.

It took them nearly an hour, but eventually, the four came back down. All heads snapped towards the twins, and some even whistled appreciatively.

The twins wore black leather trousers, as well as a black leather jacket with fringes over a deep red button-up shirt. On top of that came black dragon leather cowboy boots and black cowboy hats that hang on their back held by leather strings.
Harry, who in the meantime also had left to don his Lord Frilly Pink outfit and already returned, had to admit that the two girls did a beautiful job.

“Well done you two,” he complimented them. “That calls for extra Christmas presents.”

“Would you please tell us what you planned?” Hermione muttered.

“Ah, ah, ah, that would spoil the surprise, wouldn’t it?” Harry laughed while walking over to Loki. “You’ll probably learn tomorrow from the papers.”

He leaned close to the pagan god and whispered something. Loki looked at him in disbelief but after a few moments nodded with a broad smile.

“Good, Puck come here,” he called out to his Demiguise, which dutifully jumped on his shoulder, draping his tail around Harry’s neck and shoulder.

Once the monkey was in place, Harry held his hands out to the twins, who warily grabbed them. Without a sound, Harry vanished closely followed by Loki, who by that time had picked up his son.

The atrium of the Ministry of Magic was filled with people milling around, entering or leaving one of the chimneys connected to the Floo system, apparating in and out or just running around doing their business. A constant noise was filling the air, and so, it was no wonder that no one heard or saw the boy dressed in a dark deep pink and his companions arriving in the middle of it. Barely anyone gave them a second glance, thinking that they had just a strange sense of dressing before they returned to whatever they were doing.

Harry scowled when no one acknowledged his arriving, and so, he slammed his cane down on the floor three times. The magically enhanced sound echoed through the entire atrium, effectively stopping everyone in their tracks and making them stare at him.

“Good, now that I have your attention, hello!” Harry greeted everyone.

“What is the meaning of this?” someone shouted enraged that he was interrupted.

“Ah, good question. You see, I recently became the new Dark Lord, and I thought that it would be prudent to introduce myself,” Harry replied, ignoring the fearful gasps and muttering. “I’m Lord Frilly Pink, and those two are my right and left hand, the Los Dos Bros.”

“Wait, your right and left hand?” the first twin asked surprised.

“We never agreed to that,” the second continued.

“So you don’t want those positions? Too bad,” Harry said with a shrug before he called out to the staring masses. “I’m sorry my mistake, it seems that the positions as my right and left hand are still vacant. Applications can be sent to….”

“Wait, wait,” one of the twins exclaimed.

“What do these positions include?”
“And who of us fills which?”

“We’ll discuss that later, but for now the plan is to have some fun,” Harry told them when suddenly Madame Bones together with no less than seven Aurors came running from the elevators.

“What is this about? Who are you?” Bones called out.

“Oh, look there. Snow White and the seven dwarves,” Harry said with a chuckle before slamming his cane down again and transforming the Aurors into seven dwarves and Bones into Snow White. “I’m the Dark Lord Frilly Pink, and those are the infamous Dos Bros. For why we’re here, well I thought it a good idea to introduce myself, and since we’re already here, I wanted to conduct the biannual security check.”


“Well, technically I’m thirteen, officially…twelve…I think…. How old am I?” he asked one of the twins.

“Twelve, my Lord,” one of the twins said with a flourished bow.

“Ah yes, twelve.”

“As if a twelve-year-old boy could be a Dark Lord, or storm the Ministry,” another man said, barking out a laugh.

Harry looked at the man because the voice was familiar when he realised that it was Sirius, who together with Remus, Lily and James were standing close to the front desk. Seeing that a Cheshire grin spread over his face.

“The infamous Marauders. I have an idea…let’s see who of us is better, or do you fear you’ll lose?”

With that, Harry pulled a small bag out of his pocket and handed it Puck, who took it before jumping down and vanishing in the crowd that looked confused because Puck was invisible to them. In the bag was a little something that he bought in Japan and that should redecorate the Ministry quite nicely.

James though who stared at the small bag that was bobbing in the air and vanishing between the people had a suspicion of who was standing in the middle of the atrium flanked by two handsome boys. He chuckled lowly.

“I accept your challenge, may the better prankster win,” he replied, ignoring the indignant shout of his name by Lily.

Harry’s grin widened impossibly further before he stomped his cane on the floor again and sent his magic through the building, activating what Puck had left all around it.

It took a few moments but soon the first screams were heard, and vines came crawling out of the corridors, covering every wall with a green blanket of leaves. Grass burst out of the floor and not much later the entire atrium looked like a massive greenhouse.

Bones gave a few instructions to her dwarf Aurors to not use any harming spells, who instantly sent curses towards the three. Harry immediately ported away. One of the twins, on the other hand, erected a shield while the other sent hexes back.

Unknown to the Aurors, Harry reappeared behind them, and with a few flicks of his hand, he had
banished a few potions in their system. Others he just hexed.

The hairs of one of the Aurors suddenly grew exponentially and covered him from head to toe like a cloak, pooling around him on the floor. Said Auror began to curse and tried to get to see something, but it was to no avail. In the end, he only managed to tangle himself so that he fell over with a thump.

Another Auror in the meantime was hit by one of the twins’ spells and suddenly felt the urge to recite poems.

Sirius, who saw that, broke out into laughter. Looking at James they both nodded, pulled their wands and also began to throw hexes at the twins and Aurors alike. What they didn’t anticipate though was that Loki, who had disillusioned himself and his son to watch the chaos, decided to participate in this chaos that had erupted. So it was quite surprising when Sirius suddenly looked like the Marchhare while James gave a performance as the Mad Hatter. Lily in the meantime found herself as Alice.

As it was, most people had fled down the corridors in the hope that they could escape the chaos in the atrium and the hexing but they quickly found out that it seemed to be even worse there. Endless masses of plants grew everywhere and also blocked entire corridors. Some tried to cut them down with hexes, but it quickly became evident that this wouldn’t work, the plants grew faster than they could cut them down.

In the meantime, in the Atrium, the Unspeakables, as well as several more Aurors, arrived to help to contain the chaos and aid their colleagues. Bones quickly instructed them what to do though with the involvement of Loki they promptly went into defensive mode when suddenly small humanoid looking plant creatures came crawling out of the plants and tried to entangle them.

In between all that, James had a lot of fun to transfigure small stone people who shout out pieces of advice on how to fight that Dark Lord as well as questioning their fighting style, distracting the Aurors with it. At some point, one of the Aurors decided that enough was enough and blasted them apart.

“Where is that blasted boy?” Bones muttered, hiding behind a pillar from the oncoming barrage of spells from the twins.

Thanks to the twins, currently fireworks was continually exploding under the high ceiling, clouds of different colour were covering the floor, colouring anything and everything they came in touch with, while two of the Aurors looked like angry birds.

Though the twins also had been hit with the odd spell, resulting in Fred’s tongue being numb which made pronouncing spells nearly impossible, not that it impaired him in the slightest since he practised his mind magic a lot. George, on the other hand, was bound by ropes though thanks to his legs being freed, he also had no problems of defending himself.

What none of them all knew though was that Harry long since left and now entered the completely empty Department of Mysteries. He passed several different rooms that looked highly intriguing, but for now, he had another goal in mind. So, he walked through the Department until he reached a massive hall that was filled with long rows of high shelves. In these shelves laid hundreds of thousands of small glass orbs with little notes attached to them.
Wandering through the rows, he soon learned that the orbs were sorted by the time they were created. With that in mind, he walked down the rows until he reached the row that roughly fitted the timeframe he was looking for.

Carefully looking at each label, he walked along the row until one label caught his attention.

Lord Voldemort & Harry James Potter (?)

With a victorious smirk, Harry carefully picked the orb up while covering it in an unbreakable charm before placing it in a velvet bag and then in his pocket. Done with what he had come for he teleported away and straight in the office of the Minister of Magic.

Said man was sitting in his chair, worrying about what was going on.

Harry’s smirk widened when he walked through the, thankfully plant free, office towards the man.

“Hey there, I’m the Dark Lord Frilly Pink,” Harry greeted him with a wave of his hand. “By the way, your security sucks.”

The Minister was gaping like a fish out of water. How had that boy gotten in here? His office was supposed to be impenetrable during a lockdown, which had been erected as soon as the first spells went flying. He had no idea what was going on, just that someone attacked the Ministry and now that boy came in here and said he was a Dark Lord!? Preposterous.

He just wanted to say something when Harry spoke up again.

“You see, you have two choices now. Either you admit defeat, and I’ll just leave you sitting there in all your glory and unharmed – well, except what the Prophet will print about you –, or you antagonise me and well…you’ll have to face my wrath.”

However, that only managed to enrage Fudge.

“You cannot come in her and demand such things from me! I’m the Minister of Magic. How old are you even? How did you get in here? This office is supposed to be impenetrable,” he raged.

“Ah, what a pity,” Harry replied with a sigh, waving his hands.

Though after a moment he could only stare at the place the Minister had sat at. Now there was a small, cute looking little white bunny.

Harry snickered, picked the bunny up and sat down with the rabbit in his lap. At first, the Minister tried to get away, but when he realised that it was to no avail, he just cowered down in hope to be as small as possible. Harry again waved his hand before he leaned back and made himself comfortable.

They sat there for quite some time, Harry humming lowly when suddenly the door burst open and revealed an enraged Madame Bones together with five Aurors, who undoubtedly had seen better times. One was wearing only a mini-skirt that was just long enough to cover everything inappropriate, while another one looked like Heidi.

“Welcome ladies and gentlemen. How may I be of help on this wonderful day?” Harry asked cheerfully.

“You could start with telling us what happened with the Minister,” Bones snapped.

“You mean this cute little bunny here?” Harry replied while holding up said bunny. “Don’t worry,
you’ll have your panicky little Minister back in no time. You see I saw Alice and the Mad Hatter earlier and thought that all that was missing was the White Rabbit. However, I was just here to introduce myself and see how good your security is. Well…at least you fought back, the MACUSA just broke out in utter chaos. So, you only get a Dreadful instead of a Troll. Hooray! I’ll hope that you’ll do better next time. See ya.”

With a broad grin, he sat the bunny on the desk and just at that moment, Puck ran into the room on jumped on his shoulder as if knowing that they would leave, before Harry teleported away, leaving a not very amused head of the DMLE and a frightened bunny behind. Ah yes, and unknown to those also a large banner in the atrium.

*LOKI’S APPRENTICE 1 : MoM 0 : MARAUDERS 0*

*Seriously have you been trying at all?*
Chapter 59: Trouble is Coming

Loki’s Apprentice strikes again! - Ministry of Magic left in Chaos

Yesterday the Ministry was subjected to an unusual attack. Shortly before 2 p.m., three people arrived in the Atrium of the Ministry. One introduced himself as the Dark Lord Frilly Pink with his two companions the Los Dos Bros. Now you, my dear readers, might wonder who this new Dark Lord. It is none other than Loki’s Apprentice Harry James Potter.

Yes, dear readers, you read correctly. Harry Potter, the Boy-who-lived, our dear saviour claims himself to be a new Dark Lord.

But how is this connected to the recent attack on the Ministry of Magic you might ask.

Shortly after arriving in the Atrium, he claimed that he was there for the “Biannual Security Check”. Let me tell you, as I was present during the attack, that the Ministry was left in chaos as a result. Plants were growing everywhere (see picture) an no one remained the same.

As you might remember from this summer, the MACUSA was recently subjected to a similar attack. One might wonder what Mr Potter is aiming at with his seemingly random attacks that leave chaos in their wake but hurt no one.

“My son wanted to point out the severe security issues in the Ministry,” Lord Potter stated in an interview shortly afterwards. “Think about it. What if this had been a real Dark Lord? You cannot deny that it would have ended very badly.”

Lord Potter brought up a good point. Had this really been the attack of a Dark Lord it is undoubted, that the Ministry would have fallen. The Minister, who was also the target of the attack, already responded by doubling the budget of the DMLE.

“This attack proved that the security of the Ministry, as well as the entire British magical community, got lax with the lack of a threat. No more! We will do everything in our might to secure our land once more,” the Minister said in an official statement. “It is a good thing that Mr Potter brought our attention to this serious problem.”

I think that I speak for many of my readers when I thank Mr Potter for bringing this issue to our attention. Hopefully, the Ministry will take this as the means to improve security and not to neglect it again, but with the actions taken, I already feel safer.
Amelia Bones, head of the DMLE, is a very competent woman. Minister Fudge tasked her with finding ways to improve the security not only in the Ministry of Magic but also in other magical areas like St Mungo, Diagon Alley or Hogsmeade.

It is doubtable that it will take long until first results are presented to us as Ms Bones probably will surely enlist the help of Harry Potter since he seems to know how to circumvent the already existing security measures.

-Rita Skeeter-

For more about Harry Potter, Loki’s Apprentice see page 2

For more about the attack on the MACUSA see page 3

Harry snickered while reading the article. The attack the day prior had been a nice distraction and the expression on Bone’s face when she saw him sitting in the Minister’s office with the Minister bunny in his lap...hilarious.

“My aunt will skin you alive,” Susan Bones, who just walked past the Gryffindor table and the friends, told them. “If I were you, I’d run!”

Harry only snorted, knowing that he had a good argument for why she should not kill him for his little prank. Not that he thought that she would. No, he will probably be subjugated to an hour-long monologue about how much work she has now because of him, how careless his actions were and what it would mean for him. Practically the same as she had done after his coming out in front of the Buckingham Palace.

That was when his snowy owl landed in front of him, carrying a letter. Harry quickly untied the message before feeding her a strip of bacon.

“Hey girl, I’m sorry that I neglected you. It’s just that so much happened and...,” Harry tried to reassure his first friend that he would never neglect her on purpose by petting her.

Hedwig hooted reproachfully as if to tell him that he expected him to remember her in the future before she gently nibbled at his finger.

“I could never forget my first friend now, could I?” Harry asked her with a chuckle.

He was ripped from his musings when the door to the great hall banged open.

“HARRY JAMES POTTER!” Amelia Bones shouted while walking towards him at a brisk pace. Quite a few of the students chuckled or even outright laughed at Harry’s plight.

“Uh oh,” Harry muttered before turning towards the angry woman. He had to revise his opinion, she
was more furious than then if that was even possible. “Hello Madame Bones, what a surprise to see you here but I just remembered that I have to be somewhere else. See ya!”

With that Harry vanished into thin air while Hedwig let out a soft hoot that sounded suspiciously amused. However, Bones didn’t seem to be pleased about it.

“Where is he?” she asked Loki, who was currently entertaining his son, in a tone that spoke of untold punishment should he as much as think about lying.

Loki looked surprised and slightly frightened at the women before he merely pointed upwards.

Ms Bones rose an eyebrow but looked up nonetheless. Indeed, hidden behind the spells that made the ceiling invisible, she could make out the faint outline of Harry sitting in the rafters.

“Traitor!” Harry called out but, to the shock of everyone, jumped down and nimbly landed in an emerald green cloud in front of Bones. “Madame Bones, I think we should relocate this conversation somewhere more private.”

“I have to agree,” Michael, who came over, spoke up. “If you might follow me then we can take this to my office.”

Bones looked at Harry critically. “Should you decide to vanish again, trust me there will be no place for you to hide,” she sternly told him.

“How good that I know a place neither you nor anyone else can get in,” Harry retorted with a broad grin. “But no, I promise you not to vanish again, scout’s honour.”

“Only you would use Lucifer’s cage as a hiding place,” Loki groaned. “Besides you never were with the scouts.”

Harry merely shrugged. “Lead the way and Loki...don’t think that I forgot about your little betrayal. This is not over.”

“Bring it on!” Loki retorted with a broad grin while his son chuckled.

“You asked for it,” Harry said with a smirk while following Michael and Ms Bones.

Michael looked at the two and wondered whether he should erect a few security measures, though he was quite sure that he would be able to reign in his brother. Harry on the other hand...he would have to wait and see.

The others also all got up and walked after them, joined by Draco outside the great hall. Michael looked at them questioningly but didn’t say anything, fully well knowing that Harry would tell them anyway. Together they walked the many stairs up to Michael’s office, where he conjured enough seats for everyone to sit in. Michael also called for a house-elf to bring them tea and some pastries.

“Mr Potter, would you be so gracious and explain what brought you to the idiotic idea to attack the Ministry? Do you have any idea what trouble you’re in?” Bones began after sipping her tea. “The chaos you created will take weeks to sort out. Not to mention, that quite a few very influential pure-bloods are now demanding that you’re thrown into Azkaban!”

“Oi, you should be grateful that I left everything alone that contained paperwork,” Harry retorted. “Like the offices, the archives or...the DMLE!”

Bones blanched when she heard that, the horror of having to sort through every file and document
the DMLE stored on open and recently closed cases...it would drive even a saint into a murderous rage. Not to mention that many lawyers would this take as a mean to claim that evidence were tempered with and therefore invalid.

“Madame Bones, it was never my intention to harm anyone or disrupt the workings of the Ministry too much. I just wanted to prove a point. The Ministry is wide open for an attack,” Harry explained.

“Do you know how much work it is to clean your mess up?” Bones growled. “Then there are also those who say that you should be locked away. This is very serious!”

“Yes, you have some cleaning up to do, boo-hoo! Send in a few house-elves and the Ministry will be back to normal within hours,” Harry said with a shake of his head. Sometimes he really wondered how oblivious the magicals were. “But I also made your life easier. You get more budget to hire more Aurors and even install some surveillance tech to upgrade your security.”

“Muggle technology doesn’t work in the magical environment,” Bones stated confused.

Harry sighed deeply, pulled out his mobile and snapped a picture of Bones, who looked at him shocked. A few clicks later he posted the photo on his Twitter account with the subline “Security is giving me a lecture because I was a naughty boy and livened up the boring lifes of some bureaucrats”.

Within seconds, the tweet was seen by thousands of people and reacted to it.

“Haha, did ya do?”

“Serves them right, stuck up idiots”

“your doomed”

“whose tha beatiful woman? Looks fierce. Can ya get me her numba?”

“Prank ‘em ta hell!”

“nice milf!!!”

With a grin, Harry threw Bones his phone.

“People seem to like you,” he chuckled. “Anyway, muggle technology works. That is where another problem comes up. Have you ever considered, that someone walks into the Ministry, armed with a gun? You wouldn’t know before it is too late and you have at least one dead person. That is assuming that said person only has a pistol. Would it be an MP or something even larger and the person is halfway decent in using it...halleluiah!”

Bones went even whiter than she had when Harry implied what he could have done. Thanks to her regular dealings with the muggle world to cover up mistakes those ignorant pure-bloods made, she knew very well what Harry was talking about.

The prospect alone that some muggle-born who held a grudge against the Ministry could do just that was terrifying.

“Then there is another thing. Why the heck, are you checking people only when they are already within the wards? Doesn't that defeat the purpose of having those wards?” Harry continued. “If I were you, I’d check their intention as well as what they are carrying with them personally and before they even set one foot into the Ministry. I mean I don’t know what wards are around the Ministry,
but you saw that I could just enter and leave it in chaos.”

Harry ended his speech with a shrug. He had said his part. Now it was upon the Ministry to decide whether to follow his advice or not.

Bones was deep in thought. She had come to Hogwarts to berate the boy for what he had done but now he told her that far worse things could have happened. It made it apparent to her that a lot of work was waiting for her to get the security not only of the Ministry but also other magical hotspots up to date.

Michael was also lost in his thought. Harry might have addressed Madame Bones with his concerns, but he had to admit that Hogwarts was equally vulnerable. He knew for a fact that Sam had quite a few weapons in his trunk. Sure, Sam kept them secure and away from the other children, he took his responsibility seriously but what would anyone else stop from bringing weapons to the school?

Then there were also the magical artefacts to put into consideration. The incident with the diary had shown that nothing prevented potentially harmful objects to be brought to school. So many things could enter the school, and no one would know until it was far too late. Potions, cursed objects, weapons...the list was endless.

That was when he realised something else. Harry just, without any problems, shot a picture of Amelia Bones and posted it on the web. This in itself was hardly a problem but what if one of the other children posted a picture of a ghost? Or of Hogwarts with its surroundings?

True, the needed enchanted technology was only available in America so far. However, he doubted that it would take long for at least the muggle-born to realise where Harry got his tech and buy it too.

Michael couldn’t help but sigh deeply. This was a disaster in the making.

“I will need to go over the wards of Hogwarts too. We especially need wards that prevent dark and cursed objects from getting in. Maybe also a ward that would render any gun useless though I don’t know how to do that yet,” he mused aloud.

“Why not stopping the gunpowder in the rounds from being ignited?” Sam, who knew the most about weapons, asked. “That would render any gun that doesn’t use pressured air useless.”

Michael looked at him surprised and a bit confused. Though he wasn’t the only one. Bones didn’t seem to get his point either. Sam, who saw that, elaborated.

“When you fire a gun, the firing pin hits the back of the round. The resulting spark ignites the gunpowder which explodes and catapults the bullet out through the barrel,” he explained. “All you need to suppress is the spark that ignites the gunpowder.

“Air guns though wouldn’t be affected by it as they use compressed air to catapult the bullet out. They are not as dangerous as a normal gun but can do quite some damage nonetheless.”

Sam continued to discuss the finer workings of guns with Bones and how to possibly counteract them.

Loki, on the other hand, was somewhere else with his thoughts. He stared at the phone that now rested in Harry’s lap.

“You realised it too, didn’t you?” Michael asked him.

Loki nodded solemnly. “Yes, I did. It is my fault,” he muttered. “Hadn’t I brought the tech to
“It would have happened anyway,” Michael added. “Maybe not so fast or that early but there was no way to prevent this from happening. No matter what we’d tried, sooner or later the fact that the magical world exists would have gotten out.”

“What do you think why I revealed myself in front of the Buckingham Palace?” Harry threw in only to be met by confused looks. “Don’t tell me that you thought that I revealed myself as Loki’s Apprentice on a whim. Seriously, I long since realised that the developing tech someday would expose our world and the incident with Ron only cemented that.

“That was also why I appeared in front of that reporter. I introduced the thought that there are supernatural beings in the world. Sure, for now, they think that those are few and far in between, but it will definitely soften the blow when the magical world gets revealed.

“If we can delay this revelation long enough the people will already be so used to the thought that they won’t bat an eye about it.”

“But what if they react violently? Your revelation already showed that not everyone is as reasonable about this as you might think,” Bones, who ended her talk about weapons with Sam, for now, asked.

“Those are mainly religious organisations but I hope that if someone they would listen to, for example an archangel, explains to the heads of the religions like the Pope, what is going on. They then can keep the population calm, perhaps even using quotes from their scriptures,” Harry explained. “Also include the governments so that they don’t feel left out. However, make sure that they understand that magicals are just people like them. That we’re not the answer to all of their problems.”

Harry sighed, was it really that hard to think for oneself? The easiest thing to do this was to reach out to every person or organisation of importance and let the fact that there was more to the world than they thought slowly leak out. With that, the population wouldn’t be overwhelmed.

“And where pray to tell me, do you expect me to find an archangel who would be willing to help with this?” Bones asked incredulously.

“Oh, I can think of one,” Harry replied with a grin but didn’t elaborate further.

“Uncle Michael will probably help you,” Jor, who was currently sitting in Luna’s lap and playing with her long blond hair, piped up at the same time before glancing at Michael. “Yep, he’ll help.”

Bones looked at him in surprise, but before she could say anything, Luna spoke up.

“As interesting as this is, I think the more important question is why Harry was truly in the Ministry,” she said with a serene smile, knowing that if she didn’t get them back on the track, they would go on for hours and not discuss what was needed.

Now it was Luna whom everyone looked at with a confused and surprised look.

“What do you mean?” Bones asked suspiciously.

“She means this,” Harry answered while pulling a small white orb out of his robe pocket and threw it in the air before catching it again. “I used the chaos at the Ministry and the fact that the Unspeakables came up and played with us as a distraction to nick this little Prophecy. I want to know what all this shit is about. Why Zachariah is hell-bent on getting me to do what he wants.”
“Language,” Hermione scolded him lightly.

“That was why you created the chaos,” Bones meanwhile muttered in realisation. “You wanted to lure out the Unspeakables so that you could search for the prophecy undisturbedly. But did you really have to do this? You could have just asked for it, and they would have given it to you.”

“Where would have been the fun in that?” Harry laughed. “Besides, I don’t want anyone besides us to know that I have it or know its content. And as I said, it also served the purpose to point out security problems.”

Luna chuckled. She had seen that this little deed would change everything. Not how exactly or the end result, but she knew enough to realize that this was a crucial point that had to happen if Harry wanted to escape the fate Zachariah set for him, hence why she had changed the topic earlier.

Before they could go on another tangent about the security of the Ministry of Magic, Luna picked the orb from Harry’s hand and dropped it. They all watched as it fell down, hit the stone floor and shattered into thousand pieces.

"The one with the power to vanquish the Dark Lord approaches...
born to those who have thrice defied him, born as the seventh month dies...
and the Dark Lord will mark him as his equal, but he will have power the Dark Lord knows not...
and either must die at the hand of the other for neither can live while the other survives...
the one with the power to vanquish the Dark Lord will be born as the seventh month dies...."

“Well, shit!” was all that Harry had to say to this.

They all sat in silence and contemplated what they just heard.

“Because of this pile of dragon dung, Zachariah is after me? What The Fuck?” Harry suddenly began to rant. “This thing is just so...so...ugh!”

“Self-fulfilling?” Luna asked helpfully.

“Yes, exactly, thank you! I mean seriously? And either must die at the hand of the other for neither can live while the other survives...yes but only because of that bastard Zach. Weren’t he after me I wouldn’t give a fucking shit about that bastard Riddle!” Harry continued to rant.

“Language!” Hermione scolded him again.

Harry though only glared at her, he had other things to worry about at the moment than his swearing.

“Uhm is it only me or could that prophecy also mean me?” Neville suddenly asked in a worried tone. “I mean I’m born at the end of July too.”

“Be glad that Zachariah decided that I’m the one. Believe me that feather duster is a pain in the ass,” Harry growled.

“Harry James Potter would you mind your language!”

“Ellen already tried to stop me from using swear words, and she failed,” Harry told her with a broad grin. “So why do you think that you’ll succeed.”
“Because I’m here and Ellen is not,” Hermione retorted with a smirk before waving her hand over towards Harry.

“And I don’t care what you did,” Harry said while sticking out his tongue towards Hermione. “Back to the topic. The prophecy said, assuming that it truly meant me, that I have the power to vanquish the Dark Lord. First, what Dark Lord does it mean? Are there possibly other Dark Lords than Voldy?”

“Oh, there is currently a new Dark Lord on the rise, the Dark Lord Frilly Pink. He’s very active in Britain,” Bones mused with a smirk. “He recently attacked the Ministry.”

“Ha, ha, ha, do you want to insinuate that I vanquish myself?” he answered with dry sarcasm when he perked up. “Hey Neville, want to vanquish me? Would only have to mark you as my equal beforehand.”

“Hell no! I will not kill you,” Neville replied, shocked that Harry would even think about something like that.

Harry, on the other hand, looked at him confused.

“And either must die at the hand of the other for neither can live while the other survives,” Neville recited the prophecy. “As I said...I’m not going to kill you. Besides, what about the born to those who have thrice defied him part?”

“Meh, are either of us merely surviving? To the thrice defied him…who is him? The Dark Lord? If yes, which Dark Lord? The same Dark Lord that the one born has the power to vanquish or another one?

“When did the parents have to defied him? At the time the prophecy was made? Afterwards? How is defied defined in this case? Did there have to be a battle or is a mere disagreement enough?” Harry replied with a shrug. “And since you only have to vanquish me, a mere defeating me in a duel would suffice. Hey isn’t Lockhart still pestering you about a duelling club?”

“Yes, he is,” Michael affirmed with a nod. “What have you planned?”

“Fucking this entire prophecy sideways, what else?” Harry piped. “The great Light Lord Neville Longbottom is going to vanquish the Dark Lord...Frilly Pink.”
May the Best Win

Chapter Notes

Hey, welcome to the new chapter. I decided to introduce a new character to the story. He is already mentioned in this chapter but at the same time not. To give you a hint of who that character is...it is not one that originally shows up in either Harry Potter or Supernatural in his real form. He is from the Greek mythology but not a god. Let’s see if someone can figure out who I mean *grins evilly*

Chapter 60: May the Best Win

It was two days before the Christmas break. The entire school was currently standing in the great hall eagerly anticipating what was to come. The tables and benches were stacked against the wall to make space for the large duelling platform that stood in the middle. Students were crowded around it chattering about what they would learn in this club.

To the side stood the teachers, watching everything amusedly. They all knew that Lockhart, who organised the entire thing, was absolutely incompetent so whatever was going to happen was bound to be highly amusing. The only one who looked a bit disgruntled was Severus, but it soon became apparent why.

“Hello, and welcome to the Duelling Club,” Lockhart exclaimed while stepping up on the raised platform with. “It is nice to see that so many of you attend. My name is Lockhart, as you all know,” he continued with a broad grin and a wink. “And I’ll be your instructor. Fortunately, Professor Snape agreed to be my assistant.”

Here Severus also stepped on the platform with an expression that bordered on murderous. It was evident that Severus’ agreement was more out of necessity than a genuine desire to be here.

“Good, I think that a demonstration is in order. Every duel follows the duelling etiquette,” the blond man explained. “First we bow to each other.”

As Lockhart said, he bowed with an unneeded flourish before Severus, who just curtly bowed. Afterwards, they both went to their position.

“Now that we’re in position, I’ll count down, and the duel begins. 3...2...1...0,” he counted.

“Expelliarmus,” Severus shouted as soon as Lockhart reached zero, jabbing his wand towards the man.

Severus’ spell was so fast that Lockhart had no time to react or bring up a shield to block it. When it hit the blond ponce, the force propelled him into the air and off the duelling platform where he landed with a thud on the floor.

Many were laughing and those who weren’t, mainly the Slytherins, still looked amused.
“Yes, yes, a good demonstration. Of course, I knew what you would do, and I could have countered it with ease,” Lockhart began to ramble while standing up and straightening his robe.

“Wouldn’t it be better to teach them how to shield themselves first,” Severus asked in a scathing tone.

“Yes, you’re right. Let’s see,” Lockhart was quick to agree but apparently didn’t want to try his luck against Severus again. “Potter, Finnigan, you two will demonstrate this for us.”

“Do you want Potter to be delivered to the infirmary in pieces?” Severus growled. “Finnigan tends to blow up everything he touches. I suggest someone else. Longbottom, he is the least likely to do permanent harm as long as it isn’t a potion.”

Harry had to admit that Severus is correct. He had lost count just how many times Seamus had blown up something, may it be a feather he was supposed to levitate or the water he wanted to turn into rum. Harry suspected that Seamus was a closet pyromaniac.

Though assuming that Neville couldn’t do lasting damage was a grave mistake to make. Ever since Loki began to teach them, his skills grew by leaps and bounds.

Neville and Harry looked at each other and with a smirk nodded. It was time to put up a good show. They both stepped on the platform and came to stand in the middle, facing the other.

“Worried?” Neville teased.

“Why? You have nothing on the Dark Lord Frilly Pink,” Harry retorted, his clothes rippling and morphing into his Dark Lord outfit.

Neville couldn’t help himself, he snorted.

“You’re doomed!”

They both bowed and walked to their places.

“The duel comes to an end when one fighter is disarmed or otherwise unable to continue. On my sign,” Lockhart called. “Three... two... one... GO!”

“Expelliarmus,” Neville called, pointing his wand at Harry.

The result surprised many of the attendant students as the spell hit Harry, whose wand sailed through the air and was swiftly caught by Neville. Harry, on the other hand, looked from his now empty hand to Neville and back as if he couldn’t believe what just happened.

“You defeated me,” he finally muttered. “How is this possible?”

Okay, he knew exactly how this was possible since he didn’t even put up a fight, but that was beside the point. Looking over to Michael, he saw the angel nod with a smirk.

Michael had instantly felt it when the prophecy was fulfilled.

What only very few people knew was that angels could track whether a prophecy was fulfilled or not. It was like an energy that lingered behind when a prediction was made and that dissipated once its purpose was satisfied.

Sure, a lot of prophecies were hanging around, some even millennia old that were never fulfilled. But every prediction had its own distinctive feeling to it so that beings, who knew how to track them like
angels, could feel it when a specific prophecy was fulfilled.

Michael found it highly amusing how Zachariah’s plans backfired so spectacularly and all because his little brother was bored. There was also Harry with his charm, who drew even more people in that had vital parts in the angel’s plans. It was like watching dominoes fall. With one stone a chain reaction was set off that would bring all of Zachariah’s plans crashing down around him.

With Michael’s assuring that the prophecy was fulfilled, Harry turned back to Neville with a smirk.

“I demand a rematch,” he called out.

“So eager to be defeated again?” Neville retorted.

“You might have caught me by surprise once but don’t think that it will happen again.”

“Then stop talking and fight,” Neville taunted him while throwing several hexes at him.

Harry who anticipated this, vanished only to reappear in the same spot a few moments later so that the spells hit an invisible barrier behind him. In anticipation that something like this might happen, Michael had warded the platform so that no spell could escape and strike the onlookers.

With a broad grin, Harry began to shoot hexes and jinxes back at Neville. After that they abandoned all pretence of holding back, using everything they knew.

So Harry mainly used his agility and ability to vanish and reappear to evade Neville’s attacks, while Neville used his knowledge and capabilities as an earth mage to summon plants, which absorbed the oncoming hexes or tried to entangle Harry.

Lockhart, who wanted to intervene when he saw that the two were not only using stunners but also dozens of other spells, quickly had to duck and hurry off the stage because neither Harry nor Neville were inclined to listen to him.

The other students watched with bated breath how the two turned the duelling platform into a battlefield while trying to best the respective other. Even the professors had to admit, that the two were really good.

It took the two far over half an hour before they both nearly collapsed in exhaustion. Harry and Neville walked to the middle of the now non-existent duelling platform and shook hands. Both were breathing heavily and Harry limped slightly because Neville’s numbing charm had hit his right leg.

“Draw?” Neville asked.

“Draw,” Harry replied with a laugh. “And a nice hot shower.”

Neville nodded, with that, he could agree. The duel took a lot out of them. It was a wonder that they both lasted this long. However, neither had wanted to back out, so they continued until they were physically unable to do so.

That was when slowly applause rose until the entire hall was cheering and clapping. Harry grinned broadly, at least this whole ordeal had been entertaining for everyone. He bowed curtly before hopping down and joining the others.

“An excellent duel,” Severus spoke up once the students quieted down again. “I think ten points each are in order.”
Many looked in shock at the usually dour man. It was high praise indeed when Severus awarded points, not to mention so many in one go. So it was no surprise when Neville and Harry looked at each other smugly.

Loki too looked at the two proudly. He could clearly remember the small, underfed, and abused boy as well as the frightened one that jumped at his own shadow they both had been. However, under his tutelage and teaching the last year and a half, they have become proud wizards.

Both could give seasoned witches and wizards a run for their money and Harry had proven more than once that even angels had to be careful around him. Then there was Crowley, a seasoned demon, who went out of his way as not to anger the boy. When they kept up the good work, he didn’t doubt that they would be forces to be reckoned with.

Though the two were not the only ones. Sam together with Hermione and Draco had also learned a lot. Anyone stupid enough to antagonise them would be surprised about what they knew.

Then there was also Luna. Sure, she only joined them this year. With her dreamy attitude, many underestimated her. However, as some quickly learned when they tried to bully her because of her oddness, she wasn’t weak. She might not know all that much yet, but she had creativity in her spell work that was only rivalled by the twins.

Yes, the twins. With him giving them a few pointers in what to invent they now had a nice business of pranking supplies going. Sure, they love to prank people and create chaos and mayhem, but it was developing the stuff they really excelled at.

Watching his friends chatting with each other, Loki had to admit that he couldn’t be any prouder of them. He had come to Hogwarts to create a bit of chaos and mess with that idiot Dumbledore but now look what he got. He got friends and even a part of his family back.

More than just his old family. Hell, the Potters practically adopted him and even Sam he saw more like a little brother than a friend. The others also were more like cousins than friends. How the hell had that happened?

Unaware of Loki’s inner musings the professors began to clean up after Harry and Neville. Once the remains of the platform were cleared away, they paired up the students and instructed them to practise the stunner and shield charm for now. Because of the number of students all the professors walked around, giving pointers and correcting mispronunciations. That was all except Lockhart who too tried to give advice but was promptly ignored.

Neville and Harry, on the other hand, sat to the side, watching their friends while chatting, eating some chocolate that Loki had handed them.

Even long after the duelling club found an end, the duel was the main topic of every conversation.

Zachariah was currently worrying about the fact that one of his subordinates hadn’t reported back for quite some time now and what to do about it when he felt the prophecy he had made about that Potter brat and Riddle became fulfilled and faded into nothingness. With a smirk, he wrapped up his work and walked towards the closest gate from heaven to the earthly plane to confront Potter and
demand Riddle’s soul from him.

To Zachariah, it looked like Potter finally came to his senses and did what he was supposed to do. All he had to do now was to ensure that Riddle’s soul landed in the right hands and therefore fulfil his deal with those disgusting demons.

Oh, how he would like to rip them apart but unfortunately, he still needed them. There were quite a few seals left on Lucifer’s cage. They needed to be broken before he could and would gleefully dispose of those abominations.

The only thing in his eyes that was worse than demons were Nephilim. Which angel in his right mind would want to breed with those mud-monkeys anyway?

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**The Light Lord Longbottom defeats the Dark Lord Frilly Pink – Genuine or part of a nefarious plot?**

*Yesterday was the first time in a long time that Hogwarts’ duelling club came together. So was it during this meeting that recently risen Dark Lord Frilly Pink, who is no one else than our saviour Harry Potter, was defeated by whom he claimed to be the Light Lord Longbottom.*

*However, dear readers, can we really trust Light Lord Longbottom’s victory over the Dark Lord? According to eyewitnesses who don’t want to be named, the Dark Lord Frilly Pink didn’t even defend himself against the attack.*

*So did Neville Longbottom truly defeat the Dark Lord or is this perhaps part of a nefarious plot? Especially since it is reported that the rematch the Dark Lord demanded, ended in a draw after both parties were unable to continue because of exhaustion.*

*It came to light that during the recent attack on the Ministry by the Dark Lord Frilly Pink and his Generals the Los Dos Bros not only the Ministry building was turned into a jungle but also something was stolen. Some of you might ask now why we haven’t been made aware of that fact.*

*As it stands, the Ministry has yet to discover the theft because it was a Prophecy Orb from the Department of Mysteries. For those of you, dear readers, who don’t know it, in the Department of Mysteries is also the Room of Prophecies is located. In this room are orbs of any prophecy ever made stored. So, because of the sheer number of spheres, it is no wonder that the theft hasn’t been detected yet.*

*Now you might wonder what the theft of a Prophecy Orb has to do with the defeat of the Dark Lord Frilly Pink. Anonymous sources report that it was, in fact, the Prophecy that foretold the downfall of a Dark Lord that was stolen. The exact Orb that the Unspeakables connected to You-Know-Who.*

*But what does this mean for us? Could it be that the prophecy never meant You-Know-Who?*  

*At this point, we don’t know, but we’re determined to get you the answers you deserve to know*
By the end of the article, Harry was lying on the floor laughing.

“Light Lord Longbottom,” he brought out wheezing. “I already thought that the magical world had it bad with all the alliterations, but this caps it all off.”

Most of the others were looking at him as if he finally lost it.

“What is alliteration?” Neville asked confused.

“An alliteration is when several consecutive words begin with the same letter,” Hermione explained amusedly, she could see why Harry found it so hilarious. “And for why Harry is currently behaving like a lunatic...Luna Lovegood, Severus Snape, Filius Flitwick, Minerva McGonagall, Pansy Parkinson...do I have to go on?”

You can see that Neville was thinking about what Hermione just told him and he had to concede that the magical world had a lot of those alliterations. In the end, he snorted. Light Lord Longbottom indeed sounded funny now that he thought about it.

“Alliterations or not, we have to leave soon, or we’ll miss the train,” Loki interrupted their thoughts.

They all nodded in agreement and quickly finished their breakfast. Luckily, they all already packed everything they would need for the winter holidays so that they would only have to grab their bags and coats before leaving.

Soon later they were sitting in the Hogwarts Express, eagerly awaiting their return to home. Even the group of friends were impatiently waiting for the train to reach London.

Sam couldn’t wait to see his brother again. Notwithstanding his happiness of learning more about magic, he still missed him.

Draco, on the other hand, was a bit apprehensive about the holidays. His mother had informed him that ever since Sirius helped her to get divorced from Lucius, she was living in the Black Townhouse after they renovated the entire thing. However, over the holidays Sirius and his girlfriend Ellen would also live there, and Draco didn’t know what to think about that. He would have to wait and see.

The others though, couldn’t wait to see their family again.
They were chatting, talking about what they wanted to do over the holidays. It had already been agreed that they would all meet on the first Christmas day at Potter Manor to exchange presents.

So time flew by and they soon reached London. When they heard the announcement, they all collected their things and made sure that they left nothing behind.

Puck jumped from the luggage rack down onto Harry’s shoulder while Neville held Trevor safely in his hand lest the serial jailbreaker escaped again. Even Loki at one point had tried to contain the toad with several spells in an aquarium fit for the amphibian but quickly gave up when the toad repeatedly managed to escape. No one had an idea of how the toad did it, but it was evidently a master jailbreaker.

Together they left the compartment and as soon as the train came to a halt and the doors opened, they stepped onto the platform.

The first family that was to greet them were the Weasleys.

“Fred!” the matriarch of the family, Molly exclaimed while hugging the first twin close before repeating with the second twin. “George!”

“Mum,” the one she had called Fred said indignantly over the hug. “I’m George!”

“Yeah, I’m Fred,” the second added.

“And you call yourself our mother,” they both finished.

Molly looked from twin to twin, evidently trying to evaluate whether they were truthful before turning to the first with a beaming smile.

“I’m sorry, George.”

Both twins began to laugh. “Nah, just messing with you. I’m Fred,” the first conceded.

Harry, who observed this, could barely contain his laughter. To outsiders, it might seem that Molly didn’t know her sons at all, but he could see that she was just playing along. It was nice to see that his friends had such a loving mother.

“You must be Harry Potter,” she suddenly addressed him before hugging him too.

Harry minutely tensed, not having anticipated that but quickly relaxed again. He still had problems with being touched by strangers – remnants of his time with the Dursleys – but he was getting there.

“Yes, ma’am,” Harry politely replied, making Molly blush slightly.

“None of that,” she waved off. “You can call me Molly. We have to thank you a lot. Thanks to you Arthur has now a much better-paid job. Not to mention the eyeopener you gave Ron.”

That Harry hadn’t anticipated, so he was lost for words for a moment.

“That Harry hadn’t anticipated, so he was lost for words for a moment.

“I don’t know about your husband’s new job but helping Ron see the error of his way was only logical,” he said with a shrug.

“I was previously working in the Department for Misuse of Muggle Artefacts, but two weeks ago Madame Bones contacted me and employed me to develop a Muggle-Magic security system not only for the Ministry but also the magical areas like Hogsmeade,” the man they could clearly identify as Arthur explained.
“Ah, yeah, that might be my fault,” Harry answered with a broad grin. “I’ll make sure to thoroughly test your system once it’s employed.”

“I hope that I’ll reach your expectations,” Arthur said with a laugh.

At that point, Lily and James reached them together with Alice, Frank, Sirius, Ellen, Dean, Castiel, Alastair and Narcissa. Trailing behind them was a young blond woman, who was fascinated by the large red steam engine.

“Hey Molly,” Lily greeted the other woman. “I see you met my son.”

“Lily! It’s good to see you,” Molly exclaimed, hugging her too. “I heard that you and James were alive again, but I didn’t get to contact you, I’m sorry. We had so much to do lately.”

“Ah, don’t worry about it. We’ve been quite busy ourselves,” Lily waved her concerns away. “But maybe we can meet over the holidays?”

Molly nodded in agreement, and while the two women ironed out the details, Sirius walked over to Loki.

“Loki, we need to talk,” he simply stated. “Alone!”

Unbeknownst to the two, Dean just said the exact same thing to Sam.
The Beginning of the Winter Holidays

Chapter Notes

Sorry that I skipped last month but with all the pollen in the air I had a hard time to do anything, not to mention write a new chapter...

Chapter 61: The Beginning of the Winter Holidays

“What is it, Sirius?” Loki asked the man. It was unusual for him to be so serious so it must be something important.

“When we renovated the townhouse for Narcissa and Draco...well we found something,” he said evasively but continued upon Loki’s inquisitive look. “It seems that my dear brother managed to find a piece to the Riddle we want to solve and tasked Kreacher, the Black house-elf, with destroying it. Kreacher hasn’t managed it, and he is quite reluctant to hand it over to me since he isn’t overly fond of me. Maybe you can convince him to give it up?”

With a low hum, Loki nodded. “I’ll see what I can. But I doubt that should he really want the thing destroyed, he’ll give me much trouble. Was there something else?”

“No, no, that was all. I just want the thing out of the house as fast as possible especially with children around,” Sirius explained with a glance at Draco.

It was strange to him. For years he had hated the Malfoys, hated what they stood for, the successful avoidance of prison. However, when Narcissa suddenly contacted him and asked him for help to get away from Lucius, he was shocked and surprised. Sirius would never have thought that his cousin would want to get away from the blonde ponce with all his money and influence.

Not that Narcissa was poor. No, her own vault was quite full, but it was nothing on the wealth Lucius had.

At first, Sirius hadn’t known what to do and how to help Narcissa and Draco, but a visit to Gringotts changed that. Sirius had to admit that the goblins could be very vicious and that they didn’t like Lucius at all. The man looked down on them and showed them only a minimum of respect. Therefore, they happily helped them. In the end, they found a little clause in the marriage contract about fidelity until the necessary heir was born.

As it stood, Lucius seemed to be drawn to very... unusual sex practices that his wife couldn’t and wouldn’t fulfil. So, he regularly visited particular establishments that catered to his special needs.

When Sirius learned of the man’s habits, he gladly exploited them to get his cousin out of her marriage with the man. A nice bonus was that Narcissa got half his fortune as payment for his infidelity. One thing that Lucius learned was that you never messed with a Black if you value your
continued existence. There was a reason that it was called the Black Madness, and it ran deep in the family.

Once Sirius finally got her free, the two sat together and in length talked about what happened during the war.

Sirius was surprised how devoted Narcissa was to her son. She usually only showed her cold exterior and seemed uncaring, but during their talk, Sirius learned that she would do nearly anything if it meant that her son was safe.

That was the point when Sirius stopped seeing her as the wife of an ex-Death Eater and began to see her as a loving mother.

Together they decided that Narcissa would move back into the Black Townhouse with Draco. So, they hired the goblins to renovate the house. Sure, it was quite costly, but the goblins did a great job.

The once dark and dreary house was now bright and friendly. Everything from the cursed silverware to the heads of dead house-elves and even Walburga’s portrait was removed. Nothing that was in any way dangerous remained.

They, of course, didn’t throw anything away but stored it in one of the Black vaults dedicated for such things. Even if he hated most of his family, Sirius would never disgrace it in such a way if he could help it, not that Narcissa would let him.

Narcissa in the meantime helped the goblins with the renovations, choosing the colour scheme, furniture, and whatever else she wanted in it. By now, it was something you could proudly call home.

“Okay, then let’s get back to the others,” Loki piped up and brought Sirius out of his musing with it.

With a smile and a nod, Sirius sat into motion, followed by Loki.

In the meantime, Dean pulled Sam aside with an earnest face.

“Dean, what is wrong?” Sam questioned, not having seen Dean so serious for a long time.

“Dad...,” Dean growled while running his fingers through his hair in barely concealed anger.

To Sam, it seemed that his brother’s demon side was lurking very close to the surface. Thanks to Alastair’s teachings, he usually had an excellent grip on it. So, threatening to come out meant that something, or someone, in this case, managed to royally piss him off.

“He has a third son! One who doesn’t even know about all the stuff we do!”

“Say what?” Sam exclaimed in utter disbelief after a few moments of silence.

“Yes,” he answered with a nod. “He even visited him while he was supposedly on hunts and went to watch baseball games with him instead. However, he never told him about us or what he’s doing.”
Sam was completely stunned. John Winchester had another son who they did know nothing about and who could live a happy life. Something they had been denied?! To say that it made Sam furious would be a massive understatement.

“How did you find out?” he finally wanted to know.

Dean huffed. “Through sheer happenstance,” he spat. “One day I thought that I should visit John in hell and thank him. He saved my life after all by making a deal. However, when he saw what I became and with whom I was, he began to sing a wholly different tune.

“Suddenly I was a disgrace unworthy to be called his son and far worse things I won’t recap. That he deeply regretted to have saved my life and – that was the best part – that he was glad that Adam was nothing like me.

“That, of course, caught my interest. So, Alastair and I – after talking to mum about it, who also had no idea about Adam – investigated the matter. You can understand how surprised I was with what I saw.”

“That…that…,” Sam growled. “That fucking biased bastard!”

It showed how pissed off Sam was that he began to swear loudly while standing on a platform full of children, some of which looked at him shocked. Even some of his magic slipped out and cracked around him.

“I’m very tempted to go to him an tell him what exactly I think of this.”

That made Dean laugh. “You won’t believe it, but mum actually demanded to be taken to him. It taught me to never piss her off,” he explained to his brother.

“John is an idiot,” Mary told them while walking over to them. “He deserved what he got!”

“I demand to see the memories later,” Sam said in a tone that broke no argument.

“Sure thing, Sammy,” Dean piped much happier.

“You ready to leave?” It was James, who also walked over to then, that asked. “Sam, you, your brother and your mother are staying with us at Potter Manor over the holidays.”

They all nodded, while Mary stepped next to James and Dean placed a hand on Sam’s shoulder.

Within the blink of an eye, they vanished and reappeared in the entrance hall of Potter Manor. It was a quite large room with a broad stair going up to the first floor. Left to the stairs was a set of double doors behind which they could see a large ballroom. Opposite another entrance led to the private wing.

James led them up to the stairs and down the right corridor.

“This is the guest wing. First comes Dean, Alastair and Castiel’s room followed by Mary’s room. On the other side, we have first Remus followed by Fenrir and Kali,” James explained. “Though every room has a plaque stating who’s staying there. Loki and Jor are staying with us in the family wing because Jor still has trouble being far from Harry or his father for too long. You, however, wouldn’t be able to get in there. So, don’t even try.

“Meals will be served in the small dining room on the ground floor through the right door, the second door on the left. Other than the top floor and my study on the ground floor, you can move freely.
Those two are warded against anyone without Potter blood or in this special case Loki and Jor. In the entrance hall to the left of the stairs, you find a fireplace connected to the floo system. Any questions?"

All three shook their head.

“Good, should you need help, you can always call Mipsy. She’s a resident house-elf and will help you with whatever you need…within reason, of course. I leave you now to get settled.”

The three Winchesters set into motion and entered their own rooms while James went to his study. He had to finalise some paperwork. It only had been half the truth that Loki and Jor had a special allowance to enter the private wing of the manor.

With Loki’s agreement, both James and Lily had blood-adopted Jor when they learned what happened to the poor boy. That was because they already saw the small boy as a little brother of Harry, but also to add another layer of protection in the case that should ever something happen to Loki, however improbable that was. All that was left was filing the appropriate paperwork.

Another thing was that both Remus and Sirius became his godfathers. Hopefully, this way neither Odin nor those idiots from heaven would be able to do anything to Jor without having a riot on their hands.

With a sigh, James sat behind his desk and pulled the paperwork to him. The faster he got it done, the sooner he could spend time with his family.

It was about an hour later that Loki found Sam, his mother Mary as well as Harry and Jor sitting in the parlour, playing a round of poker. Sam was growling frustratedly while Mary smirked at her son and Harry contently sat in his seat with Jor in his lap. Lily sat in another chair and watched them while charming something.

“Don’t you think it unfair pairing up?” Loki joked.

“What? They are two, and we’re two…it’s a fair game,” Harry huffed.

Loki only snorted, when his gaze fell on Sam, and he remembered something.

“Sammy, I completely forgot...do you want to be aged again?”

Sam blinked a few times confused, not realising what Loki was about. It took a few moments until it dawned him.

“Uhm actually....,” he began but fell silent again when he looked at his mother who just smiled at him. Sam nodded in return. “Over the last year I had so much fun and...and I realised that I don’t want to go back to my old life. With Dean now having Alastair and Castiel I don’t have to worry about abandoning him either. So yeah, as long as it doesn’t mean health problems for me, I’d like to stay this way.”

“Do you doubt my skills?” Loki growled playfully.

“As if I would be so stupid,” Sam replied with a chuckle. “But how old am I now actually?”
“Well, your body is twelve now. Your soul, on the other hand, in the mid-twenties,” Loki explained while sitting down on the empty chair he called over from another table. “But don’t worry, I know the human body well enough to safely do it. Or do you really think that I would endanger your life and health? I probably even extended your life by healing any damage in the meantime.”

Sam looked at Loki in shock before he shook his head.

“Only you Lo...only you.”

Loki snorted. “Anyway, Harry, I just retrieved another piece of Riddle’s soul. Turns out that Sirius’ brother Regulus wasn’t as loyal to Voldy than everyone thought. A few pieces are still missing, but we’re getting there.”

“That’s good,” Harry replied with a nod. “Now, where were we?”

“Stripping Sam of all his money,” Jor piped up, jumping up and down in Harry’s lap.

That was precisely what they were doing for the next hour and a half. Between Mary and Harry, Sam was quickly left scrambling to try and at least keep his dignity if not his money.

Harry, however, had a nice sum of spending money that he shared with Jor, who grinned broadly. Not that Sam overly minded as it wasn’t all that much money, maybe about five Galleons.

It was the morning of Christmas that Harry was woken by an overly hyper Jor at 5 in the morning. With a groan after checking the time, he turned to the jumping ball of excitement. Jor had snuck into his bed the evening prior because Loki had a few last-minute things to do, and Jor didn’t want to be alone.

The first evening they had returned home – which was still a concept that amazed Harry, having a home – they celebrated the Winter Solstice and Yule. Everyone he loved and considered family had been there, even Draco and Narcissa as well as the Winchesters, Alastair and Castiel.

Draco at first felt decidedly uncomfortable not only because he thought he was intruding in Harry’s family but also because the celebration at the Potter Manor was far less stiff than he was used to. But the longer he stayed with them, and all of them treated him like he belonged there, he relaxed.

They all played games, told stories and just enjoyed their time together.

On the following evening, that was two days ago now, Narcissa together with his parents held a Yule Ball here at the manor.

It was initially supposed to be the Malfoy Yule Ball, but when Narcissa divorced from her husband and left him to rot, she summarily decided to relocate it and make it the Black Yule Ball. This was for once because the Malfoy Balls always were the main event of the season and cancelling would have meant a massive outcry in their community. But it was also to show that Narcissa didn’t need her husband to be successful. Luckily it had been early enough to inform the guests and even invite a few more guests.

From what his father told him, Lily and Narcissa at first only worked tentatively together, but once they both realised that they weren’t all that different, they hit it off like a house on fire.
Both Sirius, seeing that Ellen joined the preparation flurry not soon later, as well as James decided to go into hiding and wait it out. Neither had been keen on being dragged into this madness.

Harry had to admit that the three women did a marvellous job. The ballroom had been decorated in white and light blues with snow falling down on the guests but never touching them or the floor. Fir trees stood along the walls and were beautifully decorated while candles that looked like ice illuminated the room.

At first, Harry had been worried that only Slytherins would be invited but to his relief soon realised that this wasn’t the case. There had been the Bones, Longbottoms, Lovegoods and so many more of his school mates.

The children had their separate room from where the adults were celebrating and where they could sit together, talk or play different games. Only during the dinner preceding the ball, they had to sit with the adults.

Harry had loved it from the beginning to the end, even if he had to dress up for the occasion.

However, now he was lying in his bed with a hyper Jor trying to get him to get up.

“Have you looked at the clock?” he asked with a frown. “I doubt that anyone is up yet.”

“But you’re always up early,” Jor pouted. “And dad never sleeps.”

“There is early, and there are ungodly hours to get up. Besides, your dad is a pagan god and an angel so no wonder that he never sleeps,” Harry said while pulling Jor towards him and draping the blanket over him.

The boy reluctantly laid down and curled up in Harry’s arms. Harry could feel that it wasn’t just anticipation that made Jor so hyper. If he had to make a guess, Loki hasn’t returned yet, and Jor was getting worried that something has happened that would keep his father away from him again.

“Hey, don’t worry. Your father will be here, no matter what. I brought him to you once, and I’ll do it again if I have to,” Harry muttered soothingly while gently stroking his back. “And afterwards I hex him to kingdom come for leaving us behind.”

Harry felt how Jor began to relax and absently waved his hand in the air and made soft music playing in the background. Slowly Jor fell asleep again, and with a smile, Harry followed suit.

The next time Harry woke up, it was because Jor was stirring in his arms. A check of the time revealed that it was shortly past eight now so a much better time to get up.

“Hey, wanna get up?” he asked Jor, who sleepily blinked at him.

That woke the boy up.

“Yay presents!” he shouted, dragged Harry out of bed and towards the door to the hallway.

“Finally!”

“Not so fast,” Harry laughed. “Bathroom first or I fear that I’ll have a problem soon.”
Jor groaned but patiently waited until Harry was done before dragging him out of the room, down the corridor and to the informal sitting room in the private part of the ground floor. Though when they entered, they were greeted by the cutest thing ever.

On a rug in front of the fire lay two wolves though one was quite a bit larger. The smaller one had fur ranging from a honey blond to a middle brown while the larger one was several shades of dark grey. They lay there curled around one another while the brown wolf whimpered and his left foreleg that stuck in the air, twitched a bit.

Jor, seeing an opportunity and completely forgetting about the presents, took a run-up and jumped onto the two wolves. Though, he seemed to have anticipated that his brother would retaliate when woken up so rudely because he instantly shifted into a much smaller snake than the one Harry had seen in the Chamber and slithered under the other wolf, who obviously was Remus.

Fenrir jumped up and tried to get to the snake, consequently waking Remus up who looked around confused and a bit irritated. Though once he processed what was happening, he also jumped up and chased the snake.

Harry chuckled while filming the entire ordeal and the resulting mock fight. It was only when Lily and Mary, together with Sam, entered that the three finally calmed down again.

“Breakfast first and then presents,” Lily told them, her amusement clearly audible.

Jor grumbled about that but dutifully walked over to Harry after shifting back. Fenrir and Remus in the meantime changed back too, Fenrir lazily stretching.

“You have your own rooms, you know?” Lily chuckled. “No need to sleep here.”

“Meh,” Fenrir replied. “I’m still helping Remus getting over his aversion of being a werewolf. At least now he looks like a wolf and not that...monstrosity, no offence.”

Remus merely waved him off. He already came a long way since his first meeting with Fenrir and the consequent confrontation. Fenrir had called him every name under the sun for his attempt at suppressing the wolf within him before lecturing him about what he was doing to himself with it and how it would kill him sooner or later.

Now a few weeks later Remus had to admit that Fenrir was right. He had come to terms that he, in fact, was not a monster as he so long believed. That revelation had changed him a lot, and for a few weeks now, he was able to transform on will and not because of the moon phase. It seems that as long as he gave his wolf the freedom it needed, it wouldn’t force the transformation every month.

Another side-effect was that he felt much better. Where he was usually exhausted continuously and weary, he suddenly was full of energy, sometimes even so much that he went on a run in the forest surrounding Potter Manor to get rid of the excessive energy.

“He helped me a lot already, Lily,” Remus spoke up while walking over to the others. “But it will still take a lot of time for me to be content with myself and Fenrir is helping me with that. If that means that we sleep curled around each other in front of the fire so mote it be.”

“I know, Remy,” Lily said while she hugged her old friend. “I’m proud of you with how much you already achieved.”

“Though I’m very tempted to search for that Greyback guy and show him what exactly I think of his doings,” Fenrir growled irritated.
Together they all went to the dining room, where they met a grumbling James and a broadly grinning Loki. Dean, Alastair and Castiel were suspiciously absent, but none of them wanted to know what the three were up to.

Sitting down, they all enjoyed the peace of the breakfast. Jor was wolfing down everything that Loki placed on his plate in the hope that if he got done with it fast, he would get his presents sooner.

“You are surprisingly calm,” James stated towards his son. “Are you not excited to get your presents?”

Harry laughed at that. “That is because I already got the greatest present any of you could gift me with. Sitting here together with the family I always wished to have, celebrating Yule and even the ball a few days ago...,” he explained with a soft smile looking at every person sitting at the table.

He wanted to make sure that they understood that he meant every one of them and not just his parents. The only ones that were currently missing other than the obvious three were Sirius, Ellen, Narcissa and Draco but they promised to come over after breakfast.

Narcissa had actually been surprised when Harry asked her whether she and Draco would come over to celebrate with them. No matter what others thought, he considered them part of his ever-growing family.

“No present in the world could top this.”

With tears in his eyes, he turned to Loki before embracing him in a hug.

“Thank you for everything,” he whispered in the pagan god’s ear. “I’ll never forget what you did for me.”

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