Survival of the Species

by Romaine

Summary

Draco approaches Harry on the 9 ¾ platform, after their sons have boarded the Hogwarts Express, and invites him over for tea. The discussion they have leads them on an adventure that neither could have expected. There be dragons! HPDH compliant.

Notes

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Just Like Old Times

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Standing on the platform, with emotions vacillating between sorrow and pride, Harry Potter watched the train round the corner and vanish from sight. Two of his children were gone now, and before he knew it, Lily would be joining them. He vaguely registered footsteps approaching him, and though he knew it wasn’t Ginny, he didn’t turn until a long shadow was cast upon the ground next to him.

“Draco,” he said, acknowledging the presence near him.

“Harry,” Draco responded as he, too, watched the last train car roll out of sight.

Harry looked past him and saw Ginny and Lily talking to Hermione, while Ron appeared to be deep in conversation with Teddy.

“Bring back memories?” Draco asked nonchalantly.

The question startled him, he and Draco had come to some semblance of understanding years ago, but they never made small talk. In fact, he couldn’t remember the last time they had spoken to each other.

Harry grinned. “Yes, some more fond than others.”

“I remember buying a bit of everything from the cart for the others. Mother and Father never allowed me to overindulge, so, of course, the first chance I got, I did.”

Harry forced the grin to stay on his face, but he was sure his eyes reflected the confusion he was feeling. “Yeah, I did the same thing as I’d never had money or treats before…Um, Draco, is there something you wanted to say?”

Draco gave a quick nod and moved a little closer. The hairs on Harry’s arms stood up with Draco’s advancement, his Auror training alerting him to the unusual circumstances.

“Yes,” Draco whispered.

Harry leant forward as he could barely hear him speak. “Well, what is it?”

“I was wondering if you could come to my home tomorrow, say for tea?”

A laugh and cough erupted from Harry’s mouth before he could stop it. “What? Why?”

Draco balled his fists and shoved them in his pocket. “I would rather not discuss it here,” Draco said through clenched teeth.

Harry moved closer to Draco, knowing that his own advancement would make Draco uneasy. He glanced up and looked at him straight in the eye. “Draco, I won’t come unless I have some idea what it is about.”

Draco smirked at him. The look was even worse than when he was a child, and reminded him of Lucius.

“You know what I do for a living?”
Harry’s eyes blinked behind the wire-rimmed spectacles. “Yes, Draco, you research ancient wizarding sites. You travel quite often, and sometimes you take your family with you.”

Draco laughed. “Still keeping tabs on me, huh?”

Harry raised a brow, but didn’t respond and they both remained silent, staring at each other until Ron’s yell interrupted the moment. “Oi, Harry, we’re ready to go.”

“I’ll be there in a few minutes,” Harry yelled back as he stepped to the side; Draco’s body had blocked his view of his family. They were all standing and staring at him and Draco. Draco’s wife was off to the side by herself near the Apparation point. She looked about as pleased as the others did.

“Hey, Harry,” Ron said as he walked towards the two, “what’s going on?” He stopped when he reached Harry’s side. Harry almost laughed when he saw Ron’s stance; it was the one he used to intimidate captured Death Eaters. Of course, it had been years since there had been a Death Eater raid.

Harry put his hand on Ron’s shoulder and gave it a squeeze. “Ron, everything is fine. Draco and I are just having a little discussion. Will you please take Ginny and Lily home for me? I’ll be there soon.”

Ron stared at Draco and then glanced down at Harry. “Are you sure, mate?”

Harry smiled. “I’m sure.”

Ron walked past Draco, almost hitting his shoulder, but Draco stepped to the side. Draco looked over to his wife and nodded; she Disapparated with a crack. Harry looked over at Ginny and knew she was scowling at him. He nodded at her, and she put her arm around Lily’s shoulders, and walked away.

“Trouble in paradise?” Draco asked sarcastically.

Harry rolled his eyes. “Leave it, Draco. We’re fine; she just isn’t too fond of you.”

“And who may I ask is?”

Harry found himself stifling another laugh.

“You can laugh, Potter. It’s a joke. I’m not beyond making fun of myself,” Draco said, and then gave small smile that surprised Harry more than anything else that Draco had said or done so far.

“Are we back to Potter, Malfoy?” Harry said, and watched the smile disappear from Draco’s face.

Draco shook his head. “Forget it, Harry. Forget it. It would never work.” Draco turned his back and began walking towards the Apparation point where his wife had disappeared.


Draco lifted his hand and gave him a two-finger salute without turning around.

In a flash, Harry withdrew his wand and muttered a word. Draco stopped mid-step.

“Potter, remove it now!” Draco yelled.

Harry walked over to Draco and faced him. “No, not until you tell me why you wanted me to come
over. What have I got to do with your work?”

Draco glared at Harry a moment before speaking. “It’s not something I wish to discuss in public.”

Harry looked around. “I don’t see anyone here but us.”

Draco snarled, took a deep breath, and then seemed to regain some of his composure. Harry was impressed. “And you and I both know that not everyone is seen if they don’t want to be. That’s not the main reason, though. It will take me awhile to explain the subject matter, and I’ll need to show you a few books to reinforce what I’m talking about. For some reason, only known to Merlin, I thought we might be able to have a decent conversation after twenty-five years.”

“Twenty-six years,” Harry said, and regretted the words the instant they left his lips. Before Draco could respond, Harry blurted, “Shit, sorry, Draco, it seems that I’m regressing back to being seventeen.”

Draco seemed to accept his apology, but remained silent.

“Fine, I’ll be there at tea time tomorrow. I’ll Apparate outside of the gates. If I remember correctly, the Manor has its share of Protection spells.”

Draco’s eyelids lowered and he bit his lower lip, almost chewing on it. Finally, he stopped. “You may Apparate or Floo into the drawing room. It’s up to you.”

Harry’s eyes widened. “You’d change your wards for me?”

“No, Harry, you’ve been welcome into the Manor since your victory. My mother insisted upon it.”

Harry was stunned. “Really? Wow, I had…Will your mother and father be there tomorrow?” It would be hard enough spending time with Draco, but he didn’t think he could stomach Lucius. He held him no harm, but he still considered the man amoral for many of his past deeds.

“No, they’re still on summer holiday in Greece. Chantal, my wife, will be at the Manor, but won’t be joining us. Now, my leg is cramping, do you think you could remove your little spell?”

“Er, yeah, sorry, I forgot about that. Ginny just about Bat-Bogey Hexed me yesterday when I did it to Snuffles and forgot about him.”

Draco shook his leg as the removal of the spell left him free to walk again. “And Snuffles would be?” Draco asked, hoping it was not a nickname for another child. He thought there were only three Potter kids, but given whom Harry had married…

“Snuffles is our dog. The mutt was digging up the garden.”

Draco’s eyes rolled. “Of course, the family pet. Fine, tomorrow it is, then. Good-day, Harry,” Draco said and walked the final few steps before Disapparating.

Harry stood there looking at the empty space Draco Malfoy had occupied and wondered what the hell he had just agreed to. He shrugged his shoulders and walked into thin air.

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The voices emanating from the kitchen below didn’t surprise Harry. It was tradition that extended family and friends spent the day together after seeing off whoever’s children were starting Hogwarts. Later in the evening, Neville would firecall and give them the list of houses the children
were sorted into. Teddy had been the first, and he remembered Andromeda weeping with joy that he was a Hufflepuff. Then it was Victoire’s turn and they were all surprised that they had a Ravenclaw in the family. When it was James’s turn, Harry had no doubt he would be a Gryffindor. Albus, though, he wasn’t too sure about. A small part of Harry hoped he wouldn’t be in Gryffindor, as his older brother would definitely overshadow him. Harry snickered to himself when he thought about Lily. No, he wouldn’t be surprised if she was the first Potter to be put in Slytherin. The child was more devious than the rest, and rarely could they catch her in action, so her brothers paid the price. He loved her dearly.

Harry removed his robes, and hung them on the back of the closet door. The boots came off and he quickly changed into jeans and a jumper over his t-shirt. The trainers went on and he finally felt comfortable.

A soft hoot came from the corner of the room. He glanced at the white snowy owl perched on the tree branch stand and quickly turned away. It was Ginny’s owl, though technically it was his, as it was gift Ginny gave him for his eighteenth birthday. Even after nineteen years, he’d never got used to the bird. It wasn’t Hedwig and there would never be another Hedwig. Alba gave another hoot; Ginny didn’t like the name, but at the time it was the only name Harry could come up with. He left the room and bounded down the stairs as he normally did, pretending that this was just like any other day. He smiled knowing it wouldn’t fool anyone. He expected a full interrogation.

Harry took a deep breath, stepped into the brightly lit kitchen, and sat down at the head of the old wooden table. Ginny had enlarged it for the guests that were all present. Word had spread quickly, and everyone was staring at him, waiting for a report.

“Coffee, Harry?” Ginny asked as she poured him a cup. The sugar had already been added, and the drink was further diluted by copious amounts of cream. He took a few sips, and then filled his plate with sandwiches and fruit.

“Well?” Hermione asked. She was sitting between Ron and George.

“Well what?” Harry said innocently. “By the way, where are Lily and Hugo?”

“At the Burrow. Mum and Dad will bring them by later,” Ginny said quickly. “And don’t even try to change the subject again,” she added firmly.

Harry laughed. “Sorry, folks, but I really don’t have much to say. He wants me to come over tomorrow for tea.”

“And you said no,” Ron said assuredly.

“No, I said yes.”

“What?” Ginny exclaimed. “Why would you go see him?”

Harry rested his hand on hers and gave it a squeeze. “Because I’m curious. All he’d tell me is that it related to his work and that his parents were on holiday.”

“Well that’s a relief,” Ron muttered. “Do you want me to come with you? I mean it could be a…”

“Ron,” Harry sighed. “Don’t start. I know you’re not comfortable about the past, but might I remind you that you did help me save the bloke’s life. If you truly hated him, you wouldn’t have helped save him and Goyle.”

“Yes, and then we wouldn’t have Goyle’s sundry to go to in Hogsmeade,” Luna added. “I think it
was worth it. Neville and I love his Chocolate Frog sundae.” Harry smiled and he knew Ron did too.

“So did he give any more hints?” George asked.

Harry shook his head. “No, he just said he would have to show me some books and that’s why he wanted me to come over. I really have no idea. Hell, I didn’t even know his wife’s name was Chantal until he told me.”

“She went to Beauxbatons. I believe she’s a year older than you,” Fleur said. “Her family was once very wealthy, but her father went to prison for a few years and was fined heavily.”

Harry’s interest perked up. “What did he do?”

“I think it was for fixing an election and for taking bribes.”

Harry brought his fist to his mouth and coughed. Ron said what they were both thinking. “So I imagine he and Lucius get along quite well.”

Fleur looked at Ron questioningly. “No, I think not. He is dead. He killed himself in prison. Maman went to school with Chantal’s mère. They’re not close, but they do see each other at social functions.”

“Has she ever mentioned anything about the Malfoys to your mother?” Angelina asked. George put his arm around his wife’s shoulder. She shrugged. They all knew that Angelina was never afraid to ask a pointed question.

“Zee only thing I have heard is that Draco’s parents treat her very well and often take her on holiday with them.”

Hermione leant forward and looked down the table at Fleur. “What is Chantal like? I mean I really can’t imagine a nice girl marrying Draco.”

“Shit, Hermione, that was my next question.” Angelina laughed.

“But she was a very nice girl at school. A bit quiet given her family’s troubles. Zee scandal happened while she was in school. I didn’t know her very well, but I heard she was bright, and, as you saw today, quite beautiful.”

Harry ate his chicken sandwich and listened to the gossip about Draco. He really hadn’t thought about him for years in any depth. He remembered running into him at St. Mungo’s when Albus was born. He and his wife were just signing into the maternity ward as Harry was signing Ginny out. Draco had congratulated him, Harry had wished him good luck, and that was it.

“Neville talks to him.” Luna said unexpectedly.

“Talks to Malfoy?” Ron asked.

“Yes, they discuss extinct magical plants and their fossilized imprints that they leave. Draco’s even brought Neville plants from his travels around the world. Some have been quite rare and once he gave Neville some seeds that came from a flower that was believed to have been extinct for hundreds of years. Neville had the seventh-years see if they could grow them, and a few sprouted.”

Harry removed his glasses and wiped his eyes with a handkerchief. “Why hasn’t he ever told me?” Harry asked.
Luna shrugged. “Maybe he thought you would be mad.”

Harry sighed. “Why would I be mad? Look, I don’t hate Draco anymore. I used to hate him, when I was kid, but I really don’t even know the bloke.”

“Well then you should know that he really is quite famous in wizarding archaeology and anthropology. Daddy even travels long distances to go hear him speak. He tried to get Draco to take him on an expedition once, when there was rumour of a Glacier Dragon being seen.”

“What?” Charlie blurted out. “Glacier Dragons have never existed. However, that is interesting, because I did receive a letter from Draco about a year ago asking about them. I told him that they were as close to a myth as Blibbering Humdingers.”

“But, Charlie, Blibbering Humdingers do exist.”

Harry put his glasses back on and smiled when Ginny gave him a small tap with her foot under the table. Ron’s kick in the shins wasn’t as welcome.

“Um, he has also been by to see me at Gringotts,” Bill said. “We went out to lunch to discuss my work in Egypt. He wanted to know more about historical codes and code-breakers. That was just a few months ago.”

“You had lunch with Malfoy?” George asked, sounding completely befuddled.

“Yes, dear brother, I did. If you must know, he sent a letter of apology soon after the war. I think I still have it if you’d like to read it.”

Harry just shook his head. “Anyone else? Now’s the time to admit you all have been talking to Draco behind my back. Merlin did you all think I would be upset?”

Bill laughed. “Hell, Potter, tone down the ego. You never even crossed my mind when I was talking with him. I was more caught up in his adventures and discoveries he’s made.”

“Oh, zat reminds me. I do remember Maman telling me that he discovered zee oldest Veela-wizard community recorded, about five years ago. It’s in ze French Pyrenees and they are still excavating zee site.”

“I remember reading about that,” Bill said. “And Draco actually discussed it with me over lunch. It’s quite a mystery, as all of the fossils are of wizards, both young and old. There isn’t a witch’s bone in the site.”

Harry’s stomach suddenly turned. The thought that Draco was travelling around the world and making significant discoveries sparked a feeling of jealousy. Or was it competition? For the first time since Draco asked him over for tea, he was excited to know what the man wanted to discuss with him.

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“Daddy, wake up!” Lily said as she set down his morning coffee on the bedside table and poked his shoulder with her finger.

Harry opened his eyes, trying to focus on his daughter standing next to the bed. “Where’s your mother?” he mumbled.

“She had to go to the shop. Uncle George got some supplies in early this morning.”
Harry reached for his glasses, put them on, and glanced at the clock. “Ten o’clock! Lily, why did you let me sleep so long?”

The girl crawled over Harry and lay down next to him. “Because you never get to have a lie-in and I knew you didn’t have to work today.”

Harry turned over and looked at his daughter. She was still in her nightdress, but it was covered in spots of blue and red. “Lily, what’ve you been up to?” Harry asked hesitantly.

“Nothing, Daddy. Snuffles just wanted a bath and I think I used the wrong bottles of shampoo.”

Harry hid the laughter that wanted to escape and tried to look stern. “And what colour is Snuffles now?”

Her bright brown eyes showed a hint of fear. “Um, purple. Actually, lavender.”

Harry reached over and tickled her until she screamed for her absent mother. He relented and sent her to her bathroom to clean up. He sipped the coffee. Not only was it tepid, but it was overly sweet. He lay there thinking of Albus and wondering how his first day of classes was going. He hoped that James would be more of a true big brother and help him find his way now that they were both Gryffindors.

Harry loved days like this; he was rarely able to spend one-on-one time alone with any of his children, and Lily least of all. They cleaned up the dog until he was once again his shaggy, white, furry self, although much better smelling. The sun broke through by early afternoon, and they spent time in the garden preparing it for autumn. Lily had a natural love for flora and quizzed Neville every time he visited.

As the day progressed, he became more anxious to know what Draco Malfoy wanted to discuss with him. Ginny arrived home only minutes before he was due to leave. She was exhausted, but pleased that father and daughter had prepared tea for her. Harry changed quickly into his robes. Whenever he made an official visit to one of the old wizarding family homes, he found that dressing like a wizard helped ease the initial meeting. He kissed both his girls goodbye and Apparated to Malfoy Manor.

Images of long ago rushed through his head, as the portrait-covered walls came into view. He almost jumped as he saw Draco rise up from an armchair near the marble fireplace and walk over to him. His first instinct was to draw his wand; this room was filled with memories of horror. However, another memory came through; a memory of a young Draco not confirming it was him when the other Death Eaters so wanted it to be. He took a deep breath and released the grip he had on his wand in his pocket.

“Good afternoon, Harry,” Draco said as he approached Harry. He held out his hand and without much hesitation, Harry returned the gesture. For some reason, Harry expected a light grip and smooth hands, but he glanced down as the grip was firm and the hands a bit calloused. They were the hands of a working man.

“Good afternoon, Draco,” Harry responded in kind as the handshake ceased.

“Tea will be served in the library, if you don’t mind. I thought it would give us more time to discuss why I’ve asked you here.

“That’ll be fine. I’ll admit you have me curious,” Harry said, and he couldn’t help but look around the spacious room. He didn’t think one thing had changed since the last time he had been here,
except the chandelier had been replaced.

Draco grinned. “I was hoping that would be the case. Now if you’ll follow me, I’ll take you to the library.”

Draco led him through to the next room by way of massive sliding doors. The room was less formal and Harry guessed it was where the family gathered at night. The furniture was less austere and the walls a warm taupe; another door, smaller than the last, led to a wide dark wood-panelled hallway. Harry’s head turned back and forth, looking at the landscape paintings mounted on the walls. He had no idea if they were fantasy or real. A part of him hoped they were real. Doors followed by open arches led through rooms Harry could only imagine the use of. All were impeccably decorated. Draco stopped at the end of the hallway, he placed his hand on the blank wall and another door appeared. Harry shook his head, wondering how many mysteries this place held. Draco opened the door and let Harry step into the newly revealed room first.

Harry stared in awe at two walls of shelves reaching up two storeys, and another wall covered with two seemingly ever-expanding family trees, on either side of a fireplace. Even from this viewpoint, he could see that there were no names smudged out. Expansive tables were covered in stacks of more books and some large sheets of parchment, which Harry guessed to be maps. Large comfortable chairs and couches were gathered around the one fireplace. An extraordinarily large painting of an ethereal-looking dragon was hung over the mantle, and what Harry could only guess to be souvenirs were scattered about on any shelf they could be squeezed onto.

“It looks like a mess, but really things are organised the way I need them.”

“It’s brilliant,” Harry whispered as he turned slowly in place trying to take it all in.

“Come over here by the fireplace and sit. Chantal will have a house-elf deliver tea soon.”

Harry almost stumbled on the fringe of the massive rug covering most of the wooden floor as he made his way through the tables and chairs toward the far wall. He couldn’t help but notice the maps and papers filled with lines and circles and notes. There were silver instruments of all shapes and sizes scattered about. He smiled at the small piles of crunched up paper balls shaped into pyramids.

He sat in the brown leather wing-backed chair by the fireplace. The two family trees caught his eye once again. It was nice to see Sirius and Tonks’ names. The Malfoy tree, he could see, had three separated trunks. One with very English names, another French, and a third he didn’t recognize. He squinted as some of the branches from one side crossed over to another, Draco’s included. He looked away and was quickly caught up in the artefacts displayed on the shelves. Draco lit the fire and sat near him.

“Chantal, she’s French?” Harry mumbled, not knowing why he said it. He was much more interested in the artefacts around the room.

“Yes, I had to go to the continent to find a bride who would have me.”

Harry’s head jerked back and looked at Draco. He was glad there was a mischievous grin on his face. “I…I didn’t.”

Draco chuckled. “I know, but Greg and Blaise tease me about it. My wife is an old family friend. We are distantly related on my father’s side. She’s my fourth cousin,” he said, pointing to the Malfoy family tree.
A tray of delectable savoury sandwiches appeared on the table before them, along with tea and accompaniments. As Draco leant over and poured them both cups, another tray of small cakes and biscuits arrived. “Sugar—milk?” Draco asked.

“Sugar.”

Their hands curled around the teacups as if warming them.

“It’s from the Sahara region,” Draco said as Harry took his first sip and showed a bit of confusion over the taste. “I like the hint of mint it contains. So, Harry, another Gryffindor, I presume?”

Harry lowered his cup. “Yes, and yours is a Slytherin?”

Draco raised a brow. “Of course, did you expect anything different?”

“No, not really, but don’t be surprised if my last is cast into the dungeon.”

Draco’s eyes widened. “Really? Do tell.”

Harry set down his tea and selected a warm lamb sandwich. Ginny hated lamb and he only ate it when they went out for dinner. “My Lily is quite mischievous, and unlike her brothers, she covers her tracks well. I know she’s done something, but I can’t prove it, so she gets away things more than she should. Also, it doesn’t help that she’s a girl: she has me wrapped around her little finger. Boys are easier.”

Draco smiled. “I wanted a girl.”

The bit of lamb stopped in Harry’s throat. He coughed and managed not spit it out.

“That is after Scorpius was born. Unfortunately, Chantal had two miscarriages and we cannot have more children.”

“Oh God, Draco, I’m sorry. I didn’t know.” Harry suddenly felt like shit. He remembered how difficult Lily’s birth had been. They were so close to losing her. The Healers shooed him away from Ginny, and knocked her out with a spell before they magically cut her open and pulled Lily out. Harry could still envision how blue his baby girl was with the cord wrapped around her neck. He had helped deliver babies before; everyone Auror trained for it, and almost every field Auror had at least one experience. Harry had even watched a few magical caesareans, but when it was his Ginny, his baby…

“It’s okay, we’ve moved on, and Scorpius didn’t seem to mind being an only child. I had always wanted a sibling, preferably a sister, but in the usual Malfoy manner, once the boy came, that was enough,” Draco added almost with disdain.

Harry felt a need to change the subject. He sipped his tea looking around the room trying to pick one object out to ask about. The framed moving pictures on the mantle caught his eyes. They were of Draco and his family on some of his expeditions. He couldn’t help but smile when he saw a picture of Draco and a young Scorpius dressed in khaki garb and safari hats. They were standing in front of a few ancient looking rock huts on a green mountainside. He thought the older man next to them must have been a guide. He almost spit his tea out when he realised it was Lucius. “Where was that taken?” Harry asked, pointing to the picture.

“Peru. It took us two days to hike to the site. We spent a week there. All we found was some old pottery and tools. The site registered as having some magic surrounding it, but the place was Muggle. It was still a good time. I must admit a fondness for the Southern constellations.”
Harry closed his eyes for a moment, absorbing what he was hearing. Three generations of wizards adventuring into the wilds. He played with his children and took great care of them, but never in his imagination did he ever think to take them on adventures. Why? he asked himself. The answer became clear. Home was safe. He wanted to be near his home and he wanted everyone to be safe.

Harry selected a lemon tart from the tray of sweets. “And where did you get that painting? It’s amazing. What type of dragon is it supposed to be?”

The expression on Draco’s face transformed into one of complete seriousness. He set down his plate and wiped the invisible crumbs from his face with the white cloth napkin. “That, Harry, is why I asked you to come here. It is a rendition of a Glacier Dragon.”

Harry wiped away the powdered sugar he was sure was covering his lips and stared back up at the picture. “Charlie said last night that they were a myth. Of course, Luna said her father disagreed.”

Draco groaned. “Yes, Xenophilius believes in them. He came to me and said he heard of one being sighted in the Antarctic. I, of course, declined to go.”

“So they are a myth,” Harry stated more than asked.

“As much as the Hallows were a myth.”

Harry’s head flinched and focused back on Draco.

“It took me a few years to figure out what the Elder Wand was. I know you own the Cloak, Harry, but tell me, did you ever have the Resurrection Stone?”

Harry stared at Draco intently, trying to read his intentions for asking. Curiosity was all that came through. Of course, Draco was much better had at hiding his thoughts and emotions than him. He had to be, to have survived his sixth and seventh years at Hogwarts. “Yes, but it’s gone now.”

“Good, I wouldn’t want some rogue Dark wizard trying to bring back Voldemort.”

A shot of adrenaline shot up Harry spine at the thought, and that Draco had used the name. “No worries about that. So you believe there was such a thing as a Glacier Dragon?”

“Not was, is. One has been sighted and documented by a very reputable wizard. The painting was created from his description. What do you think of her? She’s a beauty, isn’t she?”

Harry had thought the dragon looked ethereal, and upon closer inspection, he could see that the iridescent scales covering her body and the thin, leather-like wings caused this impression. Her face was fierce—coal black eyes, with a long snout—but it was the fire coming out in jets of blue and green flames that was truly frightening.

“I still don’t see why you invited me. Maybe you should’ve called upon Charlie Weasley again.”

“Would he have believed me? Besides, it has to be you.”

“Why? And why are you so interested in a dragon? I thought you studied ancient wizarding civilizations.”

Draco groaned and gave a deep sigh. “I do, but it is all related, can’t you see that? We didn’t always live in houses like this.”

“Most still don’t,” Harry interjected.
Draco’s face contorted at the interruption. “You know what I meant, Potter.”

“Sorry, I’m used to being around my in-laws where bantering earns me points.”

“Quick wit is usually appreciated, Harry, but what I’m about to tell you about could possibly lead to the greatest accomplishment I will ever make in this field.”

“Go on, Draco. You have my undivided attention,” Harry replied.

“Yes, I’m an archaeologist, but I’m also an anthropologist, so what I do involves more than digging for bones and cultural items. It’s much deeper than that. I want to know what these people did, what they ate, and how they survived.” Harry watched with interest as Draco’s hands moved through the air stressing his points. It struck him again that the long thin hands were strong and rough. His face already had thin wrinkles around his eyes and Harry realised it was the few times he had been able to watch Draco close without having sneers thrown at him. Harry couldn’t for the life of him figure out what colour his eyes were. He always thought they were grey, but now with the fire, they seemed almost silver. Harry blinked when he realised he wasn’t paying attention to Draco after all.

“I’m sorry, can you repeat that again?”

Another deep sigh came from Draco. “I said that I’m finding that the ancient wizards had a symbiotic relationship with some of the magical creatures. You do know what symbiotic means, don’t you?”

“Yes, Draco, I know what symbiotic means. Which reminds me, I heard about the Pyrenees site. Do you think that is the origin of Veela-wizards?”

Draco chuckled. “Very good, but I didn’t mean that close of symbiotic relationship. But, yes, it could be the origin.”

Harry noticed the hint of pride in Draco’s last statement. The smile grew wider. “Have you figured out why there were only males? Or do you think there is a female burial site nearby?”

Draco worried over his lower lip and the grey-silver eyes flashed with excitement. “I can’t prove anything at this time, but I’m getting close. I will tell you that I do not believe there were any females.”

Harry leant forward as if he didn’t quite hear Draco correctly. “Then…I mean…how?”

Laughter reverberated through the room. It wasn’t a dismissive laugh, it was one of joy, but only Draco knew the reason why. “Harry, I’ll tell you some of my secrets but not all. Now let’s get back to why you are here. Come over to the table and I’ll show you the area of interest.”

Harry poured another cup of tea and followed Draco across the vast cluttered room to the table nearest the only window in the room. Harry glanced outside and saw the clouds were gathering again, and a few horses running across a vast field of green drew his attention. “Harry,” Draco said, showing annoyance once again with his inattentiveness. Harry looked down at the table covered with one large map. The map was of a huge island, and areas on the west coast where many smaller islands abounded were marked with notes, lines, and circles.

“Where is…?”

“Greenland,” Draco answered before Harry could finish asking the question. He leant over the table, and pointed to a spot in the Artic Ocean on the West Coast of Greenland. The sleeve of his
black robe knocked a few quills and inkpots around. “Damn things,” Draco said and stood back up. He quickly removed the offending material. Harry was shocked to see Draco in jeans and t-shirt; he flinched when he saw the faded grey Mark on his left forearm. Draco leant back over and pointed once again to the spot. Harry couldn’t help but notice the long body with lithe muscles and not a hint of softness. Draco could have been in his early twenties. Harry worked at keeping in shape, as field Aurors were required to, but even he had softened a bit since hitting his late-thirties. Harry held onto the sleeves of his robe and bent over to look. There was nothing there. Surrounding Draco’s pointed finger were other islands, but he failed to see even a speck of black in the surrounding blue.

“I don’t see it Draco. Is there a spell?”

Draco laughed as he stood up and slapped Harry on the back. “Is there a spell? Oh, Merlin, is there a spell.”

Harry was bewildered at Draco’s reaction. Not only had he touched him, but he almost seemed like a crazy person, laughing at a joke no one else got.

“Yes, Harry, there is a spell; it hides the whole fucking island. It’s stronger than a Fidelius in that only the Secret Keeper knows it’s there and only he can take you there. Even though you may have been once, you cannot go back again unless he takes you.”

Harry stood back up. “I’ve never heard of such a spell before. How do you really know the island exists?” He didn’t mean to sound accusatory, but throughout his years as an Auror and lecturing on DADA, he prided himself on learning every spell he came across.

Draco snorted. “Another reason why I wanted you to come here, so I could back up what I was saying. In this case, though, the physical evidence that I can present is weak. It’s all based on a legend.”

“What legend?”

The silver eyes —yes, silver, Harry thought— stared at him once again as if trying to read him. The lower lip was grasped between white teeth.

“Draco, what legend?” Harry asked in a quiet tone.

Draco turned his back on Harry and stepped next to the window, and opened a cupboard at the bottom of a bookcase. He withdrew two snifters and a bottle of brandy. “Will you join me?”

Harry nodded. “Just a little. I have to be at work early tomorrow morning.”

Draco set the glasses on the table and poured each of them a healthy amount. “Did you read your sons stories at night?”

“Yes, of course, both Ginny and I did, and still do for Lily.”

“What was their favourite?” Draco asked, he took a sip of the golden liquid and then added with a friendly laugh, “Besides Harry Potter, the Chosen One.”

Harry coughed on the sip of brandy he had just taken. “Fuck you, Malfoy,” he said with his own laugh.

“Not in this lifetime, Golden Boy,” Draco bantered back.
“Let’s not go there, but in answer to your question, they enjoyed the stories of Merlin, The Tales of Beedle the Bard, The Dragon Riders, of course, and some Muggle books you are probably not familiar with.”

“Ah, I might surprise you there, but never mind that. Now tell me what your favourite book to read to them was. I don’t believe you knew about magical books when you were a child.”

A lone ray of sunshine shot through the window, across Draco’s face, and onto the map. Harry studied the face asking him questions about children’s books. The face looked weathered, as if exposed to too long to the elements, be it sunshine or wind, he didn’t know. “I guess I would say the Dragon Riders. I liked the idea of wizards and the magical creatures…. Oh, sweet Morgana, Malfoy, you believe they existed.”

Draco chuckled. “Sweet Morgana? There are no children present, Harry, you can swear. But, yes, you are correct, I believe they existed. Now, can you piece the rest of the puzzle together?”

Harry took the last sip of his brandy, not having remembered drinking what came before. “Let’s see, a Glacier Dragon has been spotted, Greenland, makes sense since much of it is covered in an ice sheet. However, it still wouldn’t offer complete protection from Muggles or other creatures, so an island would be preferable for a Dragon to hatch her eggs. Now if there were such wizards as Dragon Riders, they would live with the dragons on the island and make sure they were cared for and protected. Well, I guess they would protect each other.”

“Very good, Harry,” Draco said and poured each of them another dose of brandy.

“So do you believe the Dragon Riders still exist?”

Draco shook his head, as he lifted the glass to his lips. Harry waited for Draco to speak and took another large sip of the alcohol. He was sure the brandy was helping, but it struck him that he and Draco had been talking for over an hour, and they hadn’t physically come to blows, or even come close. In fact, Harry admitted, he was rather enjoying his time here.

“No, I think they are an extinct race, but it’s fascinating that one of the Glacier Dragons remains.”

“So what makes you think this is the island, and the Glacier Dragons are the ones that allowed wizards to ride them?”

Draco picked up the bottle and walked back over to the fireplace. Harry followed and they both resumed their previous places.

“I traced the legend back to its earliest forms. I’m sure you will enjoy the irony, but the legend originated with Muggles. The story appears to be the same in Europe, Africa and the Middle East. However, there is another version that I uncovered in the Americas and Western Asia. The former from the Norse, and the latter was taken from the Dorset, predecessors of the Inuits. Both tell a similar version of men riding dragons and an island where they lived. The island was not hidden at that time. Where they differ is how the island and its occupants disappeared. In the version, we are familiar with it was because the Gods were jealous and there was a war between them and the Dragon Riders. The Gods won and pushed the island under the ocean. The Inuit account says it was the men of white who fought the Dragon Riders, and when the white men were losing, they poisoned the people, and then warmed the waters causing the island to float away.”

Harry sat there in a daze, he wasn’t sure that he had moved at all while Draco was talking. His thoughts were of dragons in the air fighting back all those who came to take their island. Draco’s hand reached, and more brandy was added to the snifter Harry held. “So what do you think
happened? I mean, if this is all true.”

A roar of thunder echoed overhead, and before Draco could speak, rain pelted against the tall window.

“I think it’s a combination of the two. There was probably a wizard-Muggle war and that’s when the island was put under the spell. Later, I imagine, things calmed down, and once again they had more interaction with those on land, which brought them in contact with the Black Plague in the mid 1350s: the poison. There’s one more tale and that is the mass exodus of dragons that the Labradoreans speak of. They have a story that tells of Glacier Dragons, which is the first time the name is used, flying overhead in formation, as if migrating.”

The voice that once sent spikes of anger up Harry’s spine, now held him in a trance. It was melodic and soothing; he didn’t want to interrupt with questions, even though he had many. He couldn’t remember the last time he had let his mind wander into thoughts of fantasy and new discoveries. It brought back the same feelings he had as a youth when Hagrid told him he was a wizard and when he first saw Diagon Alley. It wasn’t that his work wasn’t challenging or interesting, though in the early days it was more so, it was that it was all the same. Bad guy does something bad, good guy catches him, bad guy goes to Azkaban. Harry suddenly realised his mind was wandering too far and that he was a bit pissed. It wasn’t the best situation to be in, sitting in Malfoy Manor having too much to drink. He set his brandy down on the table and pushed the glass out of his reach.

Draco arched his brow and did the same. Harry somehow felt comforted by that action.

Any comments?” Draco asked.

Before Harry could answer, a flash of lightning streaked through the sky and the low grumble of thunder immediately followed. Draco picked up his wand from the table and raised the fire. The food disappeared, but the sweets remained.

Harry turned to Draco and just looked at him, spending a few moments collecting his thoughts of the grown man sitting near him. He was the real deal, a scientist who went out on adventures. Draco held his stare with no comment. “Draco, my guess is that I could ask you any question, and you’d pull out the books and maps and explain everything in detail, but I’m still curious as to why you’re telling me these things.”

Draco let out a silent whistle. Harry almost laughed at his expression. He could tell that Draco was about to say something, or admit something, that was more than difficult for him.

“Yes, I could go into detail over any question you ask, and I’m hoping that you’ll want to know everything in detail after I tell you why I asked you to come over. The details are important, Harry. Details have saved my life out in the wild, and details are what make me the best in my profession. I imagine the same is true for you in yours. Bravery only gets you so far, being so familiar with things that you can see, understand, and predict what will happen next is what moves us ahead in our fields.”

Harry gulped. In some fanciful way, Draco had just paid him a compliment. He acknowledged that Harry hadn’t been just handed his position as the Head of the Magical Law Enforcement. “Go on,” Harry said with more patience than he was feeling.

“I have met with the Secret Keeper of the island. We have talked over the past year at least a dozen times. He finally admitted that the Glacier Dragon had been seen recently, but more importantly, Harry, he said that the legends were true. He has a book, more like a diary, that has been passed down through his family for the last ten centuries. I was only allowed to view it once, and then for
only a short period. About six months ago, I asked if he would take me to the island, as I only wanted to study it and not disturb anything. I wanted to know what the Dragon Riders did, what they ate, how they lived in such a harsh climate, and exactly what their relationship with the Glacier Dragons was.”

“You can really tell all of those things by just looking at a site?” Harry knew the question sounded dumb, but he couldn’t imagine discovering what they ate or how they lived from just bones and a few instruments or weapons.

Draco looked at him earnestly. “I could ask you the same thing about your job. How you enter a crime scene and know what is an important clue and what isn’t? How to read another’s intent, and so on. Experience is the greatest teacher, isn’t that the saying?” Draco said grinning.

“Only if you learn from it,” Harry snickered.

“Yes, that is the key: learning from experience. Well, to continue, the wizard denied my request. I, of course, wasn’t ready to take no for an answer, and sent him my papers and write-ups of my previous expeditions to show him my sincerity. About a month ago, I thought I’d hit a brick wall. Everything I ever sent to him was returned to me. It was probably the lowest day of my career. However, an owl woke me the next morning with a missive from the wizard saying that he was in Copenhagen for a few days and that he wished to speak to me. I ended up meeting him in Amsterdam, which I must say is an interesting city to visit, but that’s another story. We were sitting in an open air coffee shop, and he told me he’d take me to the island, but with one condition, and that condition was that I bring you along.”

“Me?” Harry gasped. “Why the … Oh, bugger, you must’ve hated to hear that.”

Draco laughed. “Yes, it took all of my control not hex the old man in a public place. However, he did explain why and I accepted his reasoning. Part of the spell is that while he is the Secret Keeper, he is not allowed on the island. He is able to take his boat up to the shore, but not step out of it. His concern is with the dragon, and whether she’ll accept me or not. While he is most impressed with you ridding the world of Voldemort and now being the Head of the Magical Law Enforcement for Britain, what he was most enthused about is that you had ridden a dragon. If something happened to him, he wanted to ensure that I had a way off the island. The dragon is not affected by the spell, no animals are, with the exception of Muggles and wizards.”

Harry’s brow furrowed. “It was an old, blind, scarred-up dragon, Draco. The poor thing was just pleased it was getting out. I don’t even think it knew we were on it.”

“Exactly,” Draco said emphatically. “The reported accounts of the breakout said you were the first one on the dragon, and that Ron and Hermione followed. Old, blind, or whatever, Harry, dragons do not want anyone riding them. The only way it is possible, according to dragon tamers and the Secret Keeper, is if the dragon trusts you and knows that you mean it no harm. Very much like that Hippogriff back in school knew.”

Harry’s thoughts were racing with images of seeing a Glacier Dragon, of being on an adventure. What would Ginny say? Would the Ministry even let him go? How long would they be gone? Where exactly were they going? What would they wear, eat….

“Potter!” Draco said loudly.

Harry jumped. “What?”

“You were off in your own world and not listening. Do you do that on your job?”
“I obviously can’t say yes or no right now, but how long would we be gone?”

“One week on the island is what I’ve been given. It isn’t much time, but with enough planning ahead, it should suffice.”

“When?”

“Soon. The next few weeks are the tail end of when the temperatures and long days are at their peak. If we don’t make it then, we’ll have to wait until next year, probably June.”

Harry looked back up at the dragon painting and couldn’t help but smile. “I’m interested, but I’ll need to talk to Ginny and Kingsley about it. And before you say it, I know you don’t want me telling them exactly what this is about.”

“I’m going to give you some books in which I’ve marked the text of interest. I want you to read them, Harry. This will not be some little vacation getaway. The environment is harsh and any mistake made can cost either or both of us our lives,” Draco said as he rose from the chair and began walking around the room gathering books from different tables.

Harry stood and toured the room, looking at the artefacts from around the world. There were masks, statues, jewellery, pottery and weapons made of various elements. His interest was piqued by an intricately carved white knife. It appeared to be made of bone, and carved with birds he thought looked like Veela. He reached out to touch it and jumped when Draco yelled, “Stop!”

Harry lifted the knife, and it did appear to be made of bone. The handle alone was carved, the thin seven inch blade appeared to have just been sharpened. But most curious of all, he felt the magic concealed in it.

“It’s a ceremonial knife I found at the Pyrenees site. It’s made of whale bone.” Draco said as he peered over Harry’s shoulder. Harry became acutely aware of the presence of strength, and not just magical strength that Draco was emitting. Draco didn’t fear him.

“What type of ceremony would call for such a knife with this much magic contained in it?” Harry asked as he turned the weapon over again, staring at the Veela.

“The blade core is Veela feather. It was used during a birthing ceremony,” Draco whispered so close to Harry’s ear he felt the exhalation of air.

“To cut the cord?”

“Yes, among other things.”

Harry coughed and set the knife back down. “Circumcision?”

Draco laughed, stepped away from Harry and picked up the books. “No, you prat, they didn’t cut their boys. I believe it was used for a caesarean birth, but I can’t prove it yet.”

Harry spun around. “Bloody hell, Draco, you think the Veela-wizards could have children!”

Draco’s eyes sparkled and he gave Harry an impish grin. “I’m not saying another word, and neither
Draco handed Harry the books, and led him out of the library and back to drawing room. Harry still felt the effects of the alcohol, but he also felt like he just stepped out of dream.

“Do you think you can let me know in a few days? I don’t mean to pressure you, but time is, as they say, of the essence.”

Harry nodded. “Yes, I’ll talk with Ginny and Kingsley.” As he said the words, he realised he had, in some way, already committed himself and it felt good, really good.

He was about to Disapparate, but instead he shifted the books and held out his hand. “It’s been an interesting evening, Draco.”

Draco smiled as he held Harry’s hand in his grip. “That it has, Harry.”

“Draco,” Harry said as he released their second handshake that night, “I have to tell you that I’m really impressed with your work and what you’re doing with your life.”

Draco’s face blanched and his eyes shut. If Harry didn’t know better, he would have sworn Draco was about to cry. He reached out and touched Draco’s forearm. “What is it? Did I say something wrong?”

Harry grasped Draco’s arm tighter. “No, Draco, that’s not it. And I’m not going anywhere with you unless we tell each other the truth. If we’re going to be partners on this expedition, we can’t mistrust each other. Now I asked you a question, and I would like an answer. Did I say something wrong?”

Draco chuckled. “Ah, the Auror appears after all. No, Harry, you didn’t say anything wrong, your words meant more to me than you know. I just wish I could hear it from the others.”

“What others?”

“Severus and Dumbledore,” Draco said softly.

Harry let go of his arm and stepped closer to Draco. “Why them?”

“Fuck, Harry, don’t you know? Don’t you remember? My mother, Dumbledore, Severus, and you, you all saved my life that last year. For a year afterwards, I stayed in this place never leaving once. I couldn’t figure out why anyone thought that I was worth saving. My mother, yes, but the rest of you… I didn’t get it. My father finally snapped me out of it. After a huge row, he told me that I may never know the answer, but that I should prove to all of you, and to myself, that you made the right decision.”

“Fucking hell, why didn’t you just ask me? Okay, I know why you didn’t, but hell, you saved my life when I stood in this room nineteen years ago. I knew what you had done, or rather hadn’t done, that day. I also saw you in my visions, being made to torture people you didn’t want to. You were being used. I admit I never liked your skinny arse, but I knew you understood that you had made the wrong choice in supporting Voldemort. But you learned from that experience, and everyone deserves a second chance. I’ve never regretted pulling you out of that fire or taking down that Death Eater. And if you need to, or just want to, hear it again, I think it’s brilliant what you have
done with your life.”

Draco sighed and bit his lower lip again. Harry was sure it would be bleeding soon from being chewed on so roughly.

“Plus your wand liked me,” Harry mumbled quickly.

Draco released a small chuckle, coughed, and then began to laugh again almost uncontrollably.

Harry took a quick sweeping glance around the room of horrors, as he thought of it, and then looked at Draco. “Look, Draco, if we do this expedition together, when we get back, the first thing I’m going to do is take you back to Hogwarts, and into the Headmaster’s office. I’d like those two stubborn bastards to know that both of us came out of it okay, and that we both were worth saving and protecting.” Harry grimaced for second.

“What?” Draco asked, still smiling.

“Long story. I’ll tell you on the trip. Let’s just say there were a few minutes there when I wasn’t sure that saving and protecting applied to me.” Harry chuckled.

tbc...
Harry sat on the driftwood bench, trying to acclimate to the freezing cold, dry air. The bench stood in front of the building that Draco had entered, after it had been decided that he would purchase the appropriate clothing for both of them. Harry chuckled at the number of times Kelby, a Manor house-elf, came by his home and office to measure him. Right now, though, he was overwhelmed that they were on an island three hundred and seventy miles north of the Arctic Circle, and that Muggles lived here and had for centuries. The small settlement they would stay the night in was one of seven in the municipality of Uummannaq.

The beauty of it was unmistakable. From his viewpoint on a porch built on top of the rocky coast, he could see other islands made of ice and icebergs floating by. It was seven at night and the sun was still high in the sky. The locals were dressed casually as if it were seventy degrees; it wasn’t, it was thirty-five. He pulled his seal-lined cloak tighter around himself. The absence of the sounds he was used to hearing in a Muggle town was a relief. There were no cars as there were no roads. The people used boats and dogsleds to get around, though he did spot a few off-road vehicles. The island they were going to, he was told, was smaller than this one, and having dogs and a sled would be beneficial. However, they would not have that luxury as the Secret Keeper told Draco that the dragon, if it appeared, would likely eat the dogs.

Harry lifted his travelling bag onto the bench as an Arctic Husky came up to him sniffing, Harry assumed for a treat. Harry let the dog sniff him, and approached him carefully before petting him on the head. Apparently, the dog did not receive that type of attention too often as its nose bucked into Harry’s hand, demanding more affection. Harry obliged and thought of Snuffles, probably the most spoiled, laziest dog in the world.

Ginny would be picking up Lily soon from the Burrow, and they would be going home together. He didn’t particularly like the idea of his two girls staying alone in the house. Ginny had about spit in his face when he mentioned it. He knew that the other Aurors would pay special attention to his homestead while he was gone, but realistically, there wasn’t much to worry about. It had been years since they’d much to worry about. His work now mainly consisted of tracking down illegal potion makers, rounding up con artists, and breaking up hexing fights at the pubs. Once in awhile, a murder or attempted murder case came his way. He hated to admit it, but he found those the most exciting to work on and solve. The lax workload did leave him more time with his family and to guest lecture at Hogwarts.

The boys had been so excited that he was going. He had stopped by to tell them in person and to say goodbye. He heard a rumour that Draco had done the same. The papers had not heard about the expedition before they left, and for that, he was thankful. They would have had a field day. Hopefully, they would be back before anyone discovered they were gone. Ginny hadn’t been pleased, he knew by her demeanour, but she never came out and said it. Harry didn’t ask either. He knew that she understood him enough to know that he needed some type of adventure, of action, in his life now and then.

Kingsley, on the other hand, was overly concerned, and would not accept Harry’s word alone that Draco had nothing nefarious planned. Harry was still amazed that Draco agreed to come to the Ministry to be interrogated and undergo the final humiliation of having to take Veritaserum to prove that this was just a scientific expedition. Harry had remained in the room with Draco during
all of the proceedings, as had Hermione. Draco seemed to take it all in his stride. Harry thought for sure he would be upset to be suspected of such behaviour, but Hermione told him on the side that this way, if anything happened to Harry, there would be proof it was accidental. The mind of a true Slytherin was impressive.

The husky finally tired of being petted lay down on the porch, his head resting on Harry’s caribou boots. The boots were an amazing Muggle creation.

Harry jumped at the pounding crash and splash of ice breaking off from the neighbouring island’s glacier. The dog lifted his head and quickly resumed his position. Harry watched the newly formed iceberg float down the fjord. He reached in his bag and withdrew a roll of parchment. He unfurled it, carefully read each item on the list, and mentally checked them off. He thought of his last camping trip all those years ago with Hermione and Ron. They wouldn’t have made it one night without Hermione’s foresight and organizational skills, and even then, they weren’t fully prepared. Yes, Harry thought, he had learned from that experience. He never went unprepared again. It paid off many times in his profession, especially when they did stakeouts of suspected Death Eater hideouts. He and Ron were a team back then; those were the best years of his career. He didn’t blame Ron for moving into another department, as he was still in Harry’s shadow as long as they were partners. Ron needed to make his own name.

Draco had created the list, and Harry had added a few items here and there. Harry had to admire the thoroughness of it, even though he and Ron had joked that it did seem a bit over the top. They would, after all, only be gone one week, two at the most, if bad weather prevented the Secret Keeper from picking them up on the designated day. Ron had given him a hard time, not in meanness, but in teasing. He even sneered around Harry just to get him used to it. Ron’s reaction surprised everyone but Harry. Ron knew that Harry thrived on the unknown, on adventure, after being his friend and partner so long. He was a bit upset that Harry couldn’t tell him what it was about, but got over it quickly enough when Harry did tell him that it involved a legend, a childhood legend. Ron’s eyes had widened and he got a knowing look about him, and asked no more questions. He did bring up the story of Gringotts and Harry’s glare gave him enough information that he left the subject matter alone completely.

Hermione, though, was much more concerned about the legalities of what Harry and Draco were up to. Ron finally took her aside and afterwards, she didn’t bother Harry with it anymore. He was surprised that she showed up at Draco’s interrogations; Draco was not. Draco addressed her properly, but his demeanour towards her was not pleasant to behold. The first thought that crossed Harry’s mind was prejudice against Hermione because she was a Muggle-born, but then Draco withdrew a stack of documents and set them on the table in front of Harry. They were all from the Department of Magical Law Enforcement Agency and contained Hermione’s signature. Harry knew, the department had requested detailed financial information, along with a thorough background check, on his wife and her father. The parchments, Harry knew, were for his benefit, so he would know that there was more to this than Draco being an arse.

The wooden framed screened door squeaked as it opened. One of the blue eyes of the husky popped open and then quickly closed as Draco struggled out the door, his arms filled with boxes and bags. He set them down next to Harry and stood watching as Harry opened his rucksack and put them in.

“Our rooms are just up the path. The sun will rise at three forty-five a.m. and we’re expected on Upernavik Island at four-thirty. Vilhelm will meet us there and bring the additional supplies, including the skis. We will have breakfast there, and should have everything loaded in the umiak by five-thirty. We will be in the water by five forty-five.”
Harry finished putting the boxes in his rucksack. Draco had purchased one for each of them. Between the two of them, they held every item on the supply list and their backups. “Okay, sounds good,” Harry replied. None of Draco’s words were new to him. They both knew the timetable by heart, but Harry figured Draco was a bit nervous and felt the need to say it aloud one more time. He had done the same thing multiple times when he worked with his new partner after Ron had transferred departments. With Ron, words were not necessary.

“Shall we go?”

Harry stood up, disturbing the resting dog, and joined Draco on the crushed rock path. The husky followed the two Muggle-dressed wizards as they passed the small brightly coloured houses, until they reached the white clapboard inn.

His room was sparsely furnished; the single bed and small dresser were sufficient for one night. Harry already felt tired as the three-hour time-difference was having its effect. It was close to bedtime at home, and here it was only seven-thirty. Harry unpacked what he needed for the night then departed his room to meet Draco for dinner in the common dining room. There was nothing extravagant about the inn, with the exception of the family who owned it. They were of Danish descent, and Greenland had been their family’s home for a century or so. Immediately, Harry felt like their long-lost cousin; it reminded him of when he first met the Weasleys. Draco, to Harry’s delight, was just as friendly in return.

They dined on fresh blue oysters and local halibut while they stared out the picture window at the icebergs floating through the fjord; neither said much as they enjoyed the food and the imported wine.

Until two nights ago, Harry and Draco had only spoken a few words since that first meeting. Harry smiled as he pushed his plate forward and poured each of them another glass of white wine. The dinner that he, Ginny, and Lily attended at Malfoy Manor was not as successful as he had hoped it would have been. He couldn’t imagine that Mrs. Potter and Mrs. Malfoy would be dining together again if either could help it.

Harry still failed to see what was so awful about Chantal; she, after all, did invite them over, and was quite interesting to talk with. Lily absolutely loved her, especially when Chantal commented on her hair and insisted that she give her a French braid. His daughter fell further in idolization when it became known that Chantal was an artist and had painted the landscapes in the hallway. Draco whispered to Harry that she had painted the Glacier Dragon in his library. Lily had even told to them, as they tucked her into bed that night, that she thought Chantal was really a princess and the Manor was a castle. The fight that ensued in their bedroom was a classic, but the sex made up for it. Harry hadn’t seen Ginny that jealous in years. This part of Ginny he never understood; Chantal was beautiful—no question about it—but she was not his type.

“Do you think they will dine together while we are gone?” Draco asked, almost too innocently.

Harry shook his head. “How the hell did you know that’s what I was thinking about?”

Draco shrugged. “It was just a guess. However, I should warn you that my wife likes to play games. I apologize if she went a bit too far. She does think your daughter is lovely, and I will reluctantly admit that I do too. She will make a brilliant addition to the House of Slytherin.”

“Bastard,” Harry replied teasingly and drank more of his wine. They both jumped as the loud rumble echoed through the room, and they watched as the tip of the glacier on the opposing island crashed into the fjord and bounced like a cork until it stabilized.

“Guess we’d better get used to it,” Harry mumbled. “So what do you mean your wife plays games?”
Draco’s eyes widened and then pursed his lips together, as if trying to stop the words from coming out.

“What? Tell me; you’re the one who said it. What did you mean?”

Draco lifted the glass of wine to his lips and took a long sip. Harry waited patiently, or at least pretended to.

“My wife and I have an understanding between us,” Draco drawled.

“What do you understand? Shit, Malfoy, just spill it.”

“Fine, Potter, we have an open marriage. She has lovers, and I have lovers.”

Harry thanked Merlin above that he had already swallowed the sip of wine. “Whoa! I mean, wow. No, I … Why? Don’t you love her? Doesn’t she love you?”

Draco rolled his eyes. “Yes, I love her and she loves me. We just have interests that the other cannot fulfil. She does enjoy teasing me, and her flirting with you was part of her game. We had brilliant sex after you left, if you must know.”

Two bowls of blueberry tart arrived at their table and they both remained silent until the owner was out of sight.

“I didn’t need to know that,” Harry replied. His cheeks were turning red both from the wine and from the conversation. “So do you make moves on others when she is around too? I mean, you talked to Ginny about Quidditch, her playing days, and her articles, but I didn’t see anything more that.”

Draco coughed. “No, Harry, I was not making moves on your wife. I mean no offence, but she’s not my type.”

Harry scowled as the memories of Draco calling her family blood traitors, and worse, condemning the Weasleys about being poor. Ginny was not a stunning woman like Fleur or Chantal, but he thought she was perfect. He loved that she was a tomboy and that she played Quidditch.

“Ah, I see that you have taken offence. My apologies.”

Harry wandered back up to his room after Draco had left the table. His thoughts were a bit muddled by both the wine and the conversation. His professional world was filled with black and white, good and evil, but there were those occasions where things fell somewhere in-between. Right after the war, for example, there had been situations like what to do with the Malfoys. Narcissa and Draco had been given a reprieve when Harry brought to light their actions at the end, and what Severus Snape’s role had been in the war, as well as the difficult position in which Draco had been placed by Voldemort. Lucius was more of a problem; he was dark-grey. Eventually, he was given credit for the time he had already served in Azkaban, was put on probation for ten years, and was not allowed to do magic outside of his home.

Harry opened his room door with a key. He and Draco were trying to reduce any use of magic except when they had to Apparate. He quickly prepared for the night and slipped into the warm feather bed. He set the alarm, turned off the light, and looked out the window at the still light sky. The Malfoys had an open marriage, was that a bad thing? They weren’t hurting anyone, but Harry couldn’t help but think that it would eventually hurt their marriage. He chuckled aloud as he turned over and faced the door, away from the light; Ginny would hex him to hell before the words even left his mouth if he suggested it. Not that he would suggest it. He loved Ginny, and they had a
great marriage and sex life…at least he thought he did. Harry yawned and pulled the duvet further up over his shoulders. Ginny was his one and only. Hell, even Ron had more experience than he did, thanks to Lavender.

Green eyes flashed open five minutes before the alarm was to ring; Harry bolted out of bed, adrenaline rushing through his body. With wand in hand, he turned in place and searched the room with bleary eyes. He reached to the nightstand, grabbed his glasses, and slipped them on. He tried to calm down and see if he could register where the alert was coming from. After a few minutes, he worked through what he had heard and what he had felt, his Auror training kicking in. He had heard five distinct cracks of air in succession; they would have been louder if they were in the hotel. He wasn’t familiar enough with how sound carried in this part of the world, given the dryness of the air and the limited number of dwellings. He closed his eyes to concentrate on the feel of magic. He felt very little, but it was there. There were magical people in this small town on the edge of nowhere and he didn’t know why.

Harry washed, dressed quickly, and was knocking on Draco’s door within ten minutes. The door was opened by a dripping wet blond with only a towel wrapped around his hips. “You’re early,” Draco said as he turned and left the door open for Harry to enter.

“At least five wizards Apparated near here about ten minutes ago,” Harry replied as he shut the door.

Draco spun around. “You can tell that?”

Harry would have laughed at Draco’s expression of disbelief, but the subject matter was too serious to start bantering. “Yes, it woke me up. I’m not sure how the lack of humidity and the environment effect sound, so I can’t tell exactly how far away they are. I do know they are not in the building. Do you have any idea why they would be here?”

“A couple of reasons come to mind,” Draco said as he undid the towel and put his pants on. “They could be just using this town as a half-way point in a long-distance Apparation.”

“And the other?” Harry asked as he watched Draco struggle putting on the woollen undergarments. He had been right, he thought, Draco could be twenty. His long, lean, muscular body reminded him of a big cat.

“Um, Potter, you are staring. Do you see something you like?”

Harry laughed. “No, yes, no, oh bugger. I was noticing that you are in good shape for our age.”

Draco looked in the mirror and ran a comb through his hair. “Well, if I’m going to attract lovers, I can’t depend on my hair anymore. Such a pity.”

Harry burst out laughing. “You know, Draco, I told my family before I came to visit you that first night that I didn’t know you. I had no idea how true that statement was. By the way your hair is fine; it reminds me of your father’s.”

Draco glanced back over his shoulder looking at Harry. “I don’t know if that is a compliment or not coming from you. I can’t imagine your feelings for my father have diminished with age.”

“Come on, blondie, just get moving,” Harry sighed.

Draco grabbed his rucksack. “You’re right, Potter, we should get out of here, just in case I’m
wrong about them being just travellers.”

Harry pulled his Invisibility Cloak out of his bag. “We are going to use this when we Disapparate, and I’m going to put up a Muffling spell so, hopefully, they won’t hear it.”

Once again, the words, “You can do that?” fell from Draco’s lips as Harry wrapped the cloak around both of them and they vanished from Uummannaq.

“Yes,” Harry whispered, as they appeared under the cloak together two hundred miles farther north from where they were a moment ago. They both glanced around seeing if they had caused a disturbance; they hadn’t. The fishermen and seal hunters from the small coastal town on the western hillside of Upernavik Island were gathering by their boats, and a large flock of Eider ducks was honking loudly as they flew low down Davis Straight. They walked to the side of small blue-painted hut and Harry removed the cloak.

“Shit, a little more warning would have been nice,” Draco mumbled.

Harry ignored the jibe and looked south. Qaarsorsuaq Mountain was visible and it resembled the pictures he’d seen in the books Draco had lent him. They had arrived safely in the correct place.

“Where are we supposed to meet Vilhelm?”

“He said he would be at the hotel. Remember, we are to have breakfast, pack the boat, and set off.”

Harry didn’t respond or move, but just stood there and closed his eyes. “Potter, what are you doing?” Draco asked decisively.

Harry eyes opened slowly. “Just trying to see if I can feel any magic around. I’m only picking up very little, which I assume is from our guide.”

Draco shook his head and helped Harry pull on his waterproof jacket. “Come on, oh mystic one.”

“Wanker,” Harry replied swatting Draco’s hand away.

The Hotel Upernavik was easy to find, but Harry swore every time they walked in the shadow of a building the temperature seemed to drop ten degrees. The restaurant in the hotel was small, but warm. Draco led Harry over to a table by the fire, where a grizzly old wizard was drinking a large mug of coffee.

The man stood and shook Harry’s hand by clasping it with both of his. Harry smiled, noticing the wizard’s bristled face seemed to be made of leather with deep creases. His hair was thick, messy and grey, reminding Harry of a thatched roof. His hands were extremely rough. “Mr. Potter, it is a great pleasure to meet you. Mr. Malfoy and I have had some interesting discussions about you.”

Harry glanced over at Draco, who tried to look innocent. “Yes, I’m sure you have, and please call me Harry. Mr. Malfoy and I went to school together. I’m honoured that you have invited me to join this expedition.”

The old man turned and winked at Draco. His dark brown eyes then turned back to Harry. “Please sit, sit. We only have a few minutes. I’ve already ordered for three.”

Harry and Draco sat down, and soon plates of eggs, bacon, and toast was set before them, along with steaming mugs of coffee. Harry had a feeling the bacon was not from a pig, nor the eggs from a chicken.

“Harry said five wizards Apparated to Uummannaq this morning before we left. Do you know what they would be doing there?” Draco whispered to Vilhelm.
“Poachers, I would say. Let’s just hope they are after Ramora and not our girl.”

Harry’s mug hit the table loudly, and coffee spilt over the sides. “What? Ramora are from the Indian Ocean, they couldn’t survive up here.”

The old man cackled, almost like an old hag. “Ah, Mr. Potter—Harry—the people of the Thule have been trying for centuries to breed them here, and they have been successful. They do migrate to the Atlantic in the winter, though. Now, you had better not tell your legal compatriots back home or I will personally hex you. We anglers honour our guardian fish; it is the poachers we detest. Now finish up, we’d best be going.”

“The umiaks were large boats the Inuits used to carry their women and supplies,” Vilhelm explained. “This old thing hardly compares, but that is what the others call it when they see it,” he added as they stepped into the boat with their rucksacks. Inside were other items lying about, mainly spears and knives made of bone, but also skis and snowshoes. Harry was thankful there were more blankets, from what animals he didn’t know, and at the moment, didn’t care. Harry sat up front, Draco in the middle, and Vilhelm in the back.

“Now each of you grab an oar, and try and look like you know what the hell you’re doing. I’m going to only use a little magic to get us moving along at a respectable pace. Once we are out of sight, we’ll move along more quickly.”

As they rowed away from Upernavik Island, Harry realised he had never felt such calmness in his life. Within a half-hour, they had rounded Apparsuit, where thousands of guillemot and cormorants were gathered, and they now faced open water, where massive icebergs seemed indistinguishable from real islands. The arctic morning sun distorted his understanding of how far away everything was.

The boat began to hum as Vilhelm increased the magic. Harry couldn’t help but look down into the deep cold waters and speculate on what was below. He knew there were seals, whales of differing types, and varieties of fish. The water was being repelled from lapping over the low-lying boat as they glided through the icy waters. It was hypnotic viewing the icebergs of blue and white drift by. He saw clouds gathering in the distance and felt the breeze pick up. He pulled the fur blanket tighter, closed his eyes, and just let his body feel the motion of the boat, and the cold ocean spray freezing on his exposed nose and cheeks. The last thing he remembered was hearing one of his boat mates singing low and soft; a ballad about ancient sailors.

Harry could hear singing as he dreamed of floating on clouds above an ocean of white. Around him, the sky was filled with men riding dragons and yelling with joy as they caught a strong current and were swept along with it. Someone’s arms wrapped around him and whispered of the beauty they were being blessed by seeing. A shadow overtook them and Harry’s hair blew in different directions as the flapping of wings sent downdrafts of air over them. He strained to look up and fought the wind whipping across his face. The dragon above him looked to be made of ice in colours of white and blue. Her great face peered down at him. She didn’t speak aloud, but her voice was clear in his head. “Dragon Rider, you and your bird are welcome.”

Harry woke with a start and a smile. He was lying down in the boat with furs covering him. Draco was beside him, asleep. They were wrapped in a thick blanket of fog, and he could see nothing around him. The old wizard stopped singing and smiled when he saw Harry sit up; at least that’s what Harry thought he was doing, as the man had very few teeth. “You both have safe passage?” the wizard asked.

“Yes,” Harry whispered, having not quite found his voice, “if that was her in my dream, but she said...”
“Good, I was hoping she would accept both of you,” Vilhelm replied joyously, not letting Harry finish his words. He raised his wand and instantly the thick grey fog vanished. Harry’s eyes widened as he saw the boat was already half-way on land. There was a shallow landing consisting of small rocks that fanned down from a path carved between two massive walls of ice. “Welcome to Cock Island, Harry Potter.”

Harry’s breath was taken away as he tilted his head back to see how tall the sheer faced glacier was. It looked like a mountain sliced in half. Draco stirred next to him. Harry pulled back the blanket covering him. He leant down and whispered next to Draco’s ear, “Draco, we’re here. Time to explore.”

Sleepy eyes opened, and the long body stretched and yawned. Draco sat up and rolled his neck around making popping sounds. “Merlin, I don’t think I’ve slept that well since I was kid.”

“It’s eight at night, boys, I think you best be going and set up camp for tonight before the sun sets much lower.”

Harry gathered his rucksack and carefully stepped out onto the shore. He looked back at Draco who was staring straight up at the bisected glacier, his eyes filled with wonder. “Malfoy, time to go,” Harry said briskly, knowing that would get his attention.

“Yeah, okay,” Draco responded, still dazed. Harry reached for his hand and helped him out of the boat. They gathered the skis and snowshoes pushing them, along with items made of bone into their bags.

“Take the extra blankets too,” Vilhelm said gruffly to them. “They will keep you warm, or at least alive in the worst of conditions. Now, I’ll be back in seven days, if the weather holds. If not, return each day. I will be back.”

Harry and Draco both attempted to return to the boat to shake the old sailor’s hand, but he used the oar to move the boat from the shallow shelf and returned to the water. Heavy mist rose from the water and their view of the boat was obscured. Harry turned to Draco, and with an exaggerated sweep of his arm, pointed towards the path and teasingly said, “After you, o’ great explorer.”

They walked for an hour through the narrow crevice, the gradient moving them uphill gradually. The walls of the glacier were strips of varying shades of blue and white, revealing millennia of compacted ice. After the first half-hour, Harry had a strong appreciation of how good of shape Draco Malfoy was in. Eventually, Harry was beginning to pant, trying to keep up with the consistent long strides of the wizard in front of him. He wanted to stop and take a drink; the dry cold air had sucked all of the moisture out of him. Just as he was going to request a break, the path became steeper, and after a few minutes of struggling to keep his legs moving forward, the walls shortened and they had come out on top of the island. Draco dropped a blanket on the ice and fell on top of it. Harry was relieved that Draco had been affected too. He plopped down next to him and together they viewed the glacier they were sitting on, recognising they were in a shallow valley in the middle of the island. Edges far in the distance could be seen, and to the north, another rise; it was a small mountain, and at least this one seemed to be made of rock.

Draco retrieved a canteen of water and took his share before handing it off to Harry. “Let’s put the skis on and go for a few, and then we’ll set up camp for tonight. I would prefer a place a little more sheltered.” As Draco’s words ended, they watched in amazement as the walls of the path they had just travelled joined once again; neither had words. Draco reached into his bag and pulled out a red pole, stood up and magically forced it into the ice, marking the spot they would have to return to.

Harry took large gulps of the water and handed it back to Draco. Together, they struggled with
putting on the cross-country skis. Draco, thankfully, had done this before. It took Harry a few minutes to get into the rhythm of sliding across the ice and not picking up his feet to walk. What initially appeared to be a sheet of flat ice was not; Harry once again noticed that the arctic sun played with his depth perception. Small dips appeared and crevasses in the glacier that looked harmless, could quickly turn into a dangerous situation. Harry smacked into Draco when he came to a full stop in front of him. The ice had been thinning below them and now they had reached an expanse of rocky ground. Farther on, where they could see it dropped off, there was another large crevice and beyond that, more rock terrain. They removed the skis and walked to the lichen-covered rocks’ edge.

A wide smile broke over Draco’s face as a small stream originating from the mountain meandered through the crevice, and further down, collected into a small lake. “Fresh water,” Draco said excitedly. “We’ll camp here.”

The tent, once fully erected, resembled those Harry had seen and used before. It was unremarkable from the outside in its size. Harry wasn’t sure what he expected on the inside, but the simplicity of the furnishings was surprising. Draco, having years of experience in living in a tent, seemed to have only brought what was needed, yet enough to still be comfortable. The inside, while one large room, was separated by function into four. One corner was for sleeping, with two single beds, a bedside table between them, and a wardrobe for each. The corner next to it was for working; Draco had included two tables resembling those in his library, and various drawing and measuring instruments strewn about the tables, and two chairs. In the same corner, were shelves filled with books. The opposing corner from the bedroom encompassed the kitchen, eating area, and a door leading to the loo. Harry smiled as he saw the two cauldrons stacked by the kitchen cupboards. One was Draco’s and one was Harry’s. Draco had teased him about requesting to bring his own. The last corner was for relaxing. Two comfortable chairs faced a fireplace, and a game table with a wizard chessboard already set stood between them. A long couch was set to the side, with furs lying over the back.

Both emptied their sacks, and went about putting away their clothes and arranging their other items. A whole kitchen shelf was dedicated to potions that both he and Draco brought with them; Draco arranged them in order of type and then alphabetically.

One thing that was becoming increasingly clear to Harry, was that Draco did not talk for the sake of talking. He was comfortable with it being quiet, and Harry appreciated this. He loved his family dearly, but the noise at home did set him on edge at times. He hadn’t grown up learning to be a conversationalist, and he found both at work and at home that others found it necessary to talk about anything and everything. This next week, he decided, would be good for him. It would be hard work, but also relaxing.

Harry sat down by the low fire and closed his eyes enjoying the peace. Draco was still puttering around, but finally Harry heard him sit down on the other chair. “Harry, would you like some dinner before bed?”

Harry opened his eyes to find a plate of shepherd's pie next to him. “Chantal insisted I bring some comfort food for the first night. We will trade off the chore of cooking dinner, and I am hoping that we might be able to enjoy some of the local seafood.”

“Sure, that would be great. Thank Chantal for me. It looks delicious.”

They finished their dinner in silence and afterwards, Draco cleaned up and brought out a bottle of firewhisky. He poured each of them a shot.

Harry lifted the glass and gave Draco a salute. “To great adventures and discoveries,” he said before downing the shot in one gulp.
Draco returned the cheer and downed his in kind. “I’m pretty knackered, so I’m off to bed. Please set the fire to stay lit. I don’t care to have to run to the loo while freezing in the middle of the night.”

“Sure, no problem. Good night, Draco.”

Harry quickly made a decision to sit in the other chair from now on. In this chair, he had a perfect view of Draco in the bedroom. Draco had no hesitation in removing all of his clothes in front of him. However, when Draco walked starkers to and from the loo, and then slipped into bed, Harry realised it wouldn’t matter where he was sitting. He had never seen anyone that was so comfortable in their own skin. “You sleep starkers?” Harry blurted out once Draco was in bed.

Draco turned and lowered the candle’s flame on the bedside table. “Yes, I do; you stay warmer without any clothes. Why, does it bother you?”

“Sure, just curious. I think Ron and Hermione would have had a conniption if I did that when we were camping.”

“Alright, you should try it sometime,” Draco mumbled as he rolled over, facing the wall.

Harry stayed up a while longer, skimming book titles and taking notice of other items Draco had brought. The only thing Harry could see that was not a necessity was a picture of Scorpius on the bedside table. Harry added his own of his three children. It struck him as odd that neither brought a picture of his wife. He crawled between the sheets, starkers, and was overwhelmed with how warm the sheets and down comforter were. Draco had put a Warming Spell on his bed. He blew the bedside candle out and snuggled into the covers.

“I saw you today,” said a familiar voice. Harry looked all around the cloud he was floating on. He couldn’t see anyone, but he knew she was around. “Your partner is a handsome one and very thorough. You should treasure him, yet he did make one mistake tonight.”

“Where are you?” Harry asked, staring up at the blue sky. “What mistake did Draco make?”

“Ah, I am home tonight, in my cave, Dragon Rider, and what a beautiful name for a bird. Draco did not put up any Protection Spells. I would feel better if you did that now. The island is not invisible to animals and there are those that would find you both a tasty meal.”

“What kind of animals? Magical ones?”

“No, I’m the only magical one, my friend. Polar bears, though there are not any on the island this season. When the water freezes, they might visit.”

“Why do you call Draco my bird? He is my friend, well, not really even that.”

The dragon suddenly appeared on his cloud and snorted at him. Smoke spewed from her nostrils. “He is more than that, Dragon Rider, and you shall not disparage him. Have I mistaken my trust in you?”

Harry quivered under her direct stare. Her eyes of black were glaring at him.

“No, Draco and I will be friends. We have a past to get over and I think he is a remarkable wizard whom I am growing to respect. You have not misplaced your trust in me.”

The dragon stretched out and lay on the cloud next to Harry.
“What is your name?” Harry asked, lying down on the cloud facing her. He could easily have reached out and petted her snout. She was a ferocious beast, he was sure, but she also had a tone that reminded him of his old Head of House.

“That is very forward of you to ask, Dragon Rider, but I shall tell you. My name is Lusi.”

Harry couldn’t help but laugh. “Lusi? How did a dragon end up with such a name?”

“You don’t like it?”

“No, that is not what I meant. I actually do, but I just expected an ancient name.”

The dragon rolled on her back and shimmied as if she had an itch. Harry thought this was a strange way to view a dragon. Her thoughts reached out to him again.

“Well, Harry the Hero, Lusi is my short name. My real name is atrocious and very aristocratic. I only use it when I meet with the others. After all, I do have to retain some level of authority, or they would all have their way with me.”

Harry burst out laughing, the dragon laughing with him by snorting out bellows of smoke.

“There are others? We thought you were the last one.”

“No, there is another female and there are two others, males, scum of the … oh never mind. The males live in Antarctica. I visited them a few years ago—to, well, you know?”

“I know what?”

“Oh please, don’t tell me that the only Dragon Rider to come along in centuries is a stupid one. To mate, you silly wizard.”

“Oh,” Harry replied. It struck him as strange that he knew he was dreaming, but that this also seemed so real that he felt foolish.

“It is real, Dragon Rider. Our thoughts are connected while you dream.”

“Will I get to meet you, Lusi?” Harry asked wistfully. He could see growing to like this amusing dragon.

“Maybe,” she answered coyly. “I will allow you to see me, but whether you will meet me will depend on the circumstances. I want to observe both of you before I make that decision. Now, I think we have talked enough for tonight. Good night, Harry. Go put up your spells and give that handsome bird a squeeze.”

Harry choked and woke up coughing. He felt for his wand and glasses on the nightstand as he leapt out of bed with a full load of adrenaline flowing through him once again. The need to set Protection Spells around the camp occluded any thoughts of reason. He whispered, “Lumos,” as he stumbled towards the tent entrance.

“Potter! Stop! What the hell?” Draco yelled out, and then a light appeared from the candle between their beds. Harry jumped and turned back towards Draco with his wand raised.

“Are you insane?” Draco asked loudly as he rubbed his eyes. “Good God, you are even starkers. You want to freeze your bits off? It’s ice cold out there, you git.”

Harry glanced down and watched his bits retract at just the thought. “Thanks,” Harry replied and
began haphazardly putting layers of clothes on.

“What are you doing, Potter?” Draco asked incredulously. He sat up in his bed and stared at Harry, who was heading for the tent door again.

“Setting Protection Spells. Lusi said there are animals out on the island. No polar bears right now, thank Merlin,” Harry replied as he made his way out of the tent. The initial blast of frozen air took his breath away. But it was nothing compared to the beauty of the night sky he was confronted with. He had heard about the Northern Lights, but he was not told of the thick blanket of stars that reached down to the ocean’s horizon when the lights were not present.

Instincts kicked in, he quickly walked around the edges of the campsite, setting the spells as he and Hermione had done so many years before. He returned to the front of the tent and stood there in amazement at the sky. “Beautiful, isn’t it?” Draco said, as he stepped from the tent and next to Harry, his breath was visible.

“Yes, it is,” Harry replied between chattering teeth. Draco wrapped an extra blanket over his shoulders.

“Who’s Lusi?” Draco asked as they both tracked a large meteor trailing down to the southern horizon and seemingly fall into the ocean.

Harry glanced over at Draco, who appeared warm in his fur boots, coat, and hat. “Lusi is the Glacier Dragon, she visits me in my dreams and we talk. Well, not really talk, it’s like we can read each other’s thoughts.”

Draco stood there staring at Harry, gobsmacked. “You talked with a dragon? Why? I mean—shit that is unbelievable—it’s incredible!”

“Slow down, Draco. I’ve only communicated with her in dreams.”

Draco shook his head and sighed. “Why am I not surprised that you can communicate with a dragon?”

The corners of Harry’s mouth turned up. He didn’t have an answer.

“So what did she have to say?” he asked impatiently.

“Inside,” Harry responded as he felt his whole body began to shake and shiver.

Once the tent door had been sealed, Draco raised the fire in the fireplace. To Harry’s amusement, Draco stripped back down to nothing, and slipped back into bed. “When you’re ready, I would like to hear what Lusi had to say. That is if you can tell me, as you made it sound like this wasn’t the first time.”

Harry scattered his clothing and quickly jumped between the sheets, once again they were warmed, courtesy of Draco. He turned on his side and faced Draco, resting his head on the stack of three pillows. “I wasn’t hiding anything. I just didn’t know what to think of it the first time it happened. It was on the trip over to the island, which, by the way, is called Cock Island,” he said with a grin, “and she said she would allow us passage. I dreamt that I was floating on a cloud watching the…”

“Dragon Riders, they were drifting on the currents,” Draco said slowly, seeming as surprised as Harry was. “But I didn’t see you talking with a dragon.”

Harry shrugged. “Well, she did in my version, but she did say something else, both earlier and
tonight, that struck me as odd. She seems rather fond of you, and quite protective. She calls you a bird."

Draco grimaced. “No clue, Potter. So what else did she have to say?”

Harry told Draco about the rest of their conversation, and Draco groaned loudly when he heard that Xenophilius had been correct; there was not only one other female, but also two male Glacier Dragons in Antarctica.

The next three days were some of the longest Harry could ever remember. They quickly learned on the first morning of their expedition that the island had an Apparation damper applied. They would not only have to walk to a destination, but walk back. Draco set a brutal pace for him to keep up with. The island was not large, but it was a good six hours walk, crossing from east to west, and over eight hours north to south, due to the conditions of the land. Draco mainly had them inspect in detail the areas not covered by the glacier. He kept a notebook out at all times and was continuously jotting down observations. Harry was sure that he was also making drawings. They had combed the brutal landscape looking for anything unusual. Anything that showed that humans and/or wizards had once lived on the island. They found nothing, and if Lusi was watching, she did not make an appearance.

One would have thought that very little vegetation would be found on such an island, but once Harry looked at where he was walking, he noticed it was all around him. On a south hill, they found patches of Arctic blueberries. They picked all they could find for the night’s dinner. Draco pointed out the Arctic birch shrubs clinging to the side of the rocks near the south shore. The mountain sorrel’s leaves were almost all red now, but still it held some of their flavour. They collected a few sprigs to add to the night’s fish soup.

The stream’s water was refreshing, but the small lake was devoid of fresh-water fish. Gathering the second night’s meal from the south coast was the only time in three days where both of them were forced out of their serious moods. Harry was sure that Draco Malfoy would hold the incident over his head for the rest of his life. The island’s south end, unlike the east and west, which ended in high cliffs, had a shoreline. Harry spotted a few cod close by, raised his wand and said, “Accio fish”. Draco fell to the ground laughing before the onslaught began. Fish of every size flew from the ocean’s waters where Harry’s wand had pointed, knocking him to the ground, covering him in a pile three meters high. Draco only helped when a lone seal landed on top of the aquatic hill and he heard Harry groan. He removed all but a few of the halibuts, and covered the distance quickly to make sure Harry was not too badly injured. A few quick healing spells for bruises and scratches, and Harry was physically healed, though he seriously doubted his ego would ever recover. Draco, to his credit, did not argue with Harry over dinner that the seal had no right coming out of the water.

It was after they went to bed that they would discuss what they had observed and where they should go tomorrow, and it was during the third night of their late night talks that they discovered an interesting difference between the two. Draco was incredibly detailed, but it was Harry who had the big picture. “Life does not give up easily; it seems to do everything it can to adapt and survive,” Harry proffered before Noxing the candle between them.

The fourth day they began their trek to the north, towards the mountain. They packed up the tent and their belongings, as Draco wanted to climb the mountain and felt returning to the river would waste time. Harry could tell that Draco was getting worried that the expedition might end in failure. Lusi had not appeared in Harry’s dreams, and Harry had no words of comfort to break Draco’s
solemn mood.

The island may not have contained any polar bears, but they did discover as they travelled north, that it did hold small herds of reindeer and caribou. They were not surprised to spy a wolf, camouflaged by the surrounding glacier, stalking the reindeer herd. Harry’s appreciation grew immensely for those who lived in these conditions permanently.

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Chapter End Notes

A/N: The following are terms and places mentioned in the chapter that might be unfamiliar to many readers.

Ramora: The Ramora is a silver fish found in the Indian Ocean. Powerfully magical, it can anchor ships and is guardian of seafarers. The Ramora is highly valued by the International Confederation of Wizards, which has set many laws in place to protect the Ramora from wizard poachers. –Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them by JK Rowling——

Uummannaq: http://www.greenland-guide.gl/uummannaq-tourist/turist.htm


Apparsuit: The world’s largest bird cliff, native of Greenland.

All fauna and flora mentioned are native species of Greenland.
They reached the foot of the mountain by late morning, though time had begun to lose its meaning. The sun rose early in the morning and set late at night. They both recognised, in just the few days that they had been there, that the darkness had increased by over a half-hour. Harry couldn’t fathom being there for the two to three months when the sun never rose. They stopped and had a small meal of berries and warmed-up left over soup. They each removed a layer of clothing; they could each still see their breath, but they seemed to be acclimatising to the persistent cold. A small breeze from the west blew upon them and was an actual relief from the stillness of the air.

The meal was followed by mugs of tea. Harry would have preferred coffee, but discovered, to his horror, that coffee was the one item he forgot to pack. Draco stared up at the mountain; in some places, it would be called a hill, but here, where the watery horizon went on forever, it was a mountain. A glacier blanketed the west face and half of the south. Draco told Harry that his previous expeditions into mountainous terrain revealed small camps as one climbed up. If they found them, they would likely be in caves or under overhangs.

Harry stood up as the breeze turned more forceful, its direction now coming from the north. He continued drinking his tea and began to feel uneasy. He was sensing something, a hint of something he hadn’t felt for days: magic.

Draco rose to his feet and suggested that they begin to climb. However, for the first time on the trip, Harry suggested they walk around to see the other side. Draco looked at Harry questioningly, recognising that their usual pattern of Harry just following Draco’s directions had been broken. The corners of Harry’s mouth turned up. “What is it?” Draco said, trying not to sound too hopeful.

“Magic, Draco, I feel magic. It’s not coming from the top, but somewhere from the east,” Harry said. He stood still and closed his eyes, trying to understand where the few thin tendrils captured by the gusts were coming from. “North-east,” Harry whispered, and then opened his eyes.

Draco’s eyes widened. The magical campfire was immediately put out, and the lunch remainders were packed away. They slipped on their protective gloves and made haste for the east side of the mountain.

They struggled against the gusts of wind as they began their afternoon trek over the frozen earth, and had only walked for a mile when Draco stopped mid-stride. Harry once again ran into him as his face and eyes were cast downwards trying to evade the wind. “Look, Harry!” Draco said excitedly. “There’s a path.” His gloved finger pointed to a foothill of the mountain, where Harry could now see a deep crevice. He would have never noticed the path, as it looked like the rocky terrain they were currently walking on, but then he saw it was crushed rock, and every ten meters or so, large granite boulders stood on either side.

Despite the wind and the increase of the grade, their strides quickened. Harry smiled to himself, knowing that if he weren’t there, Draco probably would have been running. As they neared the crevice, the wind subsided, being blocked by the mountainous rocks. The large gap was wide enough for one to walk through comfortably. Once they were near enough, it looked to be a narrow canyon caused by a split in the hill. The layers of compressed rock overwhelmed both of them. Unlike the path in the glacier, which was whites and blues, this was deep brown with strips of green, black, and rust. Veins of bluish-green and pink sparkling crystals ran like branches of trees throughout. The path was smooth, but the height increased. Curves stopped them from viewing any scene ahead, but both jerked their heads up when a shadow passed overhead and the sun was briefly obscured.
“Can you feel it?” Harry asked. He was sure they were at the heart of the small mountain, as the walls of rock were at there highest. “It’s fucking pure, Draco, I’ve never felt anything close to it. Not even at Hogwarts.”

Draco gave warning that he was stopping by raising his hand up. He turned around, and his smile was brilliant. “Yes, I’ve never been able to feel it like this before. I always had to cast spells.”

The tip of Harry’s tongue ran over his dry lips. “Hell, you can almost taste it. Let’s go.”

Draco spun back around and they walked even faster. “Stop!” Draco yelled. He stepped forward two steps and then moved to the side. The gap had ended.

“Merlin, Malfoy, what the hell is it?” Harry asked as they gazed down the open path leading to an almost completely sheltered pebbled beach. To the left of the shore was a small hillside covered in mounds of rocks.

“Burial site,” Draco whispered in awe.

They scampered down the path, barely taking notice of the vegetation that covered the hillside. They both jumped from large rock to large rock near the bottom until their feet finally landed on the small smooth stones. What had looked to be a small cove from above suddenly seemed expansive. The rock shoreline went deep into the overhang of the mountainous cliff.

“Careful,” Draco said and pointed down at their feet. There were pieces of matted straw strewn about. “Woven baskets,” he added, as he stepped around the pieces.

Harry didn’t have to ask where they were going; he knew the burial site was foremost in Draco’s mind. The bones, Harry knew from the books Draco had lent him, would reveal the history of who these people, these Dragon Riders, were. His legs being longer, Draco easily made it up the first rock on the left edge of the cove. He then helped pull Harry up, both being careful not to step into the lapping water. From there, they hopped from rock to rock until they reached the slanted hillside covered in oval mounds of rocks.

Draco was panting; they were both out of breath. “As much as I want to get started, I need to take some pictures and then we need to review the procedures.” Draco withdrew a camera and began clicking away as he recited the procedures. “Levitate one rock at a time and mark it as you set it aside. We need to return every stone to its original position,” Draco said between breaths.

Harry was bent over holding onto his knees, still trying to gain his breath. “Got it, and then we stop at the first sight of bone. But why are they above ground?”

“Come on, Potter, put your Auror brain to work,” Draco said snidely as he set down the camera and removed the flask of water from his rucksack.

Harry looked up and stuck his tongue out at him. “Give me a minute,” he said. He wanted to hex Draco as he heard him counting to sixty. “Okay, the ground is frozen, but they could have used magic…unless, they couldn’t control how big the hole was.”

“So far, so good, keep going,” Draco encouraged.

Harry closed his eyes for a moment, trying to think why wizards couldn’t control the amounts of magic. “Wands!” he burst out. “They didn’t have wands.”

“Good enough,” Draco said. “The Shaman and the leader of the group might have, but they were a rare commodity centuries ago, and I doubt there was a wand-maker around,” Draco added, between
sips of water. He handed the flask to Harry.

“Okay, I’m going to start with the top one. You start with the one closest to it. I’ve counted three dozen. I’d like to uncover at least six today.”

Harry nodded and put the lid back on the flask. They walked to the top mound of rocks on the hillside. They set their rucksacks down nearby and each slowly removed the first rocks from their respective piles. Harry watched the expertise of Draco in action; he was methodical, and his wand movements precise. He was significantly faster than Harry was, but Harry knew that Draco wasn’t interested in speed, but in the results.

It had only been ten minutes when Harry heard Draco mumble and then grumble, “Male, late twenties, oh shit, shit, shit!”

“What is it?” Harry asked as he carefully set down the rock he had been levitating.

Draco stepped over to the grave Harry was working on. “Do you mind? I need to know now,” he asked, as he began removing the rocks. Soon Harry saw the first bone appear. Draco didn’t stop, but continued until the full skeleton was in view. Even Harry could see the man died from a broken neck. “Fucking hell!” Draco yelled.

“What?” Harry yelled back.

Draco shook and looked over to Harry. “Sorry, not directed at you. These are Veela-wizards, Potter. Just like the ones in the Pyrenees.”

“How can you tell?” Harry asked, looking at what appeared to be a normal male skeleton. He thought he knew it was male from Draco’s discussions with him on bone length and density, but he really wouldn’t stake his life on it.

“Look at the shoulder blades, they are elongated and there is an extra large vertebrae right here. In a female, you would see more definition of the actual wings. The males don’t transform.”

Harry stood there looking in amazement at what Draco was pointing out to him. “What’s he holding?” Harry asked as he saw a something in the wizard’s grasp.

Draco removed more of the rocks. It was a small knife, much like some of the ones Draco had in his collection at home. “This is different,” Draco said slowly. “Ah, it’s to shuck shellfish with.”

“Not to remove babies?” Harry joked.

Draco growled at him. “No, the one I found was next to where a Shaman was buried. He wouldn’t have been buried with the rest. Somewhere around here is another burial site for the Shamans and any tribal leaders that perished.”

“So do want to uncover the rest of these?”

Draco reached across and batted Harry on the head. “Of course, you git; with my luck there will be a female and shoot my theory all to hell.”

Harry sighed. “Draco, now might be a good time for you to let me know what your theory is.”

Draco picked up his rucksack and withdrew a fur blanket. He laid it down and sat upon it. “Have a sit, Potter, this will take a few and I don’t want to talk while working. It’s too easy to make a mistake.”
Harry sat down and pulled his knees close to his chest. The gusts of wind seemed to have found them once again. He watched as Draco searched through his bag and pulled out a pipe. Harry coughed.

“Will it bother you?”

Harry laughed. “No, I just wasn’t aware that you had one.”

“Oh, well I only smoke once in a while and then only outside. Mother and Chantal don’t approve of the smell,” Draco said as he opened a small pouch and retrieved a large pinch of tobacco. He packed it in tightly and then lit it with his wand as he drew on the stem.

“Part of my research that no one but my father is aware of, is tracing the genealogy of Veela who have mated with a wizard. True Veela are females, but their offspring can be male or female. After a few generations, a female Veela-witch loses her ability to transform. She must be at least one-eighth and you can visibly see the differences in their bones. It is the males that are the most curious, as they pass the traits we see before us down directly. They don’t diminish. You can tell from the bones, whether any male has Veela blood in his ancestry.”

Draco stopped and released a few rings of smoke. The wind quickly dispersed them.

“But, Draco, I know Fleur has males in her family and they don’t seem to be getting pregnant,” Harry asked, bewildered.

Draco nodded. “That’s the mystery, isn’t it?”

Harry chuckled. “Yeah, that and what gives them that capability when it does, or rather did, happen?”

Draco rested his pipe on his knee, a wry grin passed over his face. “They inherit it from the pure Veela in their lineage. A pure Veela is more bird than human. She can transform into a human, but given the choice, she will behave more like a bird. She lays eggs and they hatch. She has asexual reproduction. When mated with a wizard in her human form, though, she will produce a baby like any other witch.”

Harry shook his head. “I don’t get it. Why would the male have this trait?”

“Survival of the species, Potter. Remember, you were the one who said that life struggles to survive and will adapt. I believe that is what happened. This ability to produce was passed onto the males as well as the females. The question is what triggers it and why don’t we see it happening now?”

“Do you have any theories?”

Draco brought the pipe to his lips, looked down upon the cove, and then up to the cliff above them. “I had an inkling before, and now I think I’m right. Isolation. The site in the Pyrenees was extremely remote, though maybe not as remote as this.” Draco laughed. “Somehow, the Veela blood recognises that survival is at stake. I think it must take more than a wizard going on a trip or the like, but a true knowledge that one is isolated and might never make it out alive could trigger it. I’m guessing here, but that is my hypothesis.”

Harry’s gloved finger traced lines through the fur. His Auror mind, as Draco put it, was engaged. “Why would a pure Veela mate with a wizard?”

“Excellent question, Potter. I’m impressed,” Draco said and somehow did not sound
condescending. “Again, survival of the species. The Veela have been around longer than most magical species, and that is because they learned to reproduce a variety of ways. With the Veela type of asexual reproduction, the offspring are all clones of the mother. This is okay if the line is strong, but if an unfavourable mutation occurs, the whole line is in jeopardy. If she is capable of passing her genes down by another method, sexual reproduction, her line survives. There are plants and some animals that do this. In fact, most of the plants we see on this island reproduce asexually, as the conditions are not favourable for germination or cross-pollination. However, many of them still do produce seeds and once in awhile, the wind will carry pollen to another of its kind, and germination will occur if there is any soil where the seed falls.”

“Neville,” Harry spoke the name aloud. “That is why you’ve been talking with Neville.”

“Yes, Professor Longbottom,” Draco drawled. “Slayer of the snake and Herbology geek.”

Harry laughed, despite not wanting too. There was still one question that needed to be answered, but he waited until Draco finished with his latest set of smoke rings.

“Draco, what got you interested in Veela?”

Draco’s eyes focused on Harry. To Harry, they once again appeared to be coloured silver. An almost bashful expression Harry had never seen on Draco’s face emerged.

“One line of the Malfoy men has this trait.”

Memories of the remarks Draco used to spout in his youth sprung forward. “Do you have this trait?” Harry asked cautiously.

Draco nodded. “Yes, and if you saw the Malfoy family tree displayed, you could trace the line.”

“The third limb,” Harry stated.

“The third limb,” Draco repeated. “That and quite a few marriages across all three lines.”

Harry quickly brought his hand to cover his mouth and turned away. He couldn’t control his shoulders from shaking as he tried to stifle the laughter. The irony of Lucius and Draco Malfoy not being pure-bloods was too much for him.

“Think it’s funny, Potter?” Draco asked sarcastically. Harry cringed at the tone; it reminded him of the Slytherin boy he knew at Hogwarts.

Harry shook his head. He counted to twenty to calm himself down. “No, Draco, I don’t think it’s funny, but I do think we’d best get off this island soon.”

Draco coughed. “Why, Harry? Do you plan on having sex with me?”

Harry choked on the little saliva he had in his mouth. “No! Fuck no! It just seemed funny that we are as remote as one can get, and you are part Veela, which, you have just enlightened me, means you can get pregnant.”

Draco extinguished his pipe and put it away. He stood up and Harry did the same.

“Look, Harry, even if we were stranded here, it would still take you fucking me to make that happen, and I don’t see that in our future. Do you?”

Harry sighed, knowing he had either upset Draco and/or insulted him.
“No, Draco, I don’t.”

Draco folded the fur skin and put it back in his bag. “Then I don’t think we have anything to worry about.”

Harry lay in bed, thinking over what had transpired during the day. It seemed so long ago since they had awakened by the stream and packed up. They should have been celebrating tonight; instead, hardly speaking a word, Draco had worked on his drawings and notes, and then gone to bed. He was tired too, but still he felt the excitement of the discovery. They had ended up uncovering twelve of the Veela-wizards and minor artefacts that were buried with them. Some had spears for fishing, others knives for cleaning animals and skinning them. Overall, it revealed a tough life for the previous occupants. They all seemed to have died young, even by Muggle standards. The toughest grave was the last one. It was of a young boy Draco guessed wasn’t more than twelve. They stopped for the day on that discovery, both thinking of their own sons, and set up their camp for the next few days. They placed the tent far back from the shore, under the overhang from the cliff where the feel of magic was at its strongest.

Harry blew the candle out, turned on his side facing Draco, and fell asleep. He had barely closed his eyes when the images appeared fast and furious. The sky seemed to be blazing with lights of green, blue and pink. Harry had seen the Northern Lights before, but nothing compared to what he was envisioning now.

“You both did well today, Harry,” came the voice of Lusi.

Harry looked around. He wasn’t on a cloud this time, but on the shore right outside the tent door, yet he couldn’t see her.

“Your bird is sad,” she stated.

“Yes, I know, and I also know why you call him a bird,” Harry replied.

“It is your responsibility to care for him, Harry. He will never ask you to. I sense great pride in him.”

Harry laughed. “Yes, he does have that.”

He heard the dragon snort and felt a great warmth around him. “Do not belittle his situation. He is of a noble race; he comes from the original Dragon Riders. They were very brave and honourable wizards.”

“But why are you speaking with me and not him?” Harry asked curiously.

“Because you have the magical gift to understand me, just as you once understood what the snakes had to say.”

Harry’s heart darkened, he thought he had rid himself of Voldemort’s influence on his body. He gazed back up at the sky, with its wispy dancing lights; he wanted to touch its beauty and diminish the feeling starting to course through him.

“No, it did not come from him; you inherited it naturally. It is not related to being a Veela-wizard. There were only a few that could talk with the dragons and they were usually the tribal leaders and Shamans. They could, of course, share the gift, but most never did.”
“Why not?”

Harry felt another burst of warmth blow past him. “Power, it’s always about power, isn’t it?” she asked rhetorically.

“I would share it with Draco,” Harry declared.

“Good, then why don’t you bring him out here to meet me? He, after all, has shared so much of his life with you, and I must say I am disappointed that you did not reassure him when he needed it most.”

It was Harry’s turn to snort. “I’m sorry, Lusi, I don’t understand.”

“Males,” she groaned. “The wizard admitted that he was capable of becoming pregnant, and you seemed to think it was funny.”

Harry took a deep breath, it was the first time he noticed he couldn’t see it in the air. “I didn’t…I don’t…hell. I don’t think any less of him for it. It’s different, but….”

“But what, Harry? You don’t think of him as a freak?”

Harry felt the low blow in his gut. He knew exactly how Draco must be feeling. “Fuck, I blew it.”

“Yes, and I would prefer you watch your language while speaking with me, Dragon Rider.”

A single memory came to the forefront, one of Albus Dumbledore reprimanding the Dursleys for their poor manners. Is that what he was doing? He was well-mannered at Hogwarts, and at work, but this wasn’t work, this was…this was Draco’s work…Harry sighed, he knew better. “My apologies, Lusi. I will go get Draco now.”

Harry didn’t know if this was a vision or a dream, but as he looked upon a sleeping Draco after he lit the candle, he knew it didn’t matter. He wanted to share whatever this was with him. “Draco, Draco, wake up,” Harry said softly as he touched his bare shoulder.

“Potter? What is it?” Draco mumbled, blinking his eyes open.

“Come outside with me, I want you to speak with Lusi. I can’t see her, but she’s out there,” Harry whispered.

Draco’s eyes opened further. “Harry, are you okay?”

“I’m fine, come on, the Northern Lights are out tonight too,” Harry replied and grabbed Draco’s hand in his, pulling him out of bed.

“Wait, we’re starkers,” Draco said as Harry dragged him through the tent entrance.

Harry laughed. “Draco, this is a dream. You are in my dream.”

“And you have me naked? Oh, Morgana….” Draco mumbled as the Glacier Dragon stood on the shore, towering above them.

“No, my sweet bird, Lusi is my name.”

Harry tried releasing Draco’s hand, but the fingers squeezed his tighter.

“I am truly honoured, Lusi,” Draco said and bowed before her.
She snorted and blasts of warm steam enveloped them. “As am I, Draco Malfoy. It has been centuries since the island has been blessed with a Dragon Rider and a Cock.”

“A what?” Harry asked, trying not to giggle. He knew he had already offended Draco earlier.

“A cock, Harry, you know, a male bird,” Draco whispered, squeezing his hand tighter. Harry sensed that Draco was both in awe and a bit scared.

“Oh.”

They both stood on the pebbled beach with their heads strained, looking up at the spectacular dragon before them. She waved her long neck as if stretching, and her white iridescent wings expanded before she folded them and lay down before them. “You have questions, Draco, of which I will answer a few, but first you must understand something about your partner next to you. I watched you sulk this evening, and my heart broke for you. As Harry must learn to completely trust you, you must learn to trust him. His heart is large and he holds no malice or thought of you being any less of a wizard because of your Veela background. Isn’t that right, Harry?”

Harry glanced over to Draco. “She’s like a mum, but she is right, Draco. I don’t think of you as a freak. In fact, I think it is incredible that you have such a noble background.”

“Really?” Draco asked sceptically.

Harry nodded. “Really.”

“Draco, you may ask two questions each night I visit, so plan them carefully.”

Draco finally released Harry’s hand and stepped forward a few steps. “Where are the Shamans and tribal leaders buried?”

“Behind you, but you cannot enter tonight.”

Harry and Draco both turned around, and for the first time noticed a large opening above the overhang. It was a cave.

“You will know when you are allowed to enter my lair. One more question, now.”

“What happened to the Dragon Riders? Why did they go dormant?”

“Ah, those are actually two questions, but I will allow it. There are two ways for the dormancy to occur. The first is if too many are in a colony. If this occurs, the Rightful Heir is given a few members to start another colony, far away from the first. The second way is if they encounter females. A witch is the preferable way to reproduce, as there are many dangers for a Cock in bearing children.

“As to the Dragon Riders who lived here, they died from a Muggle disease. It was brought from the large island. The Shaman himself was the cause. He went to gather ingredients for his potions and was exposed to the infected. Only the leader survived and he died soon afterwards. The dragons flew to the east and that is where I believe you found another colony. It was unfortunate that colony was already decimated as there was no one to care for the dragon eggs.”

Harry and Draco both looked at each other questioningly and then back to Lusi. She lumbered up to her standing position and then lowered her head next to theirs. “That would be another question,” she said and then with a massive flutter of her wings she flew up into her cave. “Good night, Harry and Draco,” she said as the opening to the cave disappeared.
They both rushed back into the tent as they started to feel an immediate chill after she left. Draco crawled back in bed, shivering. Harry did the same.

“Unbelievable, fucking unbelievable” Draco whispered, sounding like a boy who got everything he wanted for Christmas.

Harry grinned to himself and blew out the candle, but not before casting a Warming Charm on both of their beds.

The morning of the seventh day, they woke up early and began to pack away their belongings and the few artefacts they would take home with them. It was going to be a long walk back to the centre of the island, where they expected the crevice in the glacier to appear. Harry could tell Draco was disappointed. Lusi had returned and answered his questions for two nights in a row. She told him how she and the other Glacier Dragons had survived. Without Dragon Riders to care for their eggs and keep them warm, their mothers and grandmothers laid them in nests of other dragons, because a Glacier Dragon died after laying her eggs. Very few survived after being hatched, as the surrogate mother was not likely to care for them. Those that did survive were born with the memories and instincts of their biological mother. Once they were strong enough to fly great distances, they would migrate to their native lands, seek out a mate, and then wait for a Dragon Rider to appear. It had been centuries, and now only four of their kind survived. The other female was in the Himalayas, and Lusi was obviously not fond of her.

Harry watched as Draco would glance up at the steep mountainside, hoping to see the cave entrance appear. Harry admitted he hoped it would too, but even if it didn’t, he had to admit he’d an incredible time on the island. It was an adventure, but also he had learned so much from Draco and Lusi about magical history. Moreover, he would never forget the short flight Lusi took them on during the early sunrise. That alone was worth the whole trip.

Harry had climbed on first and Draco had followed, holding onto Harry for dear life. It reminded Harry of the one broom ride they took together, but then they were fleeing death and now they were embracing life. High over the island they soared, and for the first time, they discovered where they were. Upernavik Island was to the south-east of Cock Island. Harry recognised Qaarsorsuaq Mountain from high up. Lusi spoke to them of her flights, and explained that at seven years a dragon could take a wizard upon her back and at ten could take two. During wars in ancient times, it was common for two to ride at once, one guiding and defending, while the other cast hexes if wanded or threw spelled spears, hitting their intended marks.

The tent was finally placed back into Draco’s bag. Draco walked the cove making sure there was no sign of their ever having been there. The Pyrenees site, which was much larger and contained a plethora of artefacts, was still being excavated by students like he once was, trying to learn all they could about their magical heritage. No one would be coming back here but him, and maybe Harry or possibly Scorpius in the future.

Harry sat on a rock, after first warming it a bit. He nibbled on the last of the blueberries of the season. He could already tell the temperatures would be dropping steadily soon. Right now, though, he loved the autumn crispness. He thought of home and how a few warm days or weeks were still possible. He daydreamed of sitting on the porch, watching the leaves fall as he drank his large mug of coffee. He was sucked out of his thoughts as a jolt of unease coursed through his system, and he felt the ground below him shift and then begin to shake. He tried to stand, but his legs were useless as the earth below him rumbled. He could hear Draco yelling in the distance, his voice seemed so far away, “To the east! Look to the east!”
Harry’s head jerked to his right, and over the cove’s protection wall the skyline of morning grey was shot with blasts of red, green, and gold. He stumbled over to where Draco was on the shore and together they watched in horror. This wasn’t nature’s doing, it wasn’t Muggles, it was magic. Even from miles away, Harry knew that Stunning spells and Killing Curses were being cast. The sky filled with the lightning bolts of colours, and the air was disturbed with sounds that carried like thunder.

Behind them, small rocks began to tumble down the cliff. They both spun around and watched in awe as granite stairs formed to an open cave. A voice screamed in his brain, “Harry, I’m coming home!”

Harry grabbed Draco’s hand and they climbed the heavy hewn stairs. “She’s coming, Draco, she’s coming,” Harry panted. Draco’s longer legs were faster and he coerced Harry to climb quicker than he thought he could manage.

They reached the entrance gasping for breath. Before they could see inside, their attention was hijacked by the screeching in the air. They could see her trying to fly, her wings were torn, and her claws held something in their grasp. As she neared, they saw the blood pouring from open wounds, and she released what she held and it fell onto the shore. It was a man. Harry knew it was Vilhelm, and he knew by the landing that he was dead. Lusi tumbled past them and into the cave. “Hurry,” she cried, “Hurry.”

Both were startled to hear her speak, but still they raced into the cave. It was massive and covered in ice. They didn’t have time to look around as their focus was on attending to the dragon, trying to be brave as she tended her wounds. She lay in a bed of native cotton grass. “Harry, not much time. There were poachers, dozens of them. Vilhelm fought bravely, but they killed him. You must take care of my egg; it is the only way out. Oh, Dragon Rider, I’m so sorry.”

Harry’s legs carried him over to her face; he knew she was past any care he could give to her wounds. The blood stained her white and blue scales. “Lusi, we will. We will care for your egg. We promise. I’m so sorry, my beautiful friend,” he wept as he petted her scaled head.

She snorted. “No time for sentimentality, my friends. You need to survive on this island. In the back of my cave, you will find a cavern; that is where the diaries of those past lie. You will find your answers there.” Her coal black eyes rolled around until she spotted Draco. “Cock, get to work, gather my blood. It is precious and you will need it when your time comes. Collect it now before I die.”

Draco immediately went to work; he Summoned empty vials, and filled them as he stroked her bloodied, charred side. The belly wounds were deep, her flesh and bones were exposed. She turned on her stomach, wrapped her tattered wings around her, and groaned. Harry and Draco looked at each other as they watched her eyes lose their light of life, she gave one last snort, and steam filled the cave. Before they could catch their breath, her body dissipated into fine crystals of ice.

Harry was still on his knees; he looked at his open palm and four dragon whiskers lay across them. His gaze slowly moved to where Draco stood. He was covered in blood and Harry was sure there were tears mixed in with the red liquid on his face. Their eyes met as the reality of what had just happened set in, and they both looked down at the large blue-marbled dragon’s egg. *Fuck.*

tbc…
Unexpected Lives

Christmas Eve, 2017

Harry sat in the chair by the fire in the eastern corner of the cavern. The magical portal looked out into misty darkness that enveloped the land. The long exhale of air revealed the frostiness of the temperature within the space. This was his spot, the one where he waited to see the sun rise. But it didn’t; they were now in the months of eternal darkness.

Draco was sleeping soundly in his bed, surrounded by frozen stalagmites. Draco had picked the spot for his sleeping quarters last month; it was away from Harry. He wasn’t sure if Draco had done it because the area gave a sense of privacy or if Draco didn’t want to spend more time next to Harry than he had to. Harry spent hours contemplating the changes in the blond wizard.

On that day, they had quickly discovered the cavern behind Lusi’s lair. It appeared to be a solid wall of glacier ice, but Harry could feel the magic behind it. It took both of their blood to open it: one drop from a Dragon Rider and one from a Veela-wizard. The cavern was immense; it seemed as if the inside of the mountain had been carved out. The walls were made of the thick ice, and the floor of granite. Geologically, it made no sense to either of them, but that was not what caught their attention. The space, as tall as the mountain, was filled with great columns of frozen ice, formed into pillars. With every step, the cavern echoed. All around seemed to be areas where people had congregated, some for sleeping, some for eating, and some for preparing food and making weapons. Draco immediately migrated to a solid raised block in the middle of the room. A skeleton lay across it, and to their horror, they saw an infant’s bones resting inside the wizard’s. A long carved bone knife protruded from between two ribs on the left side of the adult wizard. The far south wall contained translucent drawers of ice where more skeletons lay.

Woven baskets contained treasures of the naturally occurring gemstone, Greenlandite. They had been highly polished, and strands of beads were still intact. One basket they both found highly amusing; it was filled with penis-shaped scrimshaw. Draco admired the pieces made from fossilised walrus tusks and whalebones. Harry was sure his cheeks turned bright red when Draco explained that they weren’t for decorative usage. For Draco, though, the major treasure was the diaries he found written by the Shamans and the tribal leaders. They were in ancient Veela script and Harry feared it would take all eleven years for Draco to transcribe them.

The first few days, they had spent in silence, both trying to deal with the knowledge that they would be stranded on the island for more than ten years. Harry immediately took charge of the egg, doing his best to remember everything Hagrid and Charlie had ever mentioned about dragon eggs. He put it in his cauldron and kept a perpetual warming fire below it. Draco had brought a few books on dragons, but they had scant information on raising one. Harry hoped the diaries would contain more.

They both knew that the length of the darkness outside was increasing daily. They would need supplies. They collected the rest of the berries, sorrel and other plants that could be used for cooking. Fish and shellfish were set aside in an area dedicated to keeping supplies in a frozen state. Yes, they could replicate the food, but both felt they needed enough, just in case…In case of what, Harry wondered now.

From his bed, Draco released a moan and turned over. He was covered in numerous furs and had taken to wearing pyjamas recently. Harry wasn’t sure if it was the darkness that had caused the change in Draco, or if he was suffering from depression. He spent most of his waking time either transcribing books or sitting by the western portal, writing letters to Scorpius. They barely talked
anymore, and when Draco did, it was to instruct Harry on what he was learning about the island and how to survive. Draco insisted that everything be kept neat and in its place.

The most memorable lesson was when they left the cave and killed a seal. The fish did not contain enough fat to sustain the energy they spent by keeping warm in the cavern. They needed the richer meat, laced with fat. The shore was now frozen and the icebergs that had happened to be drifting by were caught in place. There were certain times when the creaking sound of the ice shifting made them both shiver; the sound was too lonely, too haunting.

The wildlife of the Arctic made its presence known. They saw their first polar bear a few days before. They considered killing it, but neither really wanted to. They would have enough food for the next few months, if they added another seal and reindeer.

Harry feared for Draco, he tried to get him to talk about home, about Scorpius, about anything, but Draco refused. He either ignored the questions or changed the subject. More often than not, he just went back to bed and slept. What Harry noticed most was that Draco appeared bedraggled. His hair was growing longer and thicker, and always seemed dishevelled; this wasn’t the man that Harry knew, or thought he knew.

“Tempus,” Harry whispered. It was almost midnight. His heart was breaking thinking of his family tonight. He missed his kids and he knew they must think him dead. Ginny would survive, but he never wanted this for her, for them, any of them. He could imagine that, between Kingsley and Ron, Malfoy Manor had been searched for any trace of where they might be. Draco had brought most of the maps with him, but there were still hints left here and there, and Ron knew which legend they were attempting to go after. However, the hope of being found was not worth thinking about. The Secret Keeper was dead and buried on the hillside with the others, and Lusi was dead. Her egg, still being kept warm, would hatch in the spring. If they were lucky.

Harry removed the fur blanket covering his legs. While he could still see his breath, he wasn’t cold. The temperature was probably at freezing, but he had grown used to it. He lowered the fire and walked over to check on Draco. His eyelids were twitching and his mouth scowling. Harry cast a small Warming Spell and walked across the room to his own bed, stripped off his clothes, and slipped between the sheets. There would be no presents tomorrow morning, no children tearing the wrapping off gifts and screaming with joy, no house filled with red hair. For the first time in over three months, he wept.

The sound of the ice shifting, followed by the howl of an Arctic wolf, brought Harry out of a deep sleep and into a feeling of instant awareness. He let the feeling of panic diminish, while calmly telling himself that there was nothing wrong. But there was something wrong, he just couldn’t pinpoint it, and then it became clear. Draco was not in his bed. Harry lit every candle in the cavern with one swipe of his wand. Draco was gone. Harry leapt out of bed, throwing on his clothes, boots, hat and an extra fur. He stumbled over to Draco’s bed and saw the parchment with script that hardly seemed to come from Draco’s quill.

**Harry,**

*I am sorry, but this is for the best. I cannot, and will not, be a further burden to you. I know you do not blame me for what has happened, but I do blame myself. I cannot add to it by causing you further grief. You have been a wonderful friend, and I say that with joy, as I think of us as friends now. I wish you the best.*

*You will not have to wait over ten years now, only seven. However, I do ask one favour. When you do finally make it home, please give Scorpius the letters I have written for him. I do hope that you will be kind to him and tell him of our adventure.*
Goodbye, my friend,  
Draco Malfoy

Harry rushed out of the cavern, into the cave, and down the stairs. He knew Draco couldn’t have gone far. Harry had set the Protection Spells himself, and he would have been alerted if Draco had moved beyond them, or if he had tried to take them down. The frigid air hit his lungs with his first breath out of the cave’s entrance. It was too cold and too dry to even snow. Harry pulled down his fur hat and wrapped the scarf around his face. With wand held high, he stopped at the bottom of the stairs, stood perfectly still, and closed his eyes. He was desperately trying to feel Draco’s magic, his signature, amongst all of the other magic he continually felt while in the cavern. It was there, but just barely.

Harry followed the trace, and then a movement caught his eye; a polar bear was on the hill of the dead. Its great paw struck at something, rolling whatever it was back and forth. Harry saw a glint of platinum hair in the moon’s light. He aimed for the bear’s heart and cast the strongest Stunning Spell he knew. He watched in horror as the bear began to stagger and was about to fall on Draco. He didn’t know if it would work, but “Wingardium Leviosa,” tore from his lips. The giant white bear floated above the still body. Harry ran as fast as he could to Draco and dragged him away from where the bear would hit the ground. He let the bear go, picked up the stiff body, and rushed across the frozen shore, up the stairs, and back into their cavern.

He laid Draco on his bed, while he Transfigured Draco’s cauldron into a bathtub and filled it with water, which he warmed. Slowly, he caught his breath back as he peeled the blanket from Draco’s body. One scan of his wand told him there was a slow heartbeat, even if the pulse was not registering; his own was probably off the scale. He couldn’t try a Rennervate until Draco’s body temperature had risen.

“You fucking idiot, Malfoy,” Harry yelled. “Don’t you dare die on me! You can’t die on me! I don’t care if it’s ten years. I do not want to tell your son you died,” Harry cried out as Draco’s shirt came off. His body was blue. He pulled the boots, socks, and trousers with pants off, and then picked Draco up, setting him in the warm water. It was then he saw what Draco was hiding, what Draco did not want to burden him with, what Draco felt was horrible enough to want to take his own life for: Draco’s lower stomach was protruding. “Fucking h-hell, M-malfoy,” Harry stammered. His hand reached down into the waters and felt the hard bump. “How?” Harry whispered, but there was no response.

He continued warming the water, and eventually the bluish pallor faded. Draco wasn’t waking up, but he was alive. Harry was about to cast Rennervate, but he had no idea what the effect would be on the foetus Draco was carrying. He lifted Draco out of the water, laid him on a blanket of fur, and dried him. Draco’s body began to shiver. Harry cast a spell on his bed, enlarging it. He picked up the limp form again, this time struggling as the adrenaline rush had subsided, and set him down on the warm sheet. He removed his own clothes, and lay down beside him. The candles were Noxed; Harry wrapped his body around his shivering friend, and pulled up the fur blankets to cover them.

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Harry blinked his eyes open to see a single candle lit. It took him a moment to register that the warm body he was wrapped around was Draco’s; the long, white hair stuck to his lips should have been his first clue. He felt Draco stir, and he knew he was awake and probably very confused as to why he was in Harry’s bed, naked. Harry’s fingers of his right hand were splayed across Draco’s belly. He gently caressed the soft skin. “How?” Harry whispered.
“The Rightful Heir,” Draco whispered back. “My genes to reproduce were triggered. Because I didn’t mate, and my instincts told me I wouldn’t be with you, the next response of the Veela characteristic kicked in: clonal reproduction.”

“You mean there is going to be another Draco in the world?” Harry asked, trying not relay the humour he found in the situation.

Draco kicked him.

“Yes, thanks to you. You could have just let us die out there, you idiot.”

Any sense of amusement was quickly banished. “No, Draco, I couldn’t. You will never be a burden to me, and neither will your son.”

Draco remained silent. Harry watched the shadows on the ice wall shimmer as the candle flame flickered. “Don’t leave me, Draco. Please don’t leave me here alone. I don’t blame you; I never have. Yes, I miss my family, as you miss yours, but I could never face them in seven years, knowing you died because you thought you were a burden.”

A deep sigh came from Draco. “Okay, I won’t leave you,” he said softly as his hand covered Harry’s on his belly. “I want to name him Dane. Do you like it?”

“Yeah, I do.”

Draco turned on his back, his silver eyes clear and bright. “Harry, thank you,” Draco said, and their fingers intertwined with each other.

“You’re welcome, and Merry Christmas,” Harry responded, and to his own surprise, he kissed Draco on the cheek.

Draco gave a small grin, turned back over and blew out the candle. “Merry Christmas, Harry,” he said, and then they both fell back asleep.

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Not another word was spoken about Draco’s suicide attempt. Draco did share the work he had been transcribing with Harry, and Harry learned that it was more than Draco burdening Harry that had caused the depression: it was genuine fear of the future. The bones of the leader they had discovered were of the last surviving Dragon Rider; his name was Dane. In his lifetime, he had one Rightful Heir, which was customary, and three sons after that with his mate, but all of them had perished during the plague. The Veela reproductive instincts took over in his isolation, and he was pregnant and alone. In addition, it was against custom to produce another Rightful Heir. The custom was enacted because each additional heir took half of his father’s magic with him. The leader, Dane, could not perform the birthing ritual by himself, nor could he survive without his magic, so he took his own life.

Harry understood what the transcription meant, but Draco’s spirits were high and he didn’t believe it was time to discuss the situation. A part of Harry knew deep down what needed to happen in the future, but for now that seed of knowledge was planted deep in his subconscious. Anything could happen between now and then, so that discussion would have to wait. Until then, without spoken words, they shared Harry’s bed, with Harry’s arm wrapped protectively around Draco as he lay on his left side. Harry’s hand covered as much of the ever-growing stomach as he could each night. Harry told himself it was because it brought comfort being next to another person in the loneliness of the situation they found themselves in. He told himself it was to keep Draco warm, and to be
near him if anything happened. However, deep down, he knew that the reasons were much more complex than those he would admit, even to himself.

Spring came at a snail’s pace. The first sunrise in late February, after months of darkness, made them both weep. Each day, the sun stayed a little longer. By late April, when the sun neared the twenty-three hour mark, Lusi’s egg hatched. She was uglier than Harry remembered Norberta ever being, and just as bad tempered. The blue scrappy chick was constantly hungry and spat sparks of fire until she was satisfactorily fed. Her meals consisted of fresh meat; fish was the norm, but rabbit was her favourite. She was growing, though, and that was what was important. By early June, when spring officially made an entrance to the island, she was walking clumsily around the cave.

It was the morning of Draco’s thirty-eighth birthday, the fifth of June, and Harry found his cup of tea next to his bed, steaming hot. He went to the loo, cleaned up, and then dressed lightly. He walked through the cavern to the cave’s edge to find Draco. He spotted him on the shore below, spearing fish. The spears they found in the cavern still held a trace of magic, which they enhanced with their own. They felt no guilt knowing the Muggles did not have the advantage of always spearing the fish they were after.

Harry sipped his tea and watched Draco as Lusi stirred in her nest. While dressed, Draco barely looked pregnant, even though he was in his final weeks. Being over six feet tall and in extremely good physical shape made his condition hardly noticeable. Harry remembered Ginny barely being able to get up from the couch without a helping hand. The admiration Harry held for Draco grew daily. He never heard him complain, and only a few times heard a groan escape from his lips when rising from their bed. They fought when Harry tried to stop him from jumping on the larger rocks. Draco refused to be pampered. Harry understood, and obliged with the hidden request to let him be.

They had many talks, talks they should have had in the preceding years, but their history and stubbornness precluded them from doing so. Harry even found himself laughing at stories about Lucius and his dealings with the Ministry officials of old. He practically fell off the couch when Draco did impressions of him. Draco loved his parents, but he had discovered, as most children do, that they had faults. Draco learned about Harry; in fact, Harry realised at some point, Draco knew more about him than anyone else save perhaps Ginny. The night Harry told Draco about walking to the forest to meet his death, Draco took his one and only shot of firewhisky while pregnant.

They discussed their children and their hopes for them. What they did not discuss were their marriages. Harry wanted to know more about Draco’s open lifestyle, but he never felt comfortable bringing it up, and Draco rarely mentioned Ginny. Harry felt the ache when he thought of her, but its rawness had diminished.

Draco looked up from the shore and waved. Harry waved back and climbed down the granite steps. Lusi looked over the edge, watching him descend. The slope on his right, leading up to the crevice, was covered in yellow poppies and the rocks with lichen. Harry peeked into the woven basket as he reached the shore and saw that it was nearly full. Draco dropped one more fish in it and then let Harry lift it up onto his shoulders to carry it up to Lusi.

“Would you mind feeding her today?” Draco asked as they reached the top step.

“Sure, anything else you want for your birthday?” Harry asked as he set down the basket. “The local shops seem to be out of merchandise just now.”

Draco laughed. “No, just feeding Lusi will be enough. I think I’m going to take a bath.”

Harry finished his morning chore and found Draco still in the bath.
“Are you okay?” Harry inquired as Draco rarely succumbed to the luxury of being in the water for so long.

“Yeah, I just didn’t sleep well.”

Harry pulled up a seat next to the tub. “I know Dane was kicking quite a bit.”

Draco flung drops of water at him with his fingertips. “More than a bit, my back is fucking killing me.”

“Is that all it is?” Harry asked hesitantly.

“I think so, but then again, I’m not the expert. You’re the one who has had three children.”

“I’m not an expert, but I do know that this is the first time I’ve heard you say you didn’t feel well.”

Draco slid further down into the warm water. “I’m fine, Potter. Go see if the eider ducks have laid any more eggs. I fancy an omelette this morning.”

“I’ll make you an omelette if that’s what you want, but first I want you to sit up.”

Draco looked at him quizzically, but did so. Harry moved his seat to the head of the tub and placed his hands on Draco’s shoulders.

“Potter, what are you doing?”

“I’m massaging your back, that’s what I’m doing.”

“Ah, a birthday massage. Well, in that case, go lower and press harder.”

Harry snickered as he did what he was told. It struck him, as he worked his way down Draco’s spine, how well he knew Draco’s back, how the upper muscles had strengthened over the months of their hardship, and how his waist had thickened. He wondered if Draco knew he had a light birthmark near his left shoulder-blade. His fingers pressed into the muscles, lightly at first, and then gradually worked their way into harder manipulations. He laughed when he heard a small rumble sound come from Draco’s mouth.

“What was that?”

Draco sighed heavily. “I think you had better stop.”

“Am I hurting you? I’ve never heard anyone make that sound before, it almost sounded like a trill.”

“Just stop,” Draco said. “It’s a Veela sound.”

Harry jerked his hands away. “A what?”

Draco leant back in the tub and gave him a sly smile. “A Veela sound. Apparently, it is a sound of pleasure to let you know you did a good job. Now please leave and go find some eggs.”

Harry moved his chair back to the side of the tub. “You make a sound when you feel good?”

Draco glared at Harry. “I said pleasure, not just good.”

Harry blinked and then glanced into the water, noticing the erection Draco made no sign of trying to hide.
“Now, either you go collect eggs and leave me to wank, or stay and make yourself useful.”

“How many eggs do you want?” Harry asked as he stood up.

“Three, and take your time,” Draco responded, flinging more drops of water onto Harry.

Harry hurried out of the cavern. He climbed over the lichen-covered rocks and onto the ‘hillside of death’ as they referred to it, where they had spotted the ducks nesting in patches of cotton grass. His mind, though, was not on ducks, but on what his friend was doing in the tub. The close quarters gave them so little privacy, that the only place he could do it was in the loo, the only enclosed area in the cavern. In the first few months, he never thought about sex as they were in survival mode, but now that he knew they could survive, the feelings returned. He was unaware that they had for Draco, too.

Harry thought of those who had lived in the cavern, hundreds of years before. They had no privacy; every move was watched by all present. Even the ritual table in the centre of the room was used not only for delivering the children, but also for those wizards who chose to be bonded for life. Their first act of mating was to be witnessed by all. His daydream was filled with imaginings of the circle of Dragon Riders that would form around the table as the two wizards consummated their bond. He shook his head as he almost stepped on a nest of duck eggs. He took one from each of five separate nests and slowly walked back to the cavern, hoping Draco had found satisfaction.

The tub was gone and Draco was curled up on the bed when Harry returned. A single skin was pulled over him. Harry set down the basket of eggs and rushed over to the bed.

“Draco?”

“It’s time, Harry,” Draco mumbled.

Harry took three quick, deep breaths. “Okay, I’ll get everything ready, can I get you anything?”

Draco shook his head. “Just hurry. This fucking hurts.”

Harry ran to the raised rock platform in the centre of the cavern. He Summoned a small table and the cauldron, which he filled with hot water, and laid a blanket over the centre rectangular stone. “Can you walk?” Harry said as he gathered more small blankets and set them on the table. Finally, he lifted the lid off a basket nearby.

“No,” Draco responded.

Harry reached into the basket and pulled out a vial of dark liquid and the knife they discovered in the previous leader’s ribcage, and set them on the table. They had talked about the procedure when Draco made the translations. The magic should guide Harry to the correct place to make the incision when the incantation was spoken.

Harry walked over to the bed and picked Draco up with the help of a spell, carried him over to the ritual stone, and laid him down. “It’s going to be okay, Draco. I promise you. It will be over soon.”

“’Kay,’” Draco muttered between heavy breaths.

Harry forcefully unfolded the long body. Draco rolled onto his back and winced with pain as he did so. To both their surprise, magical cuffs latched onto his wrists and legs. “Hurry,” Draco cried as he struggled against the restraints.

Harry opened the vial and poured a thin strip of dragon’s blood below the bulge that was
contracting. His fingers spread it across the skin, working it in. The writings had said it would numb the area. Draco stopped fighting the restraints, and stared straight up into the upper reaches of cavern’s ceiling. Harry picked up the knife, brought it to his lips, and whispered, “Rektor.”

He grasped the handle and led the blade edge cross along the path of dragon’s blood. Draco’s mouth opened; no sound came out, but Harry knew it was filled with pain. The skin separated as the knife guided his hand to cut deeper through the muscle. He knew from watching Caesareans before that he had to move the organs around manually, until he reached the womb. He pierced it with the tip of the knife, making a small incision. The water poured out. He set the knife down, reached in, and pulled out the life, squirming in his hands. The tiny baby screamed. It was so small, smaller than his children were, but he was alive, Dane was alive. He lifted the child up and placed it on Draco’s chest. The restraints holding Draco’s wrists released and his hands grasped onto the baby.

Harry lifted the knife and cut the cord. He removed the placenta, setting it in another basket, and then poured more of the dragon’s blood over the wounds. He watched in awe as Draco’s body stitched itself back together again. Harry’s only contribution was placing the organs back in their correct positions. It was only when he saw the skin seal itself that he realised he was crying. He fell to his knees, rested his head next to Draco’s chest, and wept. Long fingers ran through his hair and then stroked his cheek. “You did it,” Draco said.

Harry glanced up at the silver eye staring at him. “We did it,” Harry replied.

Draco gave him a brilliant smile. “Yes, we did.”

Harry composed himself, took the small infant from Draco’s hands, and washed him thoroughly as he squalled. He laid him in a nest of furs and then carefully washed Draco, never paying attention to the parts he was touching where the blood had streamed. The leg braces released, and Harry carried him once again back over to their bed. He could have levitated him, but it just felt right to do this by himself. He brought Dane over to his father, where the infant latched onto a small swollen nipple.

Draco grimaced at first as the baby tried to suckle. Harry sat down on the bed and couldn’t help but watch. Draco patted the space next to him. Harry stripped off his clothes and lay down near Draco with Dane between them. He brought the fur over all of them and then stared back into the silver eyes, which were busy watching the baby. Harry’s finger reached out and stroked the soft cheek as it quivered with every suck, then stroked the cheek of the wizard who gave birth to the little boy. “You are amazing, Draco Malfoy,” Harry said as he released an almost silent cry.

The next few months were among of the happiest Harry had ever experienced in his life. That thought troubled him from time to time, but between caring for Lusi and Dane, he didn’t dwell on his other life, the one going on without him. Draco fashioned a leash for Lusi out of strips of reindeer hide and they walked her on the shore. Dane was carried in a sling against either Harry’s chest or Draco’s. By August, they tired of their safe home and ventured back through the crevice to walk the sections of the island they had visited before. They brought the tent and camped by the stream for weeks on end. Lusi loved the cold-water lake and Dane just remained wide-eyed at the scenery around him. His big blue eyes were slowly changing colour as the weeks progressed.

They visited the south shore where they found walruses in abundance basking in the sunshine. Harry collected fallen tusks, some very old and some new, from the shore. He decided that he needed a hobby for the winter months, and was determined to learn the art of carving ivory while Draco spent his time transcribing more of the books.
The winter ice-sheet, when it broke away earlier in the summer, left them with a polar bear on the island, along with more Arctic wolves than the previous year. The wolf population would die down of its own accord, as the rabbits seemed scarce and the herd of reindeer seemed smaller.

As they packed up to go back to cavern in early September, they saw the migration of the minke whales heading south. The eider ducks were leaving also. Harry took down a caribou with a spear as they neared the mountain path. Lusi enjoyed a meal of the innards as Harry carved up the meat they would save for winter. The skins he rolled up; he would let them tan on the ‘hillside of the dead’.

Dane was a remarkable baby, Harry thought. Rarely did the infant cry, and when he did, either being fed, changed, or entertained by magical floating pebbles, quickly satisfied him. If Dane was extremely upset, then only Draco could calm him. A soft warble came from his throat, much like the one Harry heard the day Dane was born, but this one was melodic. Even Harry found it soothing. The one other item that brought Dane joy was his stuffed bear. Harry had killed a rabbit earlier on their trip, cleaned the hide, and filled it with dried cotton grass. Draco shaped it into a bear and Dane rarely let go of it. Toys would be hard to come by when the boy grew older.

Lusi was slowly getting bigger and her scales were turning a lighter blue; it would be a few years before she would be primarily white.

The return to the cavern brought them a surprise; a grey, Greenlandic dog had somehow made his way to the island. Neither Draco nor Harry could fathom how it had survived. They found him sleeping in Lusi’s nest, barely alive. They had to restrain the dragon from trying to kill the beast that was exactly her size. Dane took an immediate interest in the almond-eyed dog, and there was no decision to be made; the makeshift family now had a pet. Dane took an immediate interest in the almond-eyed dog, and there was no decision to be made; the makeshift family now had a pet. Harry looked around the cavern as they unpacked. This winter they would have more mouths to feed. The dog would be easy, but Lusi eating only live or freshly killed meat was going to be a problem. Dane would still be nourished by Draco. He would never be a chubby baby as Harry’s kids had been, his genes made him long and lanky. Harry had to admit that Draco must have been a cute kid.

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Christmas Eve, 2020

The months and years slowly progressed. Harry was learning his craft, and his scrimshaw pieces decorated the cavern. The item he was most proud of was under their makeshift Christmas tree of reindeer antlers; it was a gift for Draco. He had made a Veela-feathered upper armband and had painstakingly painted it blue using dye made from blueberry skins. For Dane’s presents, he had carved dozens of animals, magical and otherwise. Dane was now two and half years old and speaking like an adult. Harry was sure his other children were never that fluent at that age. Lusi had learned to take short flights and was now feeding herself. That alone was a big relief as the dark months were once again at hand.

Draco was still translating the books and relaying stories of the previous Dragon Riders and the dragons that once called the island their home. The Shamans, he discovered, were competent but some of their means were barbaric in treating those who were injured. He was still unsure if it was intentional or out of ignorance. Those buried on the hillside were members that held high status; the others were left to the sea. The young boy’s skeleton they had found on the first day was the youngest son of the last leader, Dane.
Harry was in his chair by the eastern portal, thinking about his family on this night: his other family. He wondered if James had made Prefect, if Albus had made many friends, and most of all, he wondered if his little girl was now a Slytherin. He was sure they missed him, but by now, three years later, they must have moved on, just as he had. He took a sip of firewhisky and glanced over at Draco, whose arms were wrapped tightly around their son. Dane may have had only one biological parent, but he had two fathers. Harry loved him as much as his own children back in England. In the soft glow of candlelight, Draco looked so young. They were both forty now, and both had begun to have more definite lines around their eyes. Harry’s hair had also begun to grey, his short beard and moustache even more so. He swallowed the rest of the shot in one gulp and poured another. He didn’t know why he was drinking tonight. He hadn’t done so in years, but maybe it was because he felt safe to do so now. They were sealed in their home, and Draco would have sympathy for his headache in the morning. He downed another and for the first time in over three years, he fell asleep in his chair and not in his bed with Draco nearby.

The voice startled him; it sounded familiar, yet childlike. “Harry, Harry, can you hear me?” she asked. Harry stood up on the floating cloud and surveyed the world below. “Up here,” she said.

Harry glanced up and saw the young Lusi soaring overhead. She seemed so proud of herself. She landed next to him; she had grown immensely. “Yes, Lusi, I can hear you.”

“You need to take care of the Cock,” Lusi said as she snorted, and then spat a small spark of flame at him.

“I am,” Harry said defiantly.

“No, you are not!” she screeched in a childish, high-pitched voice, which bored through his head. “He’s in heat and will soon produce another heir. You must not let him.”

Harry fell to his knees. “Are you sure? Does he know?”

“Yes, I’m sure, and he knows. He’s too proud to tell you.”

Harry woke with a startle as the small shot glass shattered on the granite floor. Skee, the dog, lifted his head from the bottom of the bed and wagged his curled, white-tipped tail before settling down again.

Draco shot up to a sitting position. “Harry?” he whispered.

“Yeah, sorry about that, I fell asleep and dropped the glass,” he replied, and then waved his wand cleaning up the mess.

“Everything okay?” Draco asked, eyeing the scene carefully.

Harry removed his glasses and rubbed his eyes. “Yes, but we need to talk.”

“Now?”

“Yes, while Dane is asleep.”

Harry lifted the fur blanket from his legs and carried it over to Draco’s old bed, it was the place where they talked late at night so as not to awaken Dane.

“What is it?” Draco asked as he widened the bed.

They both lay down facing each other. Harry gathered the blankets and covered Draco’s naked
body. “Lusi spoke with me tonight.”

Draco’s eyes widened, they had both been waiting for this moment, it was a sign that she was maturing and not just physically. “What did she say?”

Harry lifted his hand and pushed back the long white strand of hair covering Draco’s eyes. “She said you need to mate.”

“The bitch,” Draco snarled and turned on his back, his eyes focused on the frozen stalagmites surrounding them.

“So, you knew and didn’t tell me?”

Draco gave a short laugh. “Why would I tell you, Potter? Do you think I would let you fuck me? Not in this lifetime, I told you so ages ago.”

Harry watched every move of Draco’s face. He knew what each small muscle movement meant by now. Draco was protesting too much, the twitch at the right corner of his mouth told him so.

“I’m not going to let you do this again. You know what it will do to you.”

“Fuck you! You have no choice. I will have taken almost eleven years away from your family, Harry; I am not going to take you away from them completely.”

Harry was silent for a few minutes. He thought about what Draco was saying. If they had a child together, they would be permanently attached to each other. In seven years, they would not be able to go back to their former lives. They would have a child, or maybe even two, to raise together. It would break both families apart. However, in seven more years, their other children would be gone from their homes anyway. They would only be returning to their wives. It had been a long time since Harry seriously thought about Ginny as his wife. In the beginning he ached for her; he loved her, but now, the longing for her had passed. In two more years, both he and Draco would be officially pronounced deceased, and each family would legally be free to move on.

“I won’t let you do it,” Harry said, firmly again.

Draco rolled back over on his side. “Harry, you are a married, straight wizard.”

“But, Draco, so are you. I don’t see the difference.”

Draco burst out laughing, the maniacal laugh Harry had not heard for some time.

“God, Potter, the difference is I’m not straight.”

Harry knew his jaw had just dropped, but he couldn’t help it. “You…you…you’re gay?”

“Technically, I’m bisexual. I do fuck my wife, or at least I did.”

Harry couldn’t stop his eyes from blinking repeatedly. “And your lovers?”

“Men.”

“Then that’s why that night with Ginny…”

“Exactly, I told you she wasn’t my type.”

“Why didn’t you just tell me?”
Draco released a long sigh. “I didn’t want you feeling uncomfortable. I mean shit, we sleep together.”

“And that doesn’t bother you? I mean, you’re not attracted to me?”

Draco raised a finger to Harry’s lips. “Stop right there. This conversation is now over. We have to live with each other for the next seven years and I am not going to say anything that will destroy our friendship. We need to survive together on this island.”

Harry grasped Draco’s wrist hard, removing the finger from his lips. “No, Draco, we will finish talking tonight. As to whether you are gay, bi, straight, attracted to me or not, it doesn’t matter. We are going to mate.”

A large glob of spit landed on Harry’s cheek at the same time Draco’s knee aimed for his groin. The thick fur covers stopped any damage from being done.

Harry held onto Draco’s wrist, rolled on top of him, and reached for the other. “It’s going to happen, Malfoy. It’s your choice whether you enjoy it or not,” Harry said as he lowered his cheek and wiped the spit onto Draco’s.

A quick bite to Harry’s cheek made him yelp. Harry glanced across the room to make sure Dane was still asleep.

“You don’t need to sacrifice your life for me again, Potter. I could only stomach that once,” Draco snarled as he squirmed under Harry’s weight.

“Maybe I want to,” Harry answered as he continued trying to control the body struggling for release below him.

“No, if you do this, it will be against my will.”

Harry glared into the silver eyes that showed the hate of their youth. “So be it,” Harry replied without emotion. He raised Draco’s arms, grabbed both wrists with one hand, and his other reached for his wand. “Petrificus Totalus.”

Draco’s eyes remained piercing into his in total shock.

Harry rose from the bed, picked Draco up, carried him over to the centre of the cavern, and laid him on the ritual stone. The magical restraints captured Draco’s wrists and ankles. Harry cast a Privacy Spell and then retreated to the shelves of potions. He selected a balm, bringing it back to the table. His mind would not let him think about what he was about to do; what he knew had to be done.

He released the spell. Through clenched teeth, Draco cried, “Don’t do it! God, fuck, please don’t do it, Harry! It won’t work!”

Harry removed his clothes, letting them fall in place. He placed himself on the stone, between Draco’s spread legs. With just his touch to the restraints, Harry moved them to bend Draco’s knees. “I have to, Draco. I’m sorry, but I have to.”

Draco turned his head to the side, facing their bed across the room where his son lay. “I hate you,” Draco whispered as he felt one finger trying to find his hole.

Harry reached down to the ground for his clothes, rolled them up and placed them under Draco’s hips. “I don’t blame you. I would too,” he responded as he breached the tight entrance with his
slick fingertip.

“Don’t, fucking don’t do this. It won’t work!” Draco cried one last time as the finger forced its way into him.

“It’s going to hurt if you don’t relax,” Harry muttered as the second finger found its way in.

Draco lifted his head and spat at Harry again, striking him on the chest. “Fuck you!”

Harry had no idea how his dick had got hard through the ordeal. Maybe it was from being deprived of sex for over three years, for it didn’t seem to care. A third finger squeezed in and he heard Draco whimper. “It won’t work”. Harry could no longer bear to look at him. He knew he was probably doing this completely wrong, but without Draco’s guidance, he could only hope what he was doing was enough. He wiggled his fingers inside Draco’s hole, hoping to stretch it enough to ease the entrance of his dick when it was time. Draco’s back arched and a slight trill came from his mouth.

“I hate you,” Draco repeated again. Harry knew he meant it despite his body's betrayal. But if he had to choose between living with Draco's hatred and being responsible, through his own inaction, for the loss of half of his magic...there wasn't much of a choice. Harry continued with his ministrations until he heard the sound again. He bit his lower lip as he watched Draco’s erection emerge. He withdrew his fingers and reached for the balm, coating his own dick heavily in the lubricant.

Harry moved forward and placed the tip of his cock in the slightly slack entrance. “I’m sorry, Draco,” he whispered and then he forced himself in. Draco groaned and looked away again. Harry stopped himself from just thrusting all the way. Just the feel of his cock being enclosed in the tight space brought back the instinct to want to fuck. He waited for a sign, there was none, so he pushed in further, Draco swore at him again. Sweat dripped from his forehead as he made the final thrust. An ancient spell, Draco had read to him once when discussing the mating ritual, fell from his lips. “Tribuo Vita.”

“Merlin, no,” Draco whispered.

From the tone, Harry knew that wasn’t directed at him. He looked up at Draco and in his peripheral vision, he saw who Draco was talking to. Men dressed in skins and fur surrounded them. Far off in the cavern, a drumbeat began, as did chanting from the men encircling them. Harry wanted to watch them, but his body wanted something different. He grasped Draco’s thighs as his hips flexed forward and back. He wasn’t sure if those around were keeping rhythm with him or if he was with them, but they were in synch.

Draco tried to cry out his objections again, but the trill of the Veela overruled and soon was in cadence with the ghosts around them. Harry knew he was going to climax soon, and the pace increased, he felt the build up that was once so familiar, but then a jolt of magic coursed through him like never before. His vision became even more blurred in a haze of smoke; somewhere in the distance, he heard the words, “Release me.”

Words of old tumbled from his lips, and soon heels dug into his back, forcing him in further. Strong fingers pressed into his biceps, pulling him down. He didn’t resist and his hands caught his weight as he fell forward. Draco’s knees came up to his shoulders. Warm eager lips latched onto his. His mouth opened for the tongue forcing its way in. He kissed back and found himself in a place he had never been before. He should have come, but the moment before climax was sustained; no, his own voice told him, he was reaching higher. The fingers left his arms, and soon circled between their bodies. Harry knew where they were going and he wanted his own hand to be there too. Fingers met, entwined, and then circled the prick needing to be stroked. The chanting
became almost deafening, the trilling now a vibration pulsing through both their bodies, and then his world exploded. Lips that were so lovely to kiss moved away and he felt the bite to his neck, piercing the skin. He knew someone was screaming, and it might have been him, but he didn’t care. He had never felt so whole, so loved, so wanted, so claimed.

His arm gave out and he fell onto Draco’s chest. His other hand, covered in warm liquid, eased out from between them. He was panting and Draco was too. He slowly withdrew from the hole he was afraid that he had abused and he rolled on his side. He was met with another kiss that threatened to make him want to start all over again. Fingers were running through his hair, and only when he realised the singing and beating of the drum had ceased did he open his eyes. Stormy-silver eyes were staring back at him. They expressed too many emotions for him to count, but the overpowering one, was one of desire.

“Why didn’t you tell me?” Draco asked, after ending the long kiss.

“Tell you what?” Harry replied, and then as if they had been long-time lovers, he gave Draco soft kisses across his cheeks and nose. How long he had wanted to do that, he didn’t know, but he guessed it was years.

The tip of Draco’s tongue reached out as Harry’s lips feathered over his. Harry’s own tongue met it and they gently played. “That you were attracted to me,” Draco finally answered.

Harry gave a wry grin in response. “I couldn’t admit it to you if I couldn’t admit it to myself. How did you know?”

The lower lip, that Harry longed to suck on, was drawn in and bitten. “You called the tribe to witness our mating and asked them for their blessing.”

“I what?”

“Oh, just a small detail you left out,” Harry said teasingly. “Why didn’t you tell me?”

“I don’t know. I guess because I never thought it would happen. It’s not just isolation that causes the change in Veela-wizards. The stone is magical, and with the spell, it can force the change.”

Draco’s hand freely explored Harry’s chest and arms. Harry wished he could trill as Draco did, as the touches were so welcomed. “This changes things,” Draco said, as his fingers rubbed over and tweaked the dusky circles.

Harry moaned in response to the continued touches to his nipples. “Yes, it changes everything—our present and our future.”

“You’ve seriously thought about it then?”

Harry nodded affirmatively. “Ever since you told me of the custom, I knew this would happen. The night I found you frozen outside, I knew I didn’t ever want to lose you. It’s been slowly building to this point everyday as I’ve watched you.”

“But at night, in bed, you never….”
Harry smiled at the wizard whose eyes now showed him warmth he never thought possible to be directed at him. Only when he spoke of Scorpius and Dane did they appear that way. “You never did either,” Harry replied, his hand reached behind Draco’s head and pulled him close so they could kiss again.

“Will you fuck me again?” Draco whispered in Harry’s ear the first chance he had after they kissed for what seemed to have only been minutes, but may have been hours.

Harry’s eyes brightened. “On your bed and no restraints.”

Draco laughed as he stood up and pulled Harry across the room with him. “Well, restraints can be fun under the right circumstances.”

Harry pushed Draco down on the bed, laughing as he did so. “Malfoy, don’t tempt me, I can conjure up many reasons why I would like you in restraints.”

“Potter,” Draco said, as he pulled Harry on top of him, “shut up, and let me teach you how to fuck a wizard.”

tbc…
June 5, 2028

Draco and Harry watched with pride as their eldest son rode, perched on the back of Lusi, gliding over the ocean. Dane’s two younger brothers were pulling on their fathers’ caribou suede trousers, asking when they could take a turn. Draco picked up their youngest, Regulus, held him tight as they stood at the cave’s entrance and pointed to Lusi as she picked up another thermal and soared over the top of them. Harry grabbed Siri’s hand and led him down to the shore and up to the ‘hillside of death’ to see if they could catch a glimpse of the dragon. The silver eyes brightened when Harry said that he would take him for a ride the next day, but for today, he had to do his chore of harvesting the shore for scallops and mussels. It was Draco’s and Dane’s birthdays, and both requested Harry’s specialty soup made up of shellfish. The final jar of crowberry jam would be used to spread on the birthday cake. The little flour and sugar they had was replicated only for special occasions. Skee hobbled up the rocks and joined Harry and Siri. He began to howl as the majestic dragon came into view.

Harry couldn’t believe that Dane was now ten. He looked exactly as his father had at that young age, close to when Harry had first met Draco, but the boy’s personality was his own. He was very responsible and mature for being so young; he appreciated that their environment was a harsh one. Harry smiled as Lusi coasted into the cove and landed on the shore. Dane’s long hair rivalled the whiteness of Lusi’s wings. He was a beautiful child. She was a beautiful dragon.

Siri pulled on his hand; he wanted to go see his brother and talk about what it was like to ride the dragon alone. Harry ruffled the boy’s dark hair and told him to go on. Draco and Reg were now on the shore. Reg was hugging his brother’s legs, while Draco gave Dane a fatherly squeeze around his shoulders. Harry took a deep calming breath as he surveyed the ocean before him. The ice sheet had recently given way and newly formed icebergs were floating by en masse. He sat down and withdrew the scrimshaw pipe he had crafted and filled it with tobacco. The rings he produced were good enough to rival Draco’s.

They would be leaving Cock Island in September. They could have left earlier, but the family voted to stay this one last summer, and Draco wanted to have their next child on the island. The boys had known from the beginning what had happened and that their fathers were from another land. Harry knew that Regulus, being only near three, really didn’t understand, but Dane and Siri did. Dane was the most nervous in having just one year to adjust before attending Hogwarts, and both fathers were anxious too. Out here, they were a family who slept together, hunted together, laughed and loved together as one. The boys were natives of the land, and while they were raised with manners, they had a wildness about them. They were survivors.

While he and Draco had discussed returning to the world they left behind, it never seemed quite real to Harry that they would in fact do so. At some point in the last few years, this had become his real life, the previous one was now more like a dream.

“Hey, care to share some of those deep thoughts?” Draco asked as he sat down next to Harry. The boys were all on the shore and rocks gathering mussels, and hauling in the nets filled with scallops.

Harry turned to face Draco and gave him a kiss. Draco took Harry’s pipe, set it down, and wrapped his arms around him, turning the kiss into something more than just a hello. Draco’s lips moved
away, travelled to the blue feather mark on Harry’s neck, and flicked it with his tongue until Harry moaned in his ear. He had made it the night they conceived Sirius. The bite’s result was the mark of a Cock’s mate. Soon a polar bear fur had been Summoned along with a jar of balm, and they were lying down together, stroking each other’s bodies. They laughed as they heard Dane groan at them and yell that he would take his siblings inside the cave. Privacy was not be had on the island, and shielding the children from what they were about to do, was difficult at the least; Dane understood.

The suede trousers and shirts were soon discarded. Harry stayed on his back as Draco rolled on top of him. He rose on his knees as Harry’s fingers found his entrance and circled it teasingly, the other hand rubbing Draco’s lightly furred abdomen which was once again full. “Please,” Draco moaned.

Harry winked at him as his index finger found its way into Draco’s hole. The trill came, and still after all of these years, it never failed to make Harry want to be closer to Draco, inside him, to hold him and love him. He stroked the spot he knew so well to get another Veela response. Draco glared down at him, feigning disgust at his own body’s reactions. “Get over it,” Harry said laughingly as his finger pumped in and out of the hole, “you know your body never lies.”

“Fucker,” Draco said as he reached down and removed Harry’s hand, and guided the hard dick into him. Both released a guttural groan. Draco slowly moved up and down, setting his own pace, given his condition. Harry reached up and stroked the small pink circles on Draco’s chest, which were extra sensitive when he was pregnant. Harry was sure he could make Draco come by just playing with his nipples alone.

Draco leant forward and Harry’s hands moved to grip onto each bicep, one wrapped by a blue scrimshaw band. They panted between thrusts. “Fuck, Draco,” Harry swore as his hips lifted high off the blanket and pounded into Draco’s hole, filling it with his come.

Draco sat back up; his hand was clasped tightly around his own erection, stroking and twisting it hard. Harry watched with awe as the long white hair swayed back and forth, and the silver eyes became half-hidden by lowered lids. “Come for me, Draco, come for me,” Harry commanded. The creamy white liquid soon streamed out in spurts across his chest. Harry’s hand reached up and caressed the flushed cheeks. “I love you, birthday boy,” Harry whispered.

“Love you, too,” Draco replied as he awkwardly fell forward for another kiss.

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July 25, 2028

The plan had been to leave in mid-September, eleven years from the date of their arrival. They had once asked Lusi in their dreams, when she was seven, whether she would fly one of them with one child back to Upernavik Island and then return for the others. She refused, saying that they must all leave together; she wouldn’t chance them to be separated if another incident like what happened to her mother occurred.

“Ready?” Draco asked nervously as they stepped out of the cave.

“We have to be,” Harry replied as he walked down the steps holding Siri in his arms. The young boy was unconscious. His body was burning hot and nothing they did seemed to help over the past few days. He needed a Healer; he needed to be in a hospital.

“Dad, I have everything packed and ready,” Dane said to Draco. “I’ll hold Skee.”

Draco nodded. Harry handed Siri to Draco and hoisted himself up onto Lusi’s back. Draco lifted
the slack form back up to Harry’s waiting hands. Dane went next and the dog was placed in front of him, Draco having sedated him first with a spell. Reg was boosted up, followed by Draco; he held his youngest son tight. His green eyes were filled with tears. Draco kissed the top of his sandy blond hair. “It’s going to be fine,” Draco whispered as he covered him with his cloak.

The Glacier Dragon slowly rose up from the shore. She stretched her wings and flapped them twice as if testing them out. Her long neck turned around and her black eyes surveyed those for whom she was now responsible. It was only a short flight, but she knew her future and the hope of resurrecting the Dragon Rider race was on her back. She spewed forth a long flame of fire as she turned back and faced the Arctic Ocean. Her wings stretched out again and with only four lumbering steps, she lifted off the shore.

It was close to three in the morning, and the cloudy August sky was light. Harry glanced down at the island as they rose above it. It had held them captive for so long. It seemed so small from where he was now, but it was their home, his family’s home, and now they were leaving, not knowing when they would return. Siri groaned, and Harry was quickly pulled out of his melancholy.

Draco spotted Upernavik first. It was just a dot compared to the massive landmass of Greenland, also in view. Lusi threw her head up and then laid down flat; they all did the same as the dragon propelled them through the magical barrier. Harry could feel it pricking at him, clutching at his arms and legs as if trying to hold him back. He worried for Dane and Skee, he glanced over his shoulder to see the boy lying almost parallel to Lusi’s body, his long hair forced back, and his eyes closed. Draco raised a thumb to Harry, he nodded in return. Then it was over, and a sudden rush of freedom filled Harry’s heart, only to be followed by a sudden void at the loss of having his family, his world, magically protected.

Lusi’s wings turned forward, the white iridescent leather slowed their speed, and soon they were gliding down. Harry felt the tears freezing on his cheeks as Qaarsorsuaq Mountain seemed to be rushing towards them. They would land on top, hoping no one had seen the dragon. From there, they would Apparate straight to St. Mungo’s. Harry pushed back the trepidation he and Draco had in having to Side-Along-Apparate their whole family that far. Neither had cast the spell in eleven years.

The descent was smooth and Lusi’s legs stretched down; her claws dug into the glacier ice. Draco jumped off first, Dane handing him Regulus, and then Skee, before climbing down himself. Harry lowered the bundled up Siri into Draco’s arms, and then descended from the dragon. As a family, they walked in front of her and bowed deeply. She lowered her head and then flew off the mountaintop. Harry knelt to the frozen surface and held Siri in one arm and Regulus in another. “Destination, determination, deliberation,” Harry and Draco whispered before both closed their eyes.

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It was dark, but a warm, humid wind blew across them as they stood before the red-brick building at nearly quarter to one in the morning. Harry rose up and spoke to the dummy in the window, asking for permission to enter. He didn’t think Dane’s eyes could get any bigger as he looked at the empty city street. They did, though, when Draco led the family through the window. Regulus was shaking as he clung to Harry’s leg.

Harry’s mind was filled with competing thoughts and images. His memories of being in this place pushed forward, but his concern for Siri fought back. Draco was already speaking with the welcomewitch, who seemed overwhelmed by the strangely dressed family she was presented with.
“Ma’am, my son is ill. He has a fever and is non-respondent,” Draco repeated for the second time.

“Name of the child, please,” she said, matter of fact.

“Sirius Quatic …”

“Sirius what?” she said, her eyes scrunched together as if doing so would help her understand what she was hearing.

“Sirius Quatic Black,” said a strong voice from behind Harry.

Harry spun around to see a tall, young, red-haired Healer. Brown eyes stared into his from behind wire-rimmed spectacles. “James?” Harry uttered as his eyes tried to reconcile the man in front of him with the boy he left behind.

“Yes, Dad, it’s me.”

Draco rushed over and took Siri out of Harry’s arms as he saw Harry’s knees falter. Harry fell into the arms of the wizard now taller than him. “Oh my God, James,” Harry whispered as he grasped onto him tightly. The embrace back was warm, but restrained.

“Dad, let me take a look at the boy,” James said and he withdrew from Harry’s strong hug. Harry stepped back as James walked over to Draco and peeled back the blanket hiding Sirius. His hand reached out and stroked the warm cheek of Siri. “He looks like you and Al,” James commented.

“How long has he been like this?”

Harry cleared his throat. “It started four days ago. He complained of stomach pains and began throwing-up. We gave him some stomach calming potions. Then the next day he said he felt better, and then that night he began to run a fever and became very ill. We tried treating him again with the potions we had, and then a few hours ago he became unconscious.”

James tapped the boy’s swollen abdomen once with his wand and watched as the boy grimaced.
He then traced the tip across the area and whispered Healing Spells. “I’ll be right back. Don’t move him,” James said as he glared at the two adult wizards before leaving the room.

Dane stepped over to Harry and took his hand. “Papa, is that man my brother?”

Harry’s bit his lower lip as it began to quiver and just nodded ‘yes’.

The door flew open as James returned immediately with a two vials of potions and jar filled with a viscous white balm. “He has peritonitis, his appendix has burst. He was very close to dying. Help me lift him up to take the potions and then we need to rub in the balm to help pull out the poison.”

Harry rushed to the head of the examining table and lifted Siri’s head up. He seemed so small now compared to his oldest brother. James leant forward, opened Siri’s mouth, and dribbled the first potion in. “So tell me, Father, where is Mrs. Black? Were you afraid to bring her to London?”

“Excuse me, James. Where is who?”

James snorted. “Mrs. Black. Your new wife.”

Harry coughed and almost dropped Siri.

“James, there is no Mrs. Black, and I do not know why you would call her that even if there were one,” Harry replied after composing himself.

James set down the first vial and picked up the second. “Hogwarts registry, it lists these two children by those names. Mr. Malfoy’s son is also registered. Quite a scandal it’s caused,” he said, sounding a bit too enthusiastic.

Harry looked over at Draco, who was now holding a sleeping Regulus. Draco brought a finger to his lips. “Keep calm,” he mouthed silently.

“James, I’m not sure what you think happened, but I assure you, I would have returned if I could have.”

“Yeah, sure, Dad. You can lay him down now. Do you want me to call a matron to rub the balm in?”

Harry took the jar out of James’s hand. “No, that won’t be necessary. I’ll do it myself. We will talk later, James, but this is not the time or the place. In the mean time, do you have a prognosis for Siri?” Harry said, sounding more authoritative than he had since he arrived.

“He should be fine to leave by tomorrow night. I suggest you all go somewhere for the night, maybe take a shower and find some clothing. He won’t be regaining consciousness for another eight hours or so.”

Harry stopped himself from laughing at the shower remark. A shower actually sounded nice, and he was sure Draco would love one, too. “Thank you, but I will be staying tonight with Siri. I will be contacting your mother, brother, and sister tomorrow.”

“Good luck with Mum,” James smirked.

Harry took a quick look at Draco, who just raised a brow.

“I’ll have someone check in on Sirius in a few hours. We’ll transfer him to his own room after you apply the balm. Good to see you, Dad,” James said as he left the room.
“Trouble in paradise?” Draco asked teasingly.

“Leave it, Draco,” Harry said warningly. “Now what are we going to do? The boys need to sleep.”

“I will take them to the Manor. I’m sure my father could use a good heart attack or two.”

Harry couldn’t help but laugh. The idea that Draco’s snarkiness might be the only thing that got them all through this ordeal was a scary but warming thought.

Harry opened the jar of balm and began to apply it to Siri’s chest and arms.

“Let me help,” Dane said and dipped his hands in the jar.

Draco sat down in the chair holding a sleeping Regulus and waited. They all jumped as howling and screaming echoed from down the hallway. “Shit!” Draco yelped. He laid Regulus on the chair, and raced out the door.

Harry looked at Dane and they both laughed.

“So, um, Papa, can I ask you a question?” Dane asked as he massaged the balm onto his brother’s calves.

“Sure, just not one that requires too much explanation. I’m feeling a bit knackered.”

“Was that a woman out there? The round one with the big chest and puffy hair.”

Harry’s shoulders shook, as he tried not laugh at his poor, innocent son’s remark. “Yes, that is a woman, a witch. Though they do come in prettier and nicer varieties than her.”

“Oh.”

The door flew open again as Draco dragged the dog in by his makeshift leash. “The bitch tried to hex him.”

“Draco,” Harry reprimanded.

Dane laughed again. “I guess she doesn’t know that we used him for practicing magic.”

Skee came into the room reluctantly and sniffed around. He decided that the spot in front of the youngest boy was a good place to lie down.

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Harry lay down in the bed with Siri and pulled the clean crisp sheet and wool blanket over both of them. He removed his glasses, set them on the bedside table, and blew out the candle. His thoughts were on Draco and how he was doing at the Manor. The images of Draco showing up with two children, a dog, and being eight months pregnant were highly entertaining. Of course, the next thoughts of what he would tell Ginny and his other two children tomorrow counteracted the pleasant imaginings.

He swore he had only been asleep for a few minutes, but a quick glance at his watch told him different. He was wrapped around Siri who was still fast asleep. Siri’s colour definitely looked better. The blanket had been tossed off the bed.
“Daddy?” a soft voice said next to him. “I brought you some coffee.”

Harry rolled over, almost falling off the bed. “Lily?” he gasped out as he reached for his glasses.

“Oh, Daddy, I knew you’d come home,” she cried as she fell on top of him.

His arms wrapped tightly around her. The long red hair smothered his face. “Oh, baby, I missed you. Let me look at you.”

She moved back some, but stayed sitting on the edge of the bed. “Daddy, you’ve got a beard and you have grey streaks.”

Harry laughed. “Yes, and you have breasts and hips.”

“Dad,” she whinged.

Harry spied the coffee out of the corner of his eye. He hoped it wasn’t too inappropriate to reach for it. She read his mind, picked it up, and put it in his hands. “Draco told me you would want some.”

Harry let the few sips of hot, perfectly creamed and sugared coffee linger in his mouth before swallowing. “You saw Draco?” he asked before taking another big sip.

“Yes, last night at the Manor. Al and I were there with Scorpius when he showed up. Mr. Malfoy fainted.”

“Really, did he?” Harry chuckled.

Lily’s eyes brightened. “He actually fainted twice; the second time was when Draco showed us his stomach.”

Harry set the coffee back down on the table, afraid he would spill the precious contents as he tried to stop coughing and laughing. He had so many questions going on in his head.

“Lily, love, what were you and Al doing at the Manor?”

“Oh, we just got back from the Himalayas a few days ago, and we were in the library going over the maps again. We met a Glacier Dragon, Daddy, but she couldn’t tell us where you were.”

The young boy next to him stirred.

“Can I see my brother?” Lily asked.

Harry smiled. “Sure,” he said as lifted the sheet and leaned back.

“Wow, he does look like Al, but Regulus informed me that he was the one with green eyes, and Siri had silver like Draco’s. By the way, do you all sleep starkers?”

Harry blushed. “And what do you think of Dane?” he asked, changing the subject.

“Wow, what a shock he was. I thought Mrs. Malfoy was going to wet herself fawning over the poor boy. He really is a mature kid, are you going to let him keep his long hair?”

“It’s up to him, Lily. He will have more important issues to deal with than his hair. So, you don’t seem too surprised about Draco and the children.”
Lily leant over and kissed him on the cheek. Harry picked his coffee back up.

“I’m not, but, yet, I am now that it’s real.”

“What do you mean now that it is real?”

“Dad, I think Al should explain it to you. I think we all have a lot of explaining to do, don’t you? Maybe when you and Siri come to the Manor we can talk more. Right now, I just want to see you.”

Harry sat up and snuggled onto her slight shoulder.

“Daddy, are you crying?”

“Weeping, Lily.”

“Oh.”

Harry removed his glasses and wiped his eyes. “So Al won’t be giving me the same greeting as James?”

Lily giggled. “No, just ignore James. He’ll get over it. He’s just being protective of Mum.”

Harry took a deep breath. “And how is your mother?”

“Um, Dad, I am not sure I should be having this conversation with you. I think it’s Mum’s place to do so.”

Harry groaned and gulped down the now warm coffee. Lily withdrew her wand and refilled it. Harry wanted to weep with joy at the sight.

“How about a hint of how bad it’s going to be. Does she hate me?”

“No, but I think there were times that she did. When Sirius’s name appeared, many thought it was a fluke, but when Regulus’s appeared, she took it pretty hard. She originally thought you had died, but then she believed you married someone else. She eventually started dating again.”

“Really? Who?”

“Oliver Wood, do you remember him? Mum said he was Gryffindor’s Captain your first years at Hogwarts. They’re on holiday in Spain right now.”

Harry’s memories of Oliver came back and how fond of him he was. “Yes, he was. I liked him a lot. I’m pleased to hear that she found someone.”

“Are you, Dad? I mean, your relationship with Draco wasn’t forced because of the situation, was it? Do you really love him?”

In all of the times he thought about how he would explain what had happened, he never imagined that it would be with Lily, or that it would be so heartfelt. “The only thing that was forced was when we had to admit our feelings for each other. It was our third Christmas on the island.”

“So the Veela mark is real? I mean, it really occurs?”

Harry stretched his neck so she could see more of it. She reached out and ran her index finger over the blue feathered mark. He didn’t feel a thing; only when Draco touched it did the reaction occur.
“Where is Al now?”

“Sleeping. He, Draco, Scorpius, and Mr. Malfoy were up late poring over the maps Draco brought back with him. The books are amazing. Scorpius can read Veela-script. I don’t know Draco very well, but my guess is that he’s never felt so proud.”

Harry smiled. “If it was anything like the time we watched Dane ride Lusi solo, then, yes, I can imagine.”

“Wow, riding a dragon. It looks amazing.”

Harry swallowed a large sip of coffee. “You’ve seen someone ride a dragon?”

Lily nodded her head slowly. “Just once, a few weeks ago in the Himalayas. Of course, she let Al ride her first and then Scorpius. She was quite fond of them. Me, she was wary of. I don’t think Glacier Dragons like females.”

“No, I imagine they don’t. It is the Cocks, the Veela-wizards, they rely on for their survival. A witch would threaten their existence, but she let you meet her. You should be very honoured.”

“I am. I think she finally realised I wasn’t going to break up Al and Scorpius.”

The coffee flowed out of Harry’s mouth as his jaw dropped. Lily quickly handed him a handkerchief. “Lily, do you mean that Al and Scorpius are together?” The idea that his and Draco’s sons were a couple was a complete surprise.

“God, Dad, they’ve been together since their fifth year at Hogwarts.”

“Shit, does Draco know?”

“He does now. He told them that they were lucky that I was with them on most of their trips.”

Harry laughed. “So what about Chantal, is she also at the Manor?”

“Yes, Daddy, she is, but she’s not a threat to you and Draco. She was just thrilled that he was alive and happy. She’s a funny one. Mum doesn’t like her much.”

“No, they really don’t have much in common.”

“Well, Dad, I need to go to training. I’m going to be an Auror. Kingsley is going to apoplectic when he finds out you are home. So do you think you’ll be at the Manor tonight?”

“I hope so. Siri should be waking up soon and then we’ll see. I love you, baby, I’m so proud of you,” Harry said as he kissed her on the cheek and hugged her good-bye.

“I know. I’ve always known,” she whispered back.

“Lily,” he called out as the door was shutting.

“Yes, Daddy?” she said and peeked back around.

“What house were you sorted into?”

She laughed. “Let’s just say I didn’t tell the hat no.”

“A Slytherin,” Harry said knowingly.
“The first witch to make the house Quidditch team,” she said proudly and let the door close behind her.

“Papa, where are we?” said a strained voice next to him.

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“Ready, son?” Harry asked as he wrapped his arm around Siri’s frail body. He had lost so much weight in the last few days.

“I guess so,” Siri replied. Despite how he felt, Harry smiled as he looked down into the eyes that appeared grey.

“Just remember that this is where Dad grew up, and this is his family. No one there will hurt you, I promise.” Harry only hoped the same would be true when his children met his side of the family. He had sent a missive to Ginny and she had replied that she would be returning in a few days. At first he was disappointed that she didn’t come home immediately so they could talk, but then she’d waited eleven years; he could wait a few days. James hadn’t returned, which also disappointed Harry. Ron and Hermione said they would see him at the Manor. Harry had choked when he received that message.

The only advantage to the rest of the day after Lily left was that he was able to spend time with Sirius. It was the first time they had ever been alone together, and it gave Harry time to explain some of the rules that he would be expected to learn. A part of Harry was saddened to put so many restrictions on his sons so early. Siri detested the robes he was asked to wear, complained that he was hot, and stripped the offending clothing off. Harry had to agree with him about the temperature. It was close to unbearable. A little coaxing with a small bar of chocolate did the trick. The poor boy looked like he had gone to heaven after taking his first bite.

Harry thought of the Malfoy home and of the purple drawing room as he held Siri tighter. “Okay, Siri, here we go.”

The noise coming from the next room was filled with laughter and loud voices. Harry grinned as he recognized Hermione’s voice discussing some legal issue he was sure he would soon know about. Siri was quaking in his caribou sandals. Harry couldn’t quite talk him out of those. The boy’s head moved in the same direction as his eyes as they scanned the room and portraits.

Harry held his son’s hand and made his way for the room he had only passed through once before, many years ago. “Papa! Siri!” Regulus cried out as he scampered off a wizard’s lap. Harry did a double take when he recognised the older man as Lucius Malfoy.

Harry scooped up Regulus as others started gathering around. Al squeezed the breath out of him, and Ron and Hermione just stood there weeping. Harry held out his hand to Ron, who took it and pulled him forward into a strong embrace. Harry knew it was them, but they had changed, just as he was sure he had in their eyes. He glanced around quickly to see where Draco was. He was lying on a couch with his feet on Chantal’s lap and she was massaging them. He gave them quick scowl and then went back to hugging his family. Al, he had to admit, looked so similar to him; only the light freckles sprinkled across the bridge of his nose gave him away as part Weasley.

Lucius and Narcissa rose from their seats; Harry noticed the cane was now being used more for its intended purpose. They waited at the back of the group until the joyous reunion had subsided a notch. “Mr. Potter, welcome home,” Lucius said, as he stepped forward and held out his hand.

The turmoil Harry felt was strong, but having his youngest boy whisper in his ear, “Papa, I have a
“It’s good to be home, Mr. Malfoy. Thank you, both of you, for your hospitality to my family during my absence.”

“Dad,” Al said, “I want you to meet Scorpius. I think Lily told you…”

Harry held out his hand to the young blond wizard, who he admitted was even more handsome than Draco was at that age. He didn’t have the sharpness of chin or nose, and his smile was generous. “Scorpius, I know you don’t know me well, but I know everything about you, that is up until the age when we left for the island.”

Scorpius laughed freely. “Mr. Potter, I can say the same is true for me. Between Lily and Al, I feel I know you, too.”

Siri slowly peeled himself away from Harry and walked over to his brother, Dane, who was standing by the windows, looking out onto the summer gardens. Regulus soon joined them. They would seek comfort in each other for quite awhile, Harry surmised.

“Harry,” Draco called out.

Harry walked over to the couch and glared down at Draco. Chantal began to giggle.

“Yes, Draco,” Harry replied, “you wanted something?”

“You remember Chantal, don’t you?”

Harry nodded to Chantal. “Of course, she’s your wife.”

Chantal burst out laughing. “Soon to be ex-wife, Harry. I’m just pampering the tired, old, pregnant man.”

“Yes, Harry, why haven’t you ever done this for me before?”

The room was silent and Harry was failing miserably at finding the words to tell Draco off. Memories of a train ride long ago came into view: Pansy Parkinson stroking Draco’s hair as if she were the luckiest girl alive. That was the Draco he hated and suddenly he couldn’t shake the feeling as he stared down at the blond who was relishing being spoiled once again.

Dane finally came to Harry’s side and spoke as he looked at the others in the room. “Dad refused to be pampered while pregnant. He felt that he would be a liability to our family if he were indulged. And he would have been,” Dane added with a sneer that did the Malfoy name proud. He walked back to his brothers staring out the window.

Harry was not sure he could love Dane any more than he did right at that moment. He knew the others were watching and extremely curious, or maybe even anxious, as to what his reaction would be. “Draco, if you think your feet could handle it, how about we take a walk, maybe in the garden?”

Draco sighed and sat up. Harry held out his hand, helping him come to his feet. It was a first. “Excuse us,” Draco said to everyone as he held Harry’s hand and led him out of the room.

They had barely made it out onto the brick patio before Harry turned on him. “What are you doing, Draco? Playing games?”
Draco stood still and looked up at the evening sky; the sun would be setting in another hour or so. “I don’t know; it was just so nice to be home. My parents have been wonderful, Scorpius is a dream, and Al and Lily are a joy. I just was caught up in it. Fuck, it’s hot out here.”

Harry snorted. “Yes, Siri refused to wear a robe until I bribed him with chocolate. You do remember your son; you know, the one who was only a few hours away from death last night, don’t you?”

“Uncalled for,” Draco snarled.

“Uncalled for?” Harry yelled. “We have three kids in there staring out the window because they have never seen a fucking tree before, much less a witch. They need us as a team, Draco. No games. Not now,” Harry seethed.

Draco turned his head back and forth, looking at Harry and then back at the Manor.

“Look, if you are thinking that we will have an open relationship, you are wrong. If I’m not enough for you, then we will end this amicably and you can go back to Chantal.”

“No,” Draco replied firmly. “That is not what I want. I want you and only you.”

“Fine,” Harry said more harshly then he intended to.

“Ginny? Have you spoken with her?”

Harry turned and walked down a gravel path that wandered through Narcissa’s rosebushes in full bloom. He held his hand out behind him; Draco put his own hand into it.

“No, she’s on holiday with Oliver Wood. They are dating, and that’s about all I know, besides that she was very hurt when the children’s names appeared.”

“Are you tempted, Harry? Tempted to go back to the way it was?”

Harry stopped as they approached a small vine-covered gazebo and then went inside. Draco followed and led him to a white wrought iron bench. “Potter, are you going to answer?”

Harry sat down. “No, Draco, I’m not tempted. Not even close.”

Draco stood in front of Harry, and lifted his chin with both hands. His fingers briefly brushed through the newly trimmed beard. “Good,” he said and leant down and kissed him.

Harry felt the stirring race through him as Draco’s finger slid across the magical mark. Draco’s tongue swirled around his own and then Harry began to suck on it knowing what it would do to Draco. His hands reached up and unclasped the thin robe, letting it fall to the ground. He stroked Draco’s chest until he felt the pebbles form under the summer white shirt.

“Not here, the kids…window,” Draco tried to say.

“Yes, here,” Harry said after letting go of Draco’s tongue. “Now they’ll know everything is alright. They can’t see us anyway through the jasmine.” One hand slid down as the other pushed Draco up to a standing position. He stroked the erection trying to break free from the summer shorts. He heard Draco suck in air through clenched teeth as he slowly lowered the restricting clothing. His hands reached up and stroked the swollen belly as he lowered his mouth to the tip of Draco’s cock.

“Fuck,” Draco mumbled, as Harry’s tongue played with the head of his shaft. “So fucking good,”
he continued as more was taken in and sucked upon. Harry’s hands moved around and grasped his bum, pushing Draco’s dick in and out of his mouth, until Draco’s reflexes did it on their own. “Damn you,” Draco spat out as his body froze and then quickly began pumping uncontrollably. Harry swallowed all that was given and gently tongued Draco clean as his erection faded.

Harry pulled up Draco’s shorts and helped him on with his robe. They walked back in silence. As Draco reached to open the French doors, Harry stopped him and pulled him close. “Tell Chantal she’s lost; a blowjob beats a foot massage in any game I know of.”

Draco coughed. “Agreed.”

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Harry yawned and stretched before lying down next to Draco on the massive four-poster bed Draco had created in his bedroom. The three boys and Draco were already asleep. The single sheet had been shoved to the bottom of the bed. Harry hoped they would acclimate to the warm, humid air soon. He’d felt in constant need of a shower all day. He ended up taking three, the last one with Draco after most of their company had left.

Usually, he and Draco slept on each edge of the bed with the three boys in between, but tonight Harry felt the need to be near Draco. He draped his arm over Draco’s side and rested his hand on the belly with their fourth child inside, moving about. As if by instinct, Draco’s body manoeuvred until he filled the space between them. Harry kissed his shoulder and then Noxed the only remaining light. A soft breeze flowed over them from the open windows.

Memories of the night’s events swirled through Harry’s brain. His heart ached at how much pain Al had suffered through the years. In the beginning, the families had all been sad, thinking Harry and Draco had perished, but soon the feud between the Malfoys and Weasleys returned with a vengeance. Al had not been part of it, but James had. Scorpius had paid a big price for being the son of Draco Malfoy, the wizard who took Harry Potter away from the magical world. Ron and Kingsley had searched Malfoy Manor, but even though Ron guessed what Harry and Draco were after, there was not enough to go on.

Harry rubbed his forehead as he tried to piece together the years he had missed. It was when Lily entered Hogwarts that things had begun to change. She was a Slytherin and a powerful young witch. More often than not, she ended up in the Headmistress’s office for some rule someone believed she broke. It was there she met the previous Headmasters and learned the truth about how her father had been detested, not for his own deeds, but for those of his father. She thought of the boy in her own House who was now in a similar position. She slowly began initiating conversations with Scorpius Malfoy.

During the Christmas holidays of her first year, she told her brother Al of her budding friendship with Scorpius. He didn’t condemn her, but listened to what she had to say. And she listened to him as he crawled into her bed a few nights later crying with joy because he had seen a vision of Harry, Draco, and a toddler in an ice cave. They shared the vision with the younger Malfoy when they returned to Hogwarts. The visions were infrequent, but they all maintained hope that they were real. Scorpius finally confided that someone with the surname Malfoy had been registered in the Hogwarts magical book. They guessed that it was the young boy Al had envisioned.

Mid-September of Lily’s third year Albus was given detention for banging on the Slytherin door asking for Lily or Scorpius. He’d had another dream, but this time he watched as his father cut open Scorpius’s father with a knife and pulled out a baby. The three of them didn’t know what to think of it, until news reached them that an unknown member of the Black family had a baby registered in the Hogwarts magical book. They finally decided to tell the adults. They could never
have predicted the repercussions of doing so.

Al was diagnosed as being delusional and was treated with potions. The potions stopped the visions. The Malfoys went to court to try to stop the medical treatment. They were dismissed and seen as trying to hold onto Draco’s inheritance, as Chantal had petitioned the courts to rule Draco deceased. She quickly dropped the case once her son asked her to. Harry surmised, as he listened, that the real reason the Malfoys petitioned on Al’s behalf was that they were holding onto the hope that Draco was alive and that Al’s visions might be able to help them find him.

The Weasley family was torn apart. Bill and Fleur had joined their side. Charlie had not, as he didn’t believe anyone could live with and tame a dragon. George refused to take sides, as did Molly and Arthur. Ron and Hermione stepped in and called a family meeting when Al fell into a depression; the side effects of the potions he was taking caused insomnia and mood swings, and he was failing at school. There was no harm to anyone if Al believed what he believed. The treatment was causing worse damage than the supposed ailment. Ginny acquiesced and Al was left to his beliefs.

Ginny’s life was also affected, though, by public opinion. Originally, they gave her sympathy and now they were gossiping behind her back. Half of the magical community believed that Harry and Draco were dead, and the other half believed they had intentionally left their families. No one but the Malfoys, Al, Lily, Ron and Hermione believed Al’s story that Draco was producing the babies.

As the children grew, they became more secretive and devised a plan that once Al and Scorpius left Hogwarts, they would begin looking for their fathers. In the meantime, they studied legends; Scorpius combed the Manor study for any bits of information that might help. It got worse when Al dreamed of another son being born. He told everyone about his vision and then the name Regulus Amorak Black appeared on the magical book. They surmised that Black was showing up as it was the closest familial linkage that Harry and Draco shared.

Ginny was devastated; she had truly thought Harry was dead. She couldn’t wrap her mind around the ideas that her son and daughter were telling her. Even when shown the Veela knife and notes Draco had left, and the notes explaining what it was for, she believed Harry had found someone new, another witch. Ron and Hermione finally took a stronger stance in the situation and became more involved with their nephew. Slowly, they began to believe that Harry would once again return from the dead.

Trips had been taken; Al, Scorpius, and Ron went on a few, and on the less strenuous ones, Lucius joined them. Lily became their third consistent travelling partner when she finished school. They were retracing Draco’s steps, looking for clues. The trip to the Himalayas was something of a fluke; they had heard of a rumour about another Veela-wizarding site.

“You okay?” Draco whispered; his fingers met Harry’s and intertwined as they rested on his stomach.

“Just thinking,” Harry said, his voice gave away the sadness he was feeling.

“Al?”

“Yeah.”

Draco rolled over. “It’s nice having you next to me.”

Harry wished it were light enough to see Draco’s eyes. While their emotions ran deep, neither expressed sentimentality very often.
Harry kissed his forehead. “Nice to be here.”

“I’m sorry about the incident earlier today,” Draco said softly.

“It’s okay. But I was thinking that it would be nice to indulge you once in awhile.”

Harry could almost feel the smile on Draco’s face. “I think having four sons together is a big indulgence.”

“Yes, but you know what I mean. I know you wear your pride like a shield. It would be okay to lower it once in awhile, especially now that we are here.”

The soles of Draco’s feet rubbed up and down Harry’s calves. “Hmm, well maybe, if you insist,” Draco mused.

“I do,” Harry whispered and kissed him once again, this time on the nose.

“Vanilla ice cream with chocolate sauce,” Draco whispered back.

“What about it?” Harry asked.

“I want some,” Draco replied.

Harry chuckled quietly. “Would that be before or after the foot massage?”

Soft lips met Harry’s and brushed over them. “During, but both can wait until you fuck me.”

Harry pulled Draco closer. “Is there a spare room in this house we can go to? I’m thinking it might be nice to have some privacy and take our time.”

“Potter, if there is one thing the Manor is good for, it is having spare rooms,” Draco replied as he began pushing Harry out of the bed.

Harry carefully slid out, and to the amusement of both of them, held out his hand to help Draco up. Draco kept hold and led Harry out the bedroom door.

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“Dad, Dad,” a familiar voice whispered. Harry instinctively reached for his glasses. Al was standing next to the bed.

“What is it? What time is it?”

“It’s eleven and Mum is here with James.”

Harry was instantly awake. He turned around and saw that the bed was empty.

“Where are the kids and Draco?”

“Outside, in the garden. He and Narcissa are giving them the grand tour.”

Harry swung his feet over the side of the bed. “Okay, tell them I’ll be about fifteen minutes,” Harry said and then stopped as he gathered his thoughts. “Al, I think I would like both you and Lily to be there also.”

“For protection?” Al joked.
“No, I think we need to talk as a family: the family we were before all of this happened.”

“Okay, I’ll find Lily. I think we should meet in the study so we can show them the maps and books.”

Harry stretched and then stood up. Al snickered as Harry stumbled, reaching for his dressing gown. “Hey, watch it, son, you’ll be my age someday.”

“Merlin, I can only hope when we are your age, Scorpius and I are as randy as you and Draco. I would never have thought of using whipped cream on toes.”

Harry glared at Al. It was unnerving seeing his own green eyes staring back at him.

“I need some coffee,” Harry whinged, turning away from Al and heading toward the loo. It struck him that this growing up thing that kids do was not always a good thing.

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With a large mug of coffee in hand, Harry stepped into Draco’s study. To say he was anxious would have been an understatement. He had no idea what he was going to say to Ginny. It wasn’t that he had stopped loving her; it was that he had fallen love with someone else. He knew it sounded trite, but it wasn’t her, it was him.

“Ginny,” he exclaimed as he found her in his arms. He set down the mug of coffee and embraced her back. The reality of having her close shook him. The scent and texture of her hair threw him, and the memories of old flooded back. He couldn’t stop himself from enjoying the moment. “I’m so sorry,” he whispered.

She released him and all he could do was stare at her. The years had been much kinder to her than to him.

“You—you look different,” she mumbled.

Harry gave a wry grin. “Older, you mean. The sun and dry air are not beneficial to the skin.”

“But, you have a beard and your hair....”

“Is going grey. Yes, I know. You, though, look just the same, just as wonderful as I remembered.”

Harry heard Lily talking from across the room and saw his three grown children waiting for him by the fireplace.

“But the memories weren’t strong enough, were they?”

Harry shook his head as what she said registered in his brain. He looked back down at her. He wanted to say she was wrong, but that would have been lying. He knew no matter how painful it would be, he needed to be truthful.

“No, Ginny, they weren’t and I am sorry that they weren’t. I think if you listen to what I have to say, it might be easier to understand.”

Her brown eyes narrowed and he saw something he hadn’t remembered ever seeing before: Molly’s scowl. “Why don’t you start by explaining to your three children why they now have two more siblings?” she said defiantly, as she turned and walked towards the seating area near the fireplace.
Harry picked up his mug of coffee and followed. None of his three children gave him any looks of reassurance. He was sure it was because their mother was watching them. Harry sat down and said, “Four, they have or will have four siblings. Dane, I consider to be my son, and Draco is due in a few weeks with our fourth.”

He watched as his words struck Ginny across the face like a slap. He didn’t mean it to sound harsh, but he would not deny Dane as one of his own. Ginny looked at James, then to Lily, and finally her eyes settled on Al. “So what Al saw were true visions? You were in some type of ice cavern. And Draco, for some bizarre reason, was able to have children, so you two saw the brilliancy of having four?”

“That’s a bit overly simplified, but, yes,” Harry said, while sipping the hot liquid quickly. He was hoping the caffeine would stimulate his capacity to think more clearly. “It was either that or Draco would have more children like Dane, and with each one, he would have lost half of his magic.”

Ginny’s brow furrowed. “What do you mean, like Dane? What is so special about him?”

Harry couldn’t help but smile as he thought about Dane. Everything was special about him. To Harry, Dane was everything Draco could have been given the right upbringing. “Dane is a clonal reproduction of Draco. Draco has Veela blood and the instinct to reproduce was instigated by our situation. We were stranded on an island almost six hundred miles north of the Arctic Circle, close to north-west Greenland. The island was protected by a spell that would not allow us to leave unless the Secret Keeper took us or by the Glacier Dragon who lived there.”

James cleared his throat. “Are you saying that Dane is a clone of Draco?”

Harry nodded. “Exactly. He is what the Dragon Riders referred to as the Rightful Heir.”

“So you felt you needed to have sex with Draco so he wouldn’t produce more of those?” Ginny asked.

The hairs on his arm stood up at the word those. “No, Ginny, it was more than that. I did know that I would have to from the moment he told me about the situation, but the conception would not have happened if the feelings were not there. It takes a spell to ask for that blessing, and it is only given if the feelings are real.”

He saw the disappointment on her face, but he continued anyway.

“The environment in that part of the world is extremely harsh and unforgiving. Any wrong step, any carelessness, could result in death. The resulting child of two men, who felt nothing for each other, would be disastrous. We worked, lived, and loved as a unit, as a family. We survived.”

A silver tray appeared on the table with tea, scones, and jam. Al did the honours and poured for four.

“Lily explained to me how you were stranded. What I don’t understand is why neither of you didn’t plan for something like what happened. I mean really, Harry, you should have had a back-up plan.”

Harry shook his head. “I was the back-up plan. If the Secret Keeper died then I would be able to ride the dragon. No one planned for poachers to be able to take down Lusi. That day was one of the worst I can remember having.”

“Worse than when I dyed Snuffles purple?” Lily interjected.
A smile broke across his face. He had relived that day’s memories often while on Cock Island. “I treasure that day, Lily,” Harry responded and gave Lily a wink, his attention then returned to Ginny. “It was an accident and that is all I can say. No one can plan for everything.”

“But why Al?” James asked. It suddenly struck Harry why James was so against believing Al. He was jealous. James had always been the strongest, more attractive, and Harry had to admit, the brighter of the two boys, but then suddenly Al was gaining attention and James wasn’t used to it. “I don’t know, James, but my guess is given the timing of his visions, he was communicating with Lusi, the Glacier Dragon, the second Lusi. I wonder if she was aware of it.”

Ginny set down her teacup. “I can accept what you are saying, Harry, but I still do not believe what you did was of your own free will. Fleur and Bill have both told me that the Veela instinct to survive is strong. Don’t you think it is possible that the Veela in Draco entranced you, enchanted you, or something of the kind?”

“No,” Harry said, resolutely. The memory of almost taking Draco against his will was enough to know what Ginny was saying was not possible.

“I still think…”

They all turned their heads as the doors opened. Dane walked quickly through the centre of the room and stood before Harry. He was out of breath. Harry heard Ginny mumble, “Oh my God,” as she looked at him.

“Papa, Dad needs you. I think he’s in labour.”

“Shit!” Harry said as he stood up abruptly. “Dane, can he make it in here?”

“Yes.”

“Okay, go get your brothers, including Scorpius, to help bring him in. I’ll get everything ready.”

“Papa?” Dane said hesitantly as he looked over to Ginny.

Harry stared down at Dane. “Everything’s all right, Dane. Go on, now. Hurry!”

“Yes, Papa,” Dane said, giving Harry a small smile before he ran out of the room.

“Al, Lily, clear that table and get some blankets. James, I would appreciate it if you could stand by in case anything is wrong with the baby.”

“Harry, what are you doing?” Ginny asked, looking bewildered at the sudden commotion.

Harry stopped in mid-stride as he was rushing over to the shelf that contained the Veela knife they had taken from Cock Island, knowing at some point they would need it. He spun around and faced his stunned family. “I’m going to deliver the baby,” he replied and then hurried to the shelf, gathering the knife and the vial of Lusi’s blood.

Al and Lily quickly began clearing a table.

“Dad, shouldn’t Mr. Malfoy go to St. Mungo’s?” James asked, sounding flummoxed.

Harry lifted his wand and levitated a small chair-side table over next to the one larger one being cleared. “No, I’ve delivered the previous three at home, and Draco doesn’t have time. The baby needs to come out now,” he replied while looking around the room for additional items he might
“Master Potter is needing something from Kelby?”

“Yes, Kelby, Draco is about to give birth. I need containers of hot and warm water, a large bowl, some towels, and a small blanket.”

The house-elf’s eyes bulged out reminding him of a long lost friend.

“Yes, Master Potter, Kelby is getting what you need.”

“Thank you,” Harry said as the house-elf vanished.

The study doors opened and Harry rushed over to Draco, who was looking pale. He was being supported by Scorpius and Lucius. The rest of the family, including Narcissa and Chantal, followed. Harry motioned to Scorpius to let him take his place. His arm wrapped around Draco, supporting him as they walked to the table. “It’s going to be okay,” Harry whispered and kissed him on the cheek.

“I know,” Draco whispered back and then grimaced. “I guess we…dammit…I guess we have an audience this time.”

“I could clear them out,” Harry offered.

Draco lifted his head and glanced around. “No, let them see.”

“Okay,” Harry replied, and then both he and Lucius helped Draco over to the table. Harry quickly disrobed Draco, and laid him onto the flat surface. No one even made a comment about Draco’s appearance, the shock of what was about to occur had not worn off.

Draco’s eyes widened, he looked panicked. “Restraints;” he said loudly.

Harry looked around the room, his eyes settled on their sons. “Scorpius and Al, you need to hold down Draco’s wrists, Dane and…”

“I will do it,” Lucius spoke up.

Harry nodded. “Okay, Dane and Mr. Malfoy restrain his legs. He’s going to be in some pain, but the restraints help. Understand?”

Harry could see the four witches standing to the side. He looked down and saw his other two sons. “Siri and Reg, stand by me and hand me what I ask for.”

Both boys beamed as they rushed over to stand by Harry.

“Reg, the vial of dragon’s blood, please hand it to me.”

Harry carefully opened the vial of precious fluid and poured a thin stream across the bottom of Draco’s abdomen. “Siri, the knife, please.”

Harry took the Veela knife from Siri’s hand, brought it to his lips giving it a kiss, and whispered, “Rector.” He lowered it and made the first incision, separating the skin. Draco hissed and his body jerked. Harry glanced around and surveyed the eyes of the restrainers; three of the four had them closed. Dane’s remained wide open.
Harry cut further into the muscle and then set the knife down as he moved Draco’s organs out of the way. With the knife once again in his hand, he cut open the womb concealing his seventh child. He heard coughs and gasps. He handed the bloody knife to Siri, who took it with pride.

Harry reached in and withdrew the baby who had already started to cry. He laid it on Draco’s stomach and then everyone held their breath as Harry showed Siri where to cut the cord. “Release his arms,” Harry said, firmly. Al and Scorpius did so and Draco’s hands reached for the baby holding it tight on his chest.

Harry removed the placenta and set it in a bowl, took the vial, and once again poured the dragon’s blood inside Draco’s opened body and they all watched it heal. He put the organs back into place and poured the final streams over the muscle and skin.

“Merlin, bless us all,” Narcissa whimpered from somewhere near Harry. He couldn’t chance to look up to see where anyone was anymore. He reached for a towel, gathered the baby up into it, and handed it to James. “Could you wash him please? I need to clean Draco.”

James took the small, pre-term baby and dabbed off the vernix.

Harry dipped the washcloth into the hot water and began to wash the dragon’s blood mixed with Draco’s from his body. None of the elder witches or wizards in the room moved or spoke. Harry had a sudden revelation that what they had just witnessed was extraordinary, but for him, Draco, and the kids it was routine. They all used knives, they all cut open animals; even Reg had used a knife to help skin a rabbit. Harry carefully patted Draco’s soft stomach; it would harden in a month or two. Draco grimaced. Harry winked at him.

“Um, Dad,” James said, “you might want to take a look at this.”

Harry turned his attention away from Draco. “What is it?” he asked, worriedly.

James pulled back the cloth he was using to clean the infant. “I think your baby is missing something.”

Harry stared down in shock and then began to laugh. Draco tried to sit up, but was forced back down by Scorpius. “What is it? What’s wrong?” he cried out in a panic.

Harry lifted the baby out of the blanket, brought it over to Draco, and laid it on his chest. The infant rooted with its mouth until it found the small nipple waiting for it. Harry stroked the baby’s cheek and then Draco’s. “Um, Draco, you might have to do some rethinking about those theories of yours.”

Draco glanced down at the baby and then up to Harry. “Why?”

Harry leant down close and whispered into Draco’s ear, “Congratulations, Dad, you have a daughter.”

Draco’s hands lifted the baby away from his chest and into the air. The baby cried from being taken away from her prize. Draco stared at the area between her legs in complete shock. “Holy shit, Potter, we created a girl!”

“Yes, we did,” Harry replied with a grin, “and a very pretty one at that. Look, she has white hair.”

“But your ears and nose,” Draco added as he brought her back down to his chest when she began to squall. He held her tight and released a trill that calmed her immediately.
“We did it,” Harry said.

“Yes, we did,” Draco replied and kissed his daughter’s head covered in white wisps of hair.

At some point, Harry realised that the noise level in the room had increased dramatically. Everyone was circled around Draco trying to get a peek at that newborn girl. He saw happy tears, heard many joyful expressions, and then deafening silence from the one witch who stood back from the rest.

A hand came down on his shoulder; he turned to face his eldest son. “D--Dad, I do love you. It’s just …it’s just been hard,” James stammered. His eyes were rimmed in red.

Harry reached out and touched his son’s clean-shaven face. “I love you too, James. And remember,” he said softly, as he came closer, “you were my first, which means I’ve loved you longer than the rest.”

“Dad,” James said. Harry rejoiced in seeing that his son’s cheeks still flushed when he was embarrassed.

“James,” Harry responded teasingly at first and then he changed the tone of his voice, “I am very proud of you, and despite what you might think, I am very pleased that you stood by your mother. She needed you, and you were there for her. It means the world to me that you were brave enough to do so.”

James shook his head. “Dad, it wasn’t…”

“Shh,” Harry said, firmly. “Don’t argue with your father.”

James laughed, reached out and hugged him.

Harry reluctantly released the embrace that meant so much, but he had to complete his duty. He returned to Draco and finished washing the remnants of the birth away. His poor baby daughter was being passed around for all to hold and admire. Harry almost choked as he watched her grandparents shed tears of joy. A hand reached into his and he held it tight. He looked down at Draco, who was now dressed in a summer robe. He held Draco’s gaze as he leant down and kissed him fully.

“Everything okay?” Draco asked as his eyes shifted to the windows on the far side of the room.

Harry glanced over and saw Ginny standing there looking out, away from them all.

“We were in the middle of things,” Harry answered.

“Go finish it,” Draco said, his gaze shifting back to Harry. The bright silver eyes stared into his. Harry knew what he had to do.

“Okay, but first I want to move you to the couch. I can’t imagine the table is very comfortable. And, Draco, while you’re there, how about coming up with a name.”

Draco raised his hand and grasped Harry’s arm. “A girl, Harry, we have girl,” he said as if in disbelief.

Harry lifted Draco from the table and carried him over to the couch. The strength it took for him to do so was noted by all. Both men must have had to have been physically and mentally strong to have executed what they had just witnessed three times previously. The family made room as he walked by. Harry laid Draco down on the soft cushions and asked Narcissa to bring her son some
tea. He retrieved the baby from Scorpius’s arms, gave the tiny girl a kiss and put her next to Draco. His heart swelled when he heard the Veela sounds comforting his daughter as he walked over to speak with Ginny.

“Hi,” he said, unsure of how to start the conversation back up. He stood next to her and looked out the window as she did. It reminded him of the last time they stood like this, except then it was on a platform, and they were sending their boys off to Hogwarts.

“Do you think we would have lasted if this had never happened?” Ginny asked, speaking while continuing to stare straight ahead.

Harry glanced down at her. It was the first time he noticed that her once dark red hair was lightening. “Yes, I have no doubts that we would have. We had a good marriage.”

“Then why did it have to happen?” she said wistfully.

Harry could tell by her tone that she was going to let him go, that she understood that their life together was over. He put his arm around her shoulder, and she leaned into him. “It didn’t have to happen, it just did.” He stopped briefly when he heard her give a deep sigh and then continued. “There were many things I learned while trying to survive these last eleven years. One of the most profound was that while we do have free will, nature will do anything to survive. Neither Draco nor I could have survived alone, at least mentally, for all of those years. We learned to trust each other, to depend on each other, and then an Arctic wind blew in a random seed of love. It germinated, and it grew.”

end

Epilogue to follow.

Chapter End Notes

Uuli: Greenlandic name meaning, heir, descendant

Quatic: Greenlandic name meaning, of a bird

Amorak: Inuit for spirit of the wolf

Rector: (Latin for guide)
Epilogue: Survival of the Species

Summer 2030

The boat was full as the young man steered it away from Upernavik Island. Twelve wizards, including the Secret Keeper, filled the umiak. Ten of them put their oars out, pretending to row. A beluga whale peeked up to take a look and then dove back down into the depths of the Arctic Ocean. Harry held onto Regulus tightly. He was the youngest; Lucius at the front of the boat, the oldest. Draco spread the blankets out, knowing they would all soon be fast asleep.

Harry sat close by the Secret Keeper, Jonas, who’d recently turned seventeen. On his birthday, he had received a book. Where it came from, he didn’t know, but its contents revealed an important job that he heartily embraced. As the islands faded away and only the white, floating ones remained, a soft ballad broke the wizards chatter. Siri was the first to yawn, and Harry the last.

“You’ve brought friends and family, Dragon Rider. To stay?”

Harry sat down on the cloud. The mighty white dragon landed next to him. He reached out and stroked her scaled neck. “No, Lusi, just for the ceremony, though Dane will be returning in a few years. This is his home.”

“It is, and the island will welcome him back as its leader.”

Harry’s stomach dropped. He knew that would be Dane’s fate, but to hear it spoken as such, hurt his heart. “The other two will guide him and they will be great Dragon Riders, too. They’ve done well these last two years.”

“I know,” Harry whispered solemnly. “I know.”

“Don’t be sad, my friend. They’ll have a good life, and more will come. Dane will need a mate after he has his heir.”

“Shhh,” Harry said, “I don’t want him to grow up too fast.”

A bellow of steam erupted from the dragon. “I understand, and you all may enter, but I will be watching the dragon keeper closely.”

Harry stood up and bowed to Lusi. “I thank you, my lady.”

“Nicely done. I see you have learned some manners. Now I want to know how my namesake is doing.”

“She’s beautiful and frightfully spoiled. I hope to introduce you to her someday.”

Flames of fire shot out of her nostrils. “On the mainland, Dragon Rider. The only magical females allowed here are dragons. I was impressed that your Cock figured out that a witch was always possible.”

Harry laughed, remembering Draco stressing over all of the books and notes he had gathered on the subject matter, trying to decipher how to explain the occurrence of their daughter. Lucius was
the one who reminded Draco that his branch of the Malfoy family stopped having children after the first male heir was born. One was enough to fulfil the duties of the family. Draco expanded the thought using Lucius and Dane as sounding boards. Was it really just a simple tradition? Or was it based on their Veela-wizarding history?

Harry had been sitting on the couch by the fire listening to the discourse, while staring at the painting of Lusi. He had remembered Draco telling him that the dragons and wizards were dependent on each other, a symbiotic relationship. “There were not enough dragons,” Harry mumbled from the couch.

“What?” Draco exclaimed.

“There wasn’t any reason for more Cocks. There was only one dragon to ride. Having a girl would put a stop to any of the males on the island reproducing.”

“Balance,” Draco whispered, almost with reverence, “nature was balancing the populations. Damn, that is why Lusi only left us one egg. We could have never been able to take care of two through the winters until they could feed themselves.” Draco had then been perplexed as to whether to kiss Harry or hex himself for not realizing the answer earlier.

Harry woke up smiling; he loved the cheekiness of Cock Island’s resident dragon. The long trek through the glacier opening was arduous. Ron continually shook his head mumbling about how cold it was, while Charlie said it wasn’t so bad. Ron’s son, Hugo, was near the front, conversing with Dane and Siri. James had put five-year-old Regulus on his shoulders, as the young boy’s legs couldn’t keep up. Draco walked with his father and Harry stayed behind with Oliver. The families had joined.

The red pole was still stuck in the compacted ice. The older wizards withdrew their brooms, the youngest two rode with their fathers. They reached the mountain as the sun was setting low. The temperature dropped and they hurried through the mountain pass. Harry breathed in the cold, dry air, and felt at peace once again as the tendrils of ancient magic coursed through him.

An empty cave was disappointing, but Harry could see that it had been recently been cleaned and fresh cotton grass had been laid. He and Draco opened the cavern wall and all of their noses lifted in appreciation from the smells coming from the prepared meal that awaited them in the cavern.

Scorpius and Al greeted their guests with excitement. Harry could only imagine how they felt after being alone for the last two years. Lusi had carried them here and they had never asked to return. Harry knew they would in the future, to visit, but they would return to this place, where Dragon Riders would be emerging as a race once again. They were all here to bear witness and to give their blessing to the two young men who wanted to be part of that goal.

They slept well, despite the insistence that they do starkers. Harry and Draco both laughed at a few guests, Ron, Charlie, and Oliver, being embarrassed, because the following night would go beyond anything they could imagine.

The next day was filled with reliving memories and sharing with the others how they had survived. They combed the rocks for mussels and hauled in the nets of scallops. To Harry’s dismay, Ron repeated the mistake he made once, and piles of fish covered him. Draco mumbled something about stupid Gryffindors.

In the late afternoon, Harry found himself sitting on the ‘hillside of death,’ smoking his pipe. He watched the wizards below joking and laughing. It was now safe to do so with the greater numbers. Still, as if by habit, he scanned the shore and mountainside for predators. He also repeatedly
looked to the sky to see if Lusi was watching from above; she wasn’t. Cirrus clouds were drifting over the sun’s face, and a brilliant pair of sundogs appeared.

“Deep thoughts?” the old wizard asked. Harry called for a thick fur blanket for Lucius to sit down on.

“No, not really,” Harry responded. They both sat in silence staring at the Arctic Ocean as icebergs floated by. “What do you think about all of this? I mean, you could have been a Dragon Rider,” Harry said, after a few puffs from his pipe.

A generous laugh emerged from Lucius. He withdrew his own pipe from his long coat and prepared it for smoking. Harry lit it with his wand.

“I’m too old now, but I can honestly say I would not have made a very good survivor in my youth. I do enjoy my creature comforts.”

Harry chuckled. They both sent smoke rings up into the air. “But what do you think of your heritage?”

“Ah, you mean, am I ashamed that my blood is not pure?” Lucius said, his long white hair whipped around his face as a strong breeze came ashore. “No, how could I be when such matings bring about wonders like Dragon Riders, Cocks, and you?”

Harry coughed repeatedly on both Lucius’s words and the smoke he had inhaled too deeply.

“I’m getting to be an old wizard, Harry. I would have been pleased with Scorpius as my only grandchild, but you gave me so many more to enjoy. But what pleases me most is that my son found happiness and purpose.”

Harry smiled and looked up at the sky again as dark clouds from the north-west were forming. “He was worth saving,” Harry said.

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The cavern was filled with floating candles for light; the portals to the outside world were opaque. The wizards gathered around in a circle, all sitting on furs, enjoying the feast. Copious amounts of meats from the land and sea were eaten and an even greater amount of special mead was drunk. The ritual was briefly explained once again to the guests. The wizards, when they had first been invited to witness the calling for life, were apprehensive. The idea that they would watch Albus and Scorpius make love in front of them was unnerving. Harry and Draco were both disappointed at the reaction, but Dane was the one who suffered the most. He stayed outside as long as he could each summer day. His fathers both recognized the signs of being hurt because he suddenly felt like a freak. This was his heritage the family was rejecting. He seemed fine at Hogwarts and enjoyed being there, but anyone who got close enough could see his eyes searched for the closest window to gaze out. He showed a longing to be somewhere else, and now he really knew that he didn’t belong to his fathers’ land.

They were about to meet with each member who had been invited, but Dane’s grandfather beat them to it. Neither Harry nor Draco knew what Lucius had told the others, but soon the responses of acceptance arrived. Only Teddy declined, Andromeda, they all knew, wouldn’t be able to handle another loss if something unexpected happened.

Now here they all sat in the cavern, relaxed, telling stories, and laughing freely. Harry wondered if this was the way it was centuries ago. Siri and Reg were enthralled with the camaraderie and flitted
about the men, being teased and hugged. However, Dane shone as he never had before. His wand of Arctic birch and dragon-whisker core filled goblets with more mead as they emptied, encouraging his elders to indulge themselves.

Soon the youngest two boys tired and were put to bed, the one that had been Draco’s before he started sleeping in Harry’s. Privacy Charms were cast for them to rest without being disturbed.

The anticipation in the room rose as the soft beat from the caribou skin drum filled the cavernous space. Dane’s hands moved in a rhythm the origin of which only he seemed to know. The circle moved to the centre, to the ritual stone, and only separated to allow two young wizards to pass. Harry squeezed Draco’s hand as their sons made their entrance, dressed only in cloths wrapped around their waists. The two years had strengthened their bodies, and Harry felt any apprehension he might have had float away. They were physically and mentally ready to take over where he and Draco had left off, to carry on the race that had been a hair’s-breadth away from extinction.

The small table next to the stone held all they would need, the balm and the scrimshaw piece Harry had made years before. Al pulled the knot of cloth at Scorpius’s hip and it slid to the ground. Harry heard Draco inhale deeply. Scorpius returned the gesture and Al’s cloth joined the other on the granite floor. Harry closed his eyes briefly. The last time he had seen his son naked was when he was eleven. Draco’s fingers grasped Harry’s wrist. Harry glanced over at him. “Did you look like that at …?” Draco mouthed, but before he could finish, Harry shook his head.

A brief kiss between the two young wizards preceded Scorpius perching himself on the stone. Al gently helped him lie down and a small rolled fur was placed under his hips. The pulsating beat increased as Al positioned Scorpius legs to a bent position and then, without warning, restraints emerged. Groans and few unrestrained expletives surfaced from those in the circle. A wry grin came over Scorpius’ face. Harry knew then that this was probably not first time Draco’s son had found himself captive.

Albus climbed onto the rectangular stone and between his partner’s legs. There would be no foreplay of kissing and stroking; that was something they shared as lovers. No, only the final act was required for the blessing of the tribe. A soft chant that seemed to come from up high filtered down as Al grasped the scrimshaw penis and coated it with the balm. “He’s been prepped,” Draco whispered. Harry nodded and wondered when that had happened.

The tip of the warmed ivory piece entered Scorpius. His eyes closed and he sighed releasing a trill. Draco’s gasp revealed that this was the first time he had heard his son vocalize the sound of pleasure. Harry glanced around the circle, surveying the others’ responses as the scrimshaw phallus disappeared within Scorpius’s entrance. No one’s eyes met his. Harry’s attention returned to the scene and watched intently the patience and control his son was demonstrating as he elicited more Veela tones from Scorpius. He withdrew the object and slid it back in with an expertise only long term partners shared. Scorpius appeared to be in ecstasy; Harry knew that look, it was one Draco tried to restrain, but couldn’t.

The volume of the chanting increased as the scrimshaw penis was removed. Albus placed his cock at the entrance waiting for him. He threw his head back and cried out, “Tribuo Vita”. The head of his penis pushed in. The cavern filled with mist and reverberated with a chant coming from ghostly Dragon Riders. Another drum joined Dane’s beats as the corporeal wizards found themselves mouthing words they had never known. Draco’s hand found Harry’s and fingers interlaced.

The restraints released, Scorpius legs retracted further to his chest. Albus fell forward and thrust in deeper. The Veela trill emerged from Scorpius, joining the chorus. Harry could see the come seeping down Scorpius’s sides and then the cry of ecstasy came from his son when Scorpius’s
mouth found his neck and bit down.

“Harry, I’m coming home. Wake the others and be prepared.

Harry woke with a start. He had so many questions to ask Lusi, but her message was warning enough. He had once heard something similar years before. He wondered what had happened. He rolled out of bed, picked up his wand as he dressed quickly. The others were asleep. “What is it?” Draco asked groggily from across the bed. The three boys were sleeping soundly between them.

“Lusi’s coming and she said to be prepared,” Harry said loudly. He didn’t care if he disturbed the others, they needed to get up.

“Fuck, not again,” Draco said, bounding out of the bed and stumbled towards the loo.

Within minutes, all of the wizards stood in the entrance of the cave. Wands were drawn. “She’s coming,” Al yelled and pointed to the eastern sky.

Harry squinted, trying to see the dot in the sky. “There’s two!” Siri said excitedly. Harry couldn’t believe his eyes, but Siri was right, there were two dragons gliding towards them. Lusi tumbled in first and then the second.

“Merlin,” Charlie spouted out as the two dragons sat down and folded their wings. The second dragon, Harry could tell, was ancient. Her scales were dull, her movements forced.

“Analise?” Scorpius and Albus said in unison.

“Yes, did you think there were more than two of us females?” the older dragon said, in a raspy voice that all could hear.

“You—you can speak?” Draco stuttered.

“Yes, and this young thing will too when she matures, just as her mother did. But enough of that. I see that Lusi was correct, there are Dragon Riders here. Too many for one little girl to handle,” Analise said weakly, and then seemed to choke. Her long neck twisted around until she coughed, releasing small flames. Quick wand movements doused the small fires. She paid no attention to the wizards’ reactions. She lowered her head and then moved her neck side to side as she examined each of them standing before her. She sniffed a few, and then her nose stopped at Lucius. Her face was as large as he was. “Ha, an old Cock. He won’t be useful here.”

Harry had to stop himself from laughing. Ron and Oliver weren’t so successful. Analise then stopped at Scorpius. “Oh, this one I like. We’ve met before, but he never smelled this delectable before. Lusi, he’s newly mated.”

If dragons could smile, Harry was sure that Lusi was. The old dragon stopped again at Dane. “Oh, my, what have we here? Was this the surprise you mentioned?” Analise said and Lusi nodded. “A Rightful Heir,” she gasped out reverently. “And two more young Cocks,” she added. “Lusi, you and your mother have done well. I will be honoured to have you receive my gifts.”

Harry had to stop himself from laughing. Ron and Oliver weren’t so successful. Analise then stopped at Scorpius. “Oh, this one I like. We’ve met before, but he never smelled this delectable before. Lusi, he’s newly mated.”

Lusi stood up straight and then lowered her head to the ground, bowing before the ancient one. Analise nodded. “Yes, it is time. Father of the Rightful Heir, fetch the knife and containers for my blood, I am ready to fly into the next world.”

Without question, Draco raced back into the cavern and retrieved the knife and as many empty
vials he could find, and then conjured some more. The rest of the wizards stood in place, a few shaking being this close to two dragons.

“Dragon keeper,” Analise bellowed out, “you know how to slay a dragon?”

Charlie hesitantly stepped forward. “Yes, I do,” he said almost reluctantly.

“Good, because I want you to make the cut. None of my blood should be wasted.”

Draco handed the knife to Charlie and passed out vials to Scorpius, Dane, and Albus. Analise flicked her head towards Draco. “Father of the Heir, do you not have a cauldron? I do not think my blood will be dribbling out.”

Harry once again forced down the need to laugh. Draco’s cheeks reddened. “Yes, you’re right. I wasn’t thinking,” Draco said apologetically.

“Of course I’m right. Now go and get what you need.”

Draco collected the vials and soon returned with two enlarged cauldrons. Analise snorted, steam briefly filled the cave. She lumbered over to where a fresh nest of cotton grass was laid and sat down. “I am ready, dragon keeper.”

Harry watched in awe as Charlie sliced through the scales along the underside of Analise’s neck, some falling to the floor and shattering. She groaned loudly as the first squirt of blood came out and shot into the upheld cauldron. “Not so bad,” she said quietly. She groaned almost continuously as the blood began to pour out. One cauldron was lowered and another replaced it.

Harry came forward and stood before her. “Your gift will be well cared for. We thank you,” he said and bowed deeply. He saw her cloudy black eyes sparkle with a flash of life before they went dull. Her long neck started to fall down, but before it hit the cave floor, her body became translucent, crackled, and then burst apart into fine slivers of frozen crystals. She was gone.

They all stood stunned, until Lusi made her way over to the nest. She lowered her face and looked at what was left. “Five, Dad, Papa, she laid five eggs,” Regulus said proudly as he counted the clutch of eggs once again.

**************************

“Deep thoughts?” Draco asked as he joined Harry on the ‘hillside of death.”

Harry lifted the large mug of hot coffee to his lips and took a long sip. “No, none at all.”

Draco laughed and leaned over. His tongue flicked along the blue feather mark on Harry’s neck.

“Dad!” Dane called from the shore below. “Can’t you wait until you get home?”

finis

Chapter End Notes
Tribuo Vita: (Latin for give life)

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