Virtue

by HumbleMelon2000

Summary

Lucius Malfoy was always one with a Silver-Tongue. He could talk his way out of punishment and whisper his will into the ears of men more powerful than he. But the thing that always entranced Harry wasn't his words, it was his eyes. Deep and unforgiving mercury.
To Harry, Lucius was poison.
To Harry, Lucius was death personified.
Death and Harry had always been very close.
The first time Harry met Lucius, he was only 12 years old.

That morning he'd come downstairs to the smell of bacon cooking itself in a frying pan as Molly Weasley rushed around the kitchen getting all of her children's things ready. Harry had stood on the rickety wooden stairs with his eyes glazed over as he took in the full English breakfast laid out on the table, half of the family were already in their seats with lazy eyes and reluctant looks as their mother tried to force them into cloaks.

Harry could barely move. It had been a month since he'd had a proper meal. Hours spent slavering over the stove at home cooking meals for his ungrateful family to quench their piggish appetites. All he'd received were the scraps, the last time he'd had a piece of bacon it was a centimeter of a rasher that had been severely burnt. He'd scraped it off the bottom of the pan in secret before hastily washing away the evidence with a brillo pad. And here he was now, staring at a veritable buffet being offered to him by a woman he'd spoken to a total of 6 times with a huge smile on her face as if this was a normal occurrence.

It wasn't.

He'd sat down at the table in a daze and scooped 2 rashers of bacon and a spoonful of scrambled eggs onto a piece of golden brown toast and sat there munching it sedately. His stomach was still unused and he felt he'd be sick if he ate much more. The Weasleys, mainly Ron, didn't have the same qualms.

As he started to digest, all of the family was urged into the 'living room' area and Mrs. Weasley lit a fire with a wave of her wand and held out a pot of some ashy substance towards him. "This, Harry" she gestured towards the pot, "is floo powder. All you need to do is take a handful, drop it into the flames and say where you're going. Ron! Why don't you come and show Harry!"

Ron came over and gave him a crooked grin as he grabbed a handful of the gray ash. He stepped into the flames and Harry winced until he realized Ron wasn't burning at all! Ron cleared his throat and said loudly, "Diagon Alley!" The powder dropped from his hand and the fireplace lit up in an explosion of green. When the flames died down, Ron was gone.

Harry barely kept his jaw off the floor. Within a few seconds, he was being ushered towards the flames and the pot was shoved towards him. "Come on Harry, we need to be quick. Remember to speak loud and clearly". Harry grabbed a handful and looked down at the flickering fire that was licking at his boots. "Diagonally", he shouted.

The world around him flared into explosive emerald. Then he was gone.

As he rematerialized, he realized instantly something was wrong. Firstly, he couldn't see Ron anywhere. In fact, he couldn't see anybody at all.

The shop he was in was a dusty antique store. Shelves were stocked ceiling high with an eclectic mix of goods from necklaces to books. He could see one wall dedicated to glass jars filled with rare potions ingredients from glowing leaves and roots to bloody flesh and crawling bugs. He saw an old fragile man hobble out of the backroom with a stack of books that he started to shelve, his clothes look old but high quality and his eyes had a weary yet somehow menacing quality to him like he knew things that would haunt you.
The bell on top of the door chimed and two pairs of boots came into Harry's view from where he was hiding behind a cabinet. Very carefully he slipped inside and out of view, leaving a small crack so that he could watch the conversation from the inside.

The first man came into view.

He was tall, probably about six foot but he held himself with such a straight posture and regal air that you couldn't help but feel he was a hundred times taller. His clothing was mostly black, blending into the darkness of the store. He wore a long black coat embroidered with silver patterns and held together with silver clasps, a dark navy shirt with the top few buttons undone and a pair of tight-fitting black trousers. His boots were some sort of high-quality hide and he held a black cane with a silver snakehead, mouth open with fangs ready to bite. Everything about him spoke of wealth and nobility. His long almost white blond hair fell down to his shoulders, accentuated by his pale skin and deep mercury eyes.

This man, mature as he was, bore a striking resemblance to someone Harry knew quite well. Somebody he despised.

"Father? Can we be quick I really must go see the new Nimbus 2001", pleaded the snobby voice of Harry's least favorite classmate.

"It can wait Draco", the man, Draco's father, said in a commanding voice. "This however cannot".

"But Father!" the boy whined. "If we don't get there soon they might sell out."

The elder Malfoy stopped abruptly, "You don't need a new broom. Your old one is perfectly acceptable and it would be pointless buying a new one if you don't even have enough skills to get on the house team."

Draco huffed indignantly, "I do! Somebody has to put Potter in his place and it's going to be me! I know it!"

"I'll get you a new broom under one condition. You will, by the end of the year, have the best test results in the year. I won't have you being beaten by a mudblood yet again".

"But Father", he moaned. "Granger's more textbook than human! The filthy brat thinks she's better than everyone else and spends most of her time absorbing books in the library. If I did that, I wouldn't have enough time to do my networking! Who else is going to keep control over the Slytherins as I do?"

"I won't settle for anything less, Draco. You remember how disappointed your mother was when she received your report last year?"

Draco seemed to visibly crumple at the mention of his mother and gave a dejected nod as he was led over the counter. Harry took this moment of distraction to slip out of the shop where he was found quickly by Hagrid and led back to where the Weasleys in Flourish and Blotts.

He saw the elder Malfoy one more time that day. And later, when reflecting, Harry couldn't help but think that in the dark menacing light of Knockturn Alley with that cruel glint in his eye, Lucius Malfoy looked like death personified.

Death was a concept Harry had come to know quite well over the years.
Chapter Summary

Harry and Lucius meet once again and this time a connection is formed that Harry can’t even begin to comprehend. What can he do?

“May I have a minute Professor?” Harry asked.

Dumbledore replied with a nod and a bemused expression on his face as he watched the young Gryffindor unlace his leather shoe, kick it off and pull a bright red sock with little embroidered snitches off his foot. He then placed it in the diary, taking care to avoid the residual slimy ink that had bled out of it not long earlier.

"I’ll try to be quick!" Then he ran off, his shoe only half on again and the laces flying everywhere as he zoomed down the spiral stairs and out past the Gargoyle statue and down the corridor.

"Mr Malfoy!” He shouted loudly as he saw the white blond hair whip around one of the corners.

The man stopped and his cane clicked against the floor as he turned around to face him.

"Lord”, he corrected with a smirk on his face.

"Excuse me?” Harry questioned as he stared up at the tall man, suddenly feeling like a very small child.

"If we’re going to he formal, Heir Potter, we might as well do it correctly. You may address me as Lord Malfoy, or don’t address me at all”, he raised a perfectly sculpted blond eyebrow as if daring him to talk back and Harry fought the petulance that wanted to show on his face.

"Well Lord Malfoy”, he said with no small amount of sarcasm in his tone. “I’d like to formally congratulate you in your honourable services to the school. And as a reward...you might as well take a trophy to honour the triumph”.

His eyes made contact with the bulging eyes of the cowering creature behind the mans legs as he handed over the diary. Lucius looked upon it with distain and turned a cruel smirk to him. “It is very much appreciated Heir Potter.”

He turned to walk away and threw the gift towards the quivering house elf to signify just how much he appreciated it.

Harry watched smugly as the elf caught the book and its eyes fell on the sock inside.

“Come Dobby. We mustn't be late”. But the elf wasn’t listening. Instead he was standing in the middle of the hallway with eyes bugged out clutching a worn, but still bright red, sock.

Lucius turned back around to look at his servant, his eyes resting on the item clutched in its hand. He started walking back towards the pair, his cane clicking ominously against the ground.

"Dobby..” he growled in warning.
“Master has given Dobby a sock”, the small elf whispered in wonder. Then his eyes flicked up to meet those of his former master and he announced loudly in defiance, “Dobby is free!”

“Heir Potter....”. The air around them became frigid as the man took him in with appraising mercury eyes. He took a step closer so that he could further examine the boy before him.

"I thought”, he murmured lowly, “just for a second there that what you did was very brave.” The corner of his mouth pulled up and a chilling smile now adorned his face. “But then I realised it was much more cunning...”

Harry flinched back at the word. The label he’d fought so hard against. The word that labelled him as a Slytherin, as the enemy.

Lucius caught sight of his face and smiled in triumph. He held his hand out towards Harry, with its pale yet glowing skin, pristinely filed nails and jewel encrusted rings that screamed to Harry that this man was one to be feared. To be revered.

Harry stood frozen staring at the hand in dread and confusion. “Its merely a gesture, Heir Potter. A promise of greater things to come.”

Harry reached out to accept the hand, a gesture that he’d rejected from the mans son a year before. It was almost as if something else was urging him to take his hand, something deep within his bones that he couldn’t ignore.

And when their hands met, something inside him sang. Power rushed through his veins in a ethereal symphony.

And if the widening of mercury eyes was any sign, Lucius felt it too.

They stayed that way, staring for about one minute more. Neither willing to lose contact before Lucius finally cleared his throat and let go.

"My apologies”, he murmured in a voice that made it seem if he was entirely sincere. “It seems that I had underestimated you, at least to some degree. I’m looking forward to seeing you again soon, Heir Potter. Hopefully under better circumstances”.

Then he turned and walked away, his cane tapping lightly on the floor.

Harry was left staring after him, his veins still tingling from the foreign magic that had invaded his blood minutes before. He turned to look at the house elf that was standing in the corner watching him with his mouth open in something like awe.

"Dobby”, he started slowly but the house elf was already jumping into action.

"Dobby will be very happy to keep the Great Harry Potter’s secrets! Dobby will be very pleased indeed”.

Harry nodded dazedly. He wasn’t sure exactly what was being kept secret, he didn’t understand at all. But something deep within him knew that the less people found out, the better.

Things like this didn’t happen. Even in the wizarding world. Just like people didn’t hear voices or talk to snakes. He didn’t need one more reason for people to look at him like he was a freak. Especially not because of Lucius Malfoy.
Chapter Summary

Lucius offers sanctuary to Harry when they meet in Diagon Alley. At Malfoy Manor, the truth of their connection is revealed and Harry is drawn closer in...

The feeling of freedom had drained very quickly once Harry had walked the adrenaline out of his system.

Sure, ‘blowing up’ his aunt had been oddly cathartic, but now he was stuck wandering Magnolia Crescent with a trunk wheeling by his legs and a stick clutched in his hand and nowhere to go. He could see an old woman looking out of the window with bright red rollers in her hair pointing him out to some unseen friend hiding behind the curtains in their living room.

How absurd he must look. How unnatural. Look at that freak!

He could practically feel the bruises on his back become more painful at those words shouted at him in the dark as fists pummelled into his weak body.

He’d barely escaped the wrath this time. Running outside with his belongings in a burst of adrenaline that had led him to flee the cookie cutter house on Privet Drive.

Now here he was wandering the streets with the threat of expulsion weighing heavily on his shoulders.

It was just his luck that he’d lose his one chance of escape, those blissful months in his remote Scottish school where he could learn magic and act like a real teenage boy, for a 10 minutes of ‘freedom’ and a cold night spent on the streets.

The only money he had was a few spare galleons that wouldn’t get him one bus trip let alone a night in a half decent inn or hostel. Besides, he couldn’t go to Gringotts to switch his money because the ministry would probably find him and expel him on the spot.

His only chance was to find a place on the streets in a neighborhood where he wouldn’t get mugged and beaten within an inch of his life in the middle of the night. Perhaps he could stay in one of the playparks nearby. They were relatively isolated and there were some bushes that he could sleep under so nobody could find him.

He turned around and started heading in the direction of the nearest park when his eye caught something across the road. He could see them, a pair of eyes glowing under the street lights.

They were looking directly at him.

The face started to appear out of the hedge, forming the distinct appearance of a muzzle with lips pulled back and its teeth bared in a snarl. The menacing growl vibrating around the empty streets and Harry felt a shiver go down his spine.

The dog started to advance, as it got further out of the bush more of its body was revealed. Black fur matted to its skin with dirt and mud and sharp claws, ears perked up listening to his every movement.
Waiting for the perfect moment to strike.

Harry stumbled backwards and collapsed on his ass in on the pavement, his hands scraped painfully across the rock but he was no stranger to pain. In this moment he was too filled with fear to care.

Was this how he’d die?

Not in a battle of blazing glory with a dark lord like everyone expected? Not because of infected wounds and the slash of a belt against his back? Harry Potter would die in the middle of a Little Whinging, bleeding to death and mangled by mutt. His flesh torn and his magic unable to repair such damage.

He would die, not surrounded by wizards or even by people who would care for him remotely. Someone would probably find him on their morning jog and he’d go down in history as that freakish delinquent from number four who was mauled to death by a dog. Good riddance, they’d say. And they’d mean it.

Just as the dog started into a sprint across the road, the sound of a roaring engine screeched onto the road and the dog let out a sound like a wounded cat and scarpered. Harry stared in shock, feeling like an absolute idiot that his menacing attacker was scared away by something as common as a bus. In hindsight, his fears seemed absolutely ridiculous.

"What ‘choo doin’ on the floor for?"

He looked up to see a pimple-faced teen only a few years older than him wearing a bright purple suit standing on the steps of an equally horrid coloured bus.

“Well get up then”. Harry scrambled hastily to his feet and tried to pick a few pieces of gray rock out of his scraped hands.

“Welcome to the Knight bus. Emergency transport for the stranded witch n wizard!”

”Night bus?"

The teen rolled his eyes and pointed to a small crown on his faded and patched jacket. “Knight, like Afur n dat. Where d’yoo wanna go?”

Harry looked up at the three-storied bus in apprehension, suddenly feeling as is he’d have been a lot safer fending off the mutt in a dark street.

He sighed in resignation. “Just take me to the leaky, please”.

“That’ll be 11 sickles for the ticket, 14 if you wan’ a hot chocolate and 15 for a hot water bottle and a toofbrush in any colour”. Harry searched through his trunk quickly for any spare sickles and handed them over before getting onto the rickety bus and taking a seat on one of the beds with a blue striped duvet.

"Start it up Ern!” He shouted loudly and the engine revved into gear and the bus started moving at lightning speed. It was only Harry’s reflexes that stopped his head whipping backward and leaving a pole-shaped dent there. The view from the window all blurred into a green and gray mess and Harry could see nothing as they weaved in and out of traffic. One of the women opposite him sat peacefully reading a Daily Prophet and sipping a cup of tea that somehow hadn’t spilled even at breakneck speeds.

His eyes were drawn to the picture on the front. A worn out and dirty man dressed in striped clothes,
his teeth were dirty and rotting and he had a look in his eyes that showed his lack of sanity. Sirius Black: Still on the run, the title read. Something about both the name and face were familiar to Harry. The old women's eyes met his and she smiled broadly before they narrowed in suspicion and slight recognition. Luckily, the bus pulled to a stop.

"Charin' cross", the bus conductor announced loudly. "Just opposit the leaky."

Harry picked up his trunk and smiled a bit wearily at the man as he struggled to stay upright and contain his nausea. He hopped of and turned to one of the crossings and waited for the light to tell him he could go. The Leaky Cauldron looked exactly the same as it did last time, still a bit dingy and out of place with its old fashioned almost Elizabethan decor. Yet it still had that aura of magic about it, something to show that despite its appearance this pub was somewhere special.

Harry entered, his eyes downcast and his fringe hastily arranged to cover his famous scar. He stumbled up to the bar to where Tom was standing serving a customer a large flagon of beer and a packet of honey roast nuts with a moving blue bee on the front that winked every time you caught its eye. "Excuse me", he said only loud enough to catch the bartenders attention. He came over, swinging a rag over his shoulder with a bright smile on his face. "What can I get for yah lad?"

"A room, please? For a few weeks, until school starts again". Tom looked him up and down, doubtful that he'd be able to pay especially with the state of his clothes. His face softened at the look of misery on his face. "Of course lad. What's your name?"

"Harry", he murmured. His eyes flickering to the corners of the room scared that someone would overhear. "Harry Potter".

A look of recognition came over the bartenders face. "Why didn't you say? It's been a while since I last saw you, hardly recognized ya. You've gotten taller!" He summoned a book into his hand and started flicking through the pages whilst mumbling under his breath. He stopped suddenly and looked up. "Blimey, can't believe I forgot! You're already booked in Harry. You're in room 14, Minister Fudge is waiting up there for ya".

Harry choked, "The minister?"

"Yeah. He came in not a while ago. I was too busy cleaning up a mess over in the corner that I hardly noticed. Not that he's very forgetful mind you. He said to send you up if you came".

Harry nodded quickly and headed to the stairs where the bartender gestured. "Breakfast is at 10!" he called out but Harry didn't think he'd have the opportunity to make it.

He knocked on the door and entered as soon as it opened. He closed it swiftly behind him and scanned the room for his visitor. Minister Fudge was sat in the middle of a room at a little table. There was a teapot and a tray with small cakes that the man had happily dug into already. "Ah Harry!" he said cheerily like he was addressing an old friend. "Come! Sit! How do you like your tea?"

Harry watched in fascination as a teapot rose to hover by his cup awaiting his command. "Milk, no sugar". The minister nodded and gestured to the cakes. "Feel free to help yourself"

Harry examined the man, he was portly but not quite the same size as his uncle. His size came off more like a fat happy Santa than the monstrosity that his uncle represented. He was wearing green robes and a purple tie, his hat was tilted at a jaunty angle, his smile was welcoming and genial. He wasn't sure whether to relax or to be even more on edge than before.
"Don't look so tense, young man! You're not in trouble! I had the accidental magic reversal squad out to sort the problem and your aunt should be right as rain". He smiled and bit into a purple cake. Harry's eyes narrowed in relief and confusion. If he wasn't being expelled than why was the Minister here. He voiced this issue politely and the man's face become slightly subdued. "Its nothing you need to be worried about. I've arranged for you to stay for the last 3 weeks until school starts."

There was a hooting noise from across the room and Harry watched in amusement as his snowy white owl flew in through the window. The Minister quirked an eyebrow, "That's a very smart owl you have there". He checked his watch and stood hastily. "I'm very sorry Harry but I must go. The Ministry needs me!" Then with a nod to Harry, he picked up his briefcase and left, closing the door behind him.

It took a few moments for him to compose himself before he collapsed back onto the bed. Hedwig flew down beside him and he took the time to stroke her feathers as she preened and chirped happily. "Well, that could've gone a hundred times worse."

"The usual Harry?" Florean Fortescue asked as he came to the table where Harry was sat outside his store doing his homework.

"Yes please! Can I have pecans instead of walnuts this time?"

"No problem!" the shopkeeper smiled and looked over his shoulder at the work. "Transfiguration? I thought you finished that yesterday".

Harry frowned, "Me too. Apparently, I was a few inches short. Can I please borrow one of your books again?"

"Of course I'll bring it over in a minute".

Harry picked up his quill again and looked down at his parchment when a shadow loomed over his table. "Heir Potter, I didn't realize you were in the business of taking handouts".

He recognized the aristocratic drawl almost immediately and looked up to see Lucius Malfoy staring down at him. His cane was absent, as were the formal overrobes he usually wore. Instead, it was swapped for a pair of black trousers and a silver shirt with first few buttons undone. His long silvery hair was done up in a low ponytail. Something about the state of dress made Harry's stomach flutter and he had absolutely no idea why. He looked about as casual as somebody of his class could get, probably thanks to the sweltering summer heat uncharacteristic of British weather. Despite his clothing, he was still menacing enough that everyone steered clear of him and watched in slight horror as he approached the Boy-Who-Lived.

"Lord Malfoy", he nodded politely as the man sat down opposite him and clasped his hands gently on the table in front of him. "To what do I owe the pleasure?"

The man grinned like a shark, "It's delightful to know that you find my company pleasurable".

"Its a figure of speech, I merely find you tolerable". Harry stated and tried to return to his work discretely.

"For a boy raised by muggles, you speak remarkably well". Harry bristled at the hidden insult.

"I read a lot more than people think. I'm smart enough to know that I shouldn't speak to you as I speak to my friends", he commented lightly.
Lucius smirked, "Is that because I'm a Lord? Or because I'm a pureblood?"

Harry snorted. "Perhaps. Or maybe because I find it a lot more amusing to talk like a so-called noble, this way when I beat you I'm beating you at your own game. Its much more entertaining this way".

Lucius shook his head in amusement, "Yet again, Heir Potter, I find myself wondering how you weren't placed in my Alma Mater".

"It's not impossible for somebody to represent all of the houses. Hermione's a Gryffindor but she'd do amazing in Ravenclaw. Bravery and Intelligence aren't mutually exclusive". Something about his response made Lucius' eyes light up with an unknown spark.

"I couldn't agree more".

Florean came over holding a tray with a strawberry sundae on decorated with summer fruits, chocolate sauce, and pecans. His eyes fell on Malfoy and widened, he looked worried and Harry waved him off accepting the sundae with a smile on his face to show that there was nothing to be worried about. "Would you like anything Lord Malfoy?" he said politely with only a hint of warning in his tone.

Lucius ignored it completely, "I wouldn't mind a glass of your finest lemon sorbet Mr. Fortescue, to cleanse the pallet."

The man nodded and walked off, still looking suspicious.

"I'd like to make a deal with you Heir Potter", he started slowly and Harry gulped imperceptibly. Suddenly he felt very worried about the dangerous man in front of him, who'd seemed so charming and calm a few moments before. "It is nothing to worry about. I would like to offer a room for you to stay, in my manor until September the first".

Harry startled and stared up at him with narrowed eyes. "Why? What do you want from me?"

"Nothing much", he said lightly. "We have only spoken a few times and yet I find myself very intrigued with you. Not just with your image but what lies behind it. I would like the opportunity to learn more, for us to talk and hopefully for you to listen. There are some things that I must say, but I wish to do it in a peaceful setting where we can see eye to eye. Think of this as me handing you an olive branch".

"What about Ginny?" he growled. "I can't just forget about what you did to her".

"I'm not asking for you to. I merely want an opportunity to explain, then you can decide whether to stay or leave. I'm not forcing you to do anything"

"What will your son say about this?" Harry wasn't exactly looking forward to a summer of Draco Malfoy hexing him and taunting him endlessly.

"Draco and Narcissa are on holiday in Sicily until the first. I have a small dinner party with my business partners in a weeks time but you won't be required to attend. It will be just us." He smiled. "You'll have access to the library of course, and the quidditch pitch. Think of it as an extended holiday with a rather eccentric host".

Not long ago, Harry would've recoiled and stormed off ten minutes earlier. But something about those deep mercury eyes drew him in and trapped him like a fly in a spiders web. No matter how much his mind wanted to leave, his body stayed still. He was completely entranced.
"If I agree, you have to promise not to harm me."

"I will swear it on my magic", the man replied solemnly. Harry nodded reluctantly and the older man smirked. "Well then, we can leave as soon as I finish my sorbet".

Seeing Malfoy Manor was by far the most surreal experience Harry had had in the magical world so far. If this was where Draco Malfoy had lived his whole life it wasn't hard to see why he was an entitled snot. Harry resented him just a tiny bit more.

The whole manor was like a French chateau, made out of white marble and situated in the middle of beautiful flowering fields and sprawling woodlands it was a scene out of a fairy tale. Like Buckingham Palace infused with thousands of years of magic. There were unfamiliar magical creatures roaming the gardens freely and nibbling on plants. He could see a few horses being groomed outside a stable by a tall pale man in a pale blue uniform.

He was let up a grand set of stairs and through a front door where they were greeted by a house elf. This one seemed to have fared much better than Dobby as he was wearing real clothing, similar to the pale blue of the stable hand with an odd crest on the front. He greeted them as Master and Heir Potter then led them through the halls and out onto a patio overlooking a garden that framed a natural pool. Harry took this time to examine the high-quality decorations like the solid silver candles lining the walls and the large family portraits, one of which was an image of a younger Lucius. He was probably only 15 in the picture, he was smirking and looking down on him. His hair, in the picture, was the same blond only it reached just below his chin and seemed wavier. There were similar portraits of many other family members at that age.

On the patio, there was a small table and set of wrought iron chairs. On the table was a tray with 2 glasses of cold, hand-pressed lemonade. "I hope you don't mind the setting. I didn't want to waste what little sun we will get."

He sat down opposite Lucius and smiled nervously, "Not at all. I spend far too much time inside anyway".

Lucius cleared his throat and took a sip of his drink. "I suppose I should start with an explanation of why I asked you here. I have thought long and hard about our last meeting as I'm sure you have as well. Judging by your expressions on the day, you had the same reaction as I".

Harry fought to keep calm and merely nodded distractedly as he watched a swan wander around through a patch of peonies.

"What I'm going to talk to you about is going to seem controversial, against everything your friends and teachers have taught you. Its why I asked you here. I'm hoping you can give me a chance to explain before you reject my ideas entirely".

Harry nodded slowly, his eyes narrowing but willing to give the man the benefit of the doubt for the moment. He hadn't seemed as hostile as normal up to this moment but, knowing what he did about him, the tides could turn very quickly.

"The nature of magic itself has been debated for many years. By both the Ministry and independent parties such as myself. My family is very old and my ancestors' research still remains in our library to this day and one thing that has become a common fact amongst my family is that the nature of magic is not in fact purity, purity that can be manipulated and tainted into darkness like so many believe but in fact magic longs to be neutral. Both equally light and dark to create a balance, where magic exists in its most stable form". Lucius was leaning forward now, his elbows rested on the table and his eyes
completely focused on Harry who was looking at him as if he was mad.

"For many many years, dark magic practitioners have been prosecuted for performing the arts that are most natural to them. They were thrown away to rot in Azkaban without a trial. Light magic was seen as the right way, the only way. More people adhered to this notion and those who practiced the dark arts either hid or abandoned their ways out of fear for their lives. And so magic fell out of balance. Less and less magical children were born, more squibs to families who have birthed only magicals for hundreds of centuries. The magic that was left went haywire. Children born had either magic on the levels of Dumbledore or barely enough to get a letter to Hogwarts. In the last century, more dark families have been reemerging and magic has slowly shifted towards balance. I joined the dark lord at the age of 18 believing that he would be the final push towards the return of magic as it once was". Harry's eyes flickered up to him in shock at his first full admission of being a Death Eater.

"But he tricked us, lured us in with his delusions and manipulated us into doing his bidding. His ambitions would only tip the scale in the other direction and cause far more harm than was ever necessary. I will always regret the day I was lured in by a mad man". His eyes turned steely, "But I will never feel sorry for doing what I thought was best at the time."

Harry's brain was firing into overload at this moment. As much as he wanted to deny this man, the dark wizard before him who'd willingly followed the monster who murdered his parents. Who'd tried to kill him. But everything made sense. What had he been taught throughout primary school, all equations had to be balanced. It was a concept that even muggles understood. It applied to so many other things, why couldn't it apply to magic too?

"What about what happened to us?" He asked hesitantly.

Lucius smiled sadly, "It's like I said. Magic longs to be balanced. The magic within the both of us is equal but opposite, so when we touched the resulting force was completely balanced. Magic in its most powerful form was traveling through both of our veins. That sort of thing hasn't happened in hundreds of years because of how much society has repressed us. That magic, Harry, made me feel hopeful that one day we may return to the ways of my ancestors. A time where magic was a true gift that saturated the land in all of its forms, light, dark and everything in between". Lucius sat back and observed him pensively. "I invited you here today in the hope that you would assist me in my goals. As equal partners".

Harry eyed the man in front of him with steely emerald eyes. "I believe you, Malfoy. All except for one thing. If you despise the dark lord so much, why did you put that Diary in Ginny Weasley's cauldron".

"Albus Dumbledore", Lucius stated abruptly. "That man is the root of so many problems. Hundreds of kids go through Hogwarts each year and so many come out spouting his ideals. He is in the prime position to influence young minds and he teaches them to be light and kind and pure. The sad thing is is he doesn't know any better. Nobody does. I admit I wasn't 100% sure what the diary would do but I knew it would cause problems for him and if I pushed hard with the minister I could get him fired and out of a position of power. Of course, it didn't work exactly as planned". He received a pointed look and Harry took a quick sip of his lemonade.

Lucius watched the uncertainty blooming on his face, "You don't need to make a decision now. I invited you here so you could listen and take my ideas into consideration. You are free to leave at any time, but know that my hopes lie with you".

Harry sat back, the confusion warring within his mind alongside the strange sense of longing his magic felt to the man before him. His magic, the thing that flooded his veins and powered his lifeline
was calling out to the man before him. It longed to feel balanced. To feel whole.

How could this be wrong?

He held out his hand to Lucius in a gesture mirroring the one from months before. "I'm putting my trust in you Lucius. Don't make me regret this".

Something glinted in the mans eyes but it had disappeared before Harry had seen it.
Chapter Summary

Harry’s stay at Malfoy Manor continues. At night, a dream haunts Harry and makes him question everything.

The bed Harry was lying in was unlike any other he’d ever felt before.

Gone was the rickety mess that the Dursley’s had salvaged from a junk yard with its broken boards and the old stained mattress that felt like he was sleeping on a concrete mat.

The fabric beneath his fingers was soft and silky, the duvet covered the whole bed and was somehow both cold and warm at the same time, blocking out the summer heat yet making him feel homely all the same.

The light was streaming through a pair of dark blue curtains on the east side of the room and as his eyes opened blearily he took in the room fully for the first time.

The room, like most of the manor, was decorated in various shades of blue interspersed with whites and greys and blacks. Anything metal was either silver or gold and everything was extremely pristine and of high quality. On his bedside table sat a little message neatly written in calligraphy on a pearlescent piece of card.

Harry picked it up to read and snorted loudly at message, collapsing back onto the bed with a small laugh at how surreal this all felt. After a moment to gather himself he wandered over to the wardrobe as the note had instructed and opened the doors.

Inside was more clothes than he’d ever seen in his life, each one worth more than all of his belongings combined. There was everything from formal robes to nightwear and casual wear in colours like red and blue and green, all of them were his size and he felt a bit violated at the thought that someone had measured him in his sleep.

Whilst the majority of the clothes were in a wizarding style there was a small corner dedicated to styles that resembled muggle clothing, but still not created by muggle brands. It showed just how reluctant Lucius was to go near anything muggle.

Harry pulled out a pair of black jean-like trousers and a short sleeve dark green shirt along with some leather trainers.

He wandered into the bathroom to find a comb to tame his unmanageable hair. There on the marble countertop by the sink was another note, this time accompanied by a small box. He skipped the note in favour of opening the box. Inside was a pair of silver rimmed rectangular glasses.

Harry rolled his eyes and switched them with his round ones, finding that he could see a lot clearer than before without the need of tape to bind the glasses before.

A smartly dressed house-elf arrived to take him down the breakfast room on the other side of the manor where he found Lucius sitting on a leather backed chair sipping earl grey and reading the business section of the Daily Prophet.
The man looked his clothes up and down with a mix of both approval that he now looked less like a street rat and distain that he’d chosen the most muggle thing in the wardrobe. “You do realise I only put those things in the wardrobe to make you feel more comfortable. It wasn’t an open invitation to wear them around my house”.

Harry raised his eyebrows, “Nothing about this is making me feel very comfortable. And I didn’t want to wear dress robes when its supposed to be 26 degrees out today”.

"Fair enough”

Harry helped himself to a cup of coffee with lots of milk. He scanned the selection of odd French pastries, recognising croissants and pain au chocolat from breakfast at hogwarts, the rest seemed unfamiliar. He took the safest option and slathered a croissant in raspberry jam before taking a bite, Lucius watched him in disgust.

"For a moment Heir Potter, I thought that since you spoke like a human being you might eat like one. It seems I was mistaken”, he conjured a monogramed napkin with his wand and floated it towards the teen who grabbed it to wipe a stray piece of jam from the corner of his mouth.

"Sorry”, he mumbled once he swallowed. “I just really like jam. I’ll try to be more civilised”.

"Make sure you do that”, he paused for a moment. “Harry...may I call you Harry?”

The teen shrugged, “Most people do. It makes no difference. Can I call you Lucy?”

The mans jaw clenched and his eye twitched as he placed his cup down on the table, “You can try. Did you know my manor has a Dungeon, Heir Potter? It hasn’t been used for many years but I’m sure the wards still work very well. Would you like to see them?” He asked with a pleasant smile that did nothing to hide the vicious gleam in his eyes.

Harry winced and looked away, “I’m fine thanks. Maybe another day”.

"You should try the torsade. They are quite nice”.

Harry nodded and started reaching out, scanning the food to find whatever he thought suited the name the most. Lucius frowned, “You have no clue what I’m talking about do you?”

Harry frowned, “Yeah well I haven’t had a chance in my life to sample french cuisine”.

“My ancestors were from France”, Lucius said proudly. “The Head of House Malfoy came over to England as part of the court of William the Conqueror. Armand Malfoy was one of the King’s advisors and in return for his service he was given the money to build this manor where the Malfoys have resided since. Of course there have been renovations since then but the foundations are the same”.

"Can you speak French?” Harry asked. “I only know a bit because we learnt basic phrases in primary”.

"What is this Primary?” Lucius asked in confusion with his brows furrowed.

Harry couldn’t help the laugh at the expression. “Its school for young children. They teach you how to read, write and do maths. Do wizards not have that?”

Lucius shook his head, “Sometimes the pureblood families have group tutoring when they’re young but most families teach their own children”.

"So pureblood children are allowed to learn magic before Hogwarts?" He wondered allowed. It seemed extremely unfair to the Muggleborns.

"Not technically no", Lucius said with a small smirk. "They’re not allowed to have their own wands and they’d certainly get in trouble if the Ministry traced them. Of course you can still use somebody else wand to practice, and there are no ministry tracers that could ever break through wards as powerful as ours."

Harry perked up, "Does that mean I can use magic?"

"As long as you’re within the grounds you’re free to do whatever you wish."

Harry grinned and took a large gulp of his weak coffee then stood up from the table, "Well then Lucius. As nice as breakfast has been I think its time I go and explore."

Lucius nodded, "Be back by 1:30 for lunch. Do you have any preferences for the meal?"

Harry smiled, "I wouldn’t mind something French."

Harry’s first stop on the exploration of the manor was the family stables that was situated in a field near the front gates.

The same man from yesterday was there grooming a horse with hair almost as pale as that of Malfoy’s themselves. The man looked up and smiled at him. “I heard Lord Malfoy had a guest.” He pulled out a small box of sugar cubes from inside his jacket, “Would you like to pet him? He’s really quite gentle”.

Harry approached carefully, never having seen a horse in real life let alone stroked one. He took a sugar cube from the box and held it out to the animal, wincing slightly as it got closer before sniffing his hand and munching on the cube. The man beamed at him.

"My names Finley, this beautiful guy is Mathias”. Harry reached out to stroke the horses light blond hair as it munched on some more sugar cubes. “He’s one of the the Malfoy’s prize horses, he used to do shows but he injured his leg a while back and its too dangerous to ride him”. Harry took note of a nasty looking cut on one of his hind legs.

Finley led the horse back into its own stall and showed him some of the other horses. “The true beauties are the Abraxans.” He opened a large barn door into a separate section of the stable away from the horses.

Upon first sight, Harry immediately thought they were Pegasi with their large pure white wings on their backs but these animals were far too large. They were almost the size of elephants! “You can ride on if you want?” Finley said gently and Harry shook his head vigorously. “I’ve never even ridden a horse before, I wouldn’t be any good”.

The man smiled, “Just think of it like riding a broom. Except the brooms alive and you’re not in the air you’re on the ground”.

"That’s nothing like riding a broom”, he grumbled.

"It’s ok, I won’t force you. But if you ever do wanna try just come find me”, the man returned to brushing one of thw Abraxans’ hair as it gently flapped its wings and preened.

"Whats it like working for the Malfoys?" He asked in curiosity.
Finley chuckled. “I don’t like to think of it as working for the Malfoy’s, instead I work with their horses. It’s an entirely different job if you ask me. I spend my days doing what I love and I’m respected for it. Although I did teach young Draco to ride but that’s an entirely different story”.

”So you can teach me?” He pleaded.

That’s how Lucius found them a few hours later. Finley riding on a grey connemara whilst he was coaxing Harry around on one of Lucius’ favourite black Abraxans called Giselle.

He had a large smile on his face although it was still a bit shaky and he was clutching on the reins as if his life depended on it.

Both men approached and Finley dismounted from his horse and dipped straight into a bow. “Lord Malfoy”, he greeted.

”Thank you for keeping my guest occupied”, he replied civilly.

”It has been my pleasure. Harry has taken to riding like a duck to water”, he started to help Harry back down from Giselle. “Goodbye Harry, it’s been lovely meeting you”.

Harry waved happily and walked back to the manor with Lucius who cast a quick cleaning spell on Harry to get rid of some of the hay from the stables. Harry blushed in embarrassment.

”I’m glad to see you’ve enjoyed yourself”.

Harry beamed, “The horses really are beautiful. I’d never really seen one before”.

Lucius frowned, “Do the muggles not have horses?”

Harry nodded, “They do but not the ones I lived with. Only the richer people had them, or those who rode horses as a career. My relative weren’t nearly as active”.

”So they were lazy”, the Malfoy Lord sneered in disgust.

”Extremely so”, Harry muttered.

Lunch was served outside on the patio once again, it was some kind of seafood stew with an odd name that Harry couldn’t pronounce. There was a loaf of warm freshly cooked bread on the side and bottle of rosé wine opened with two glasses. Harry watched reproachfully as Lucius poured him some.

”The purpose of wine is to enjoy it with the meal, to savour the taste. In France children drink wine at family meals because it’s part of tradition, not because they want to get drunk”, Lucius handed him the glass and Harry took a small sip, realising that it actually tasted quite good, especially with the shellfish.

Lucius watched with a smirk on his face as Harry tucked into the meal. “The rosé is from Provence, as is the seafood. I like to know where my ingredients come from, I find it enhances the experience”.

Harry groaned quietly as he ate another bite of the delicious broth, trying to be more polite than he was at breakfast that morning. “This is amazing! I’ve never had food like it”.

”Have you chosen your electives for next year?” Lucius changed the subject.

“I know I’m going to do Care because it sounds interesting and apparently divinations an easy O...”
Lucius sneered, “What a pathetic excuse. I thought you better than the Weasley filth you spend your time with”. Harry opened his mouth in protest but Lucius stopped him with a glare. “Take the lessons you will enjoy, and if that doesn’t work take whatever you think will get you the furthest in the grand scheme of things. If I were you I’d take Runes. Runes and Arithmancy have mostly the same applications when it comes to spell-crafting but you don’t need the prior knowledge of equations.”

”Spellcrafting?” Harry asked in wonder. “You can do that?”

”Of course you can! Mostly its a job done through the ministry as you need a patent to publish your spells in a book or make them known to the public. Of course its a big advantage to make spells and keep them to yourselves. Your enemy wont know what to expect”, the man said wisely.

“What do I have to do?” Harry queried.

“The basics will be taught in Runes but in order to create a full spell you will have to do lots of hard work and self study”, a contemplative look came over his face. “But of course you already have a very useful tool at your fingertips”.

”What is it?”

Lucius grinned and Harry recoiled at his next word, “Parseltongue”.

”I couldn’t possibly”, he stuttered before Lucius cut him off.

”Languages such as Parseltongue have a root in magic itself, as do Latin and Mermish, which is why spells performed in those languages are usually some of the strongest, they take their power directly from your core rather than just the ambient magic that floats around the rest of your body. The written form of Parseltongue is a runic structure so any spell crafted will be far more complex anyway, you could effectively tailor a curse that only you can cast and only you can cure”, the elder man smirked as he swilled his fine around the glass.

“And you can teach me?” He asked in awe.

Lucius smiled in an odd manner, “Oh Harry. I can teach you everything”.

In his dreams. Harry is sitting by the pool.

The pool is beautiful, surrounded by wild flowers and pampas grass, water lilies float all around as his legs dangle over the edge. The only thing he’s wearing is a pair of dark grey chino shorts.

Somebody is standing behind him now, he can feel their breath on his neck, see their fluttering blond hair out of the corner his eye. He shivers, but it has nothing to do with the cold water lapping at his feet.

The body presses against his back and he can feel the lean muscles wrapped perfectly around him, he knows now that this isn’t the body of a girl. This is the body of a man. Something in the back of his mind screams freak but in his dreams, all Harry feels is bliss.

They’re kissing his neck now, lovingly and seductively. He wants to moan but he doesn’t want to sound to desperate. In the end, he decides he doesn’t care and just presses back into the warm body, letting his eyes flutter close as the hands now run up his chest.

He should feel embarrassed. That he, a scrawny teenage boy only just starting to develop any kind
of muscle, is being touched by this beautiful God of a man. But all he feels is pleasure.

"Moan my love", the seductive voice purrs in his ear. “I want to hear you”. Harry does exactly as he’s told and he can feel the man’s arousal against his back, no, further down.

“Lucius”, he moans in ecstasy and is rewarded with an affectionate nip on his neck in response. He turns to look backward and, just before their lips meet, his eyes become lost in pools of mercury. The colour of danger and pure desire.

In a manor in Wiltshire, Harry wakes up at 4 am, sweaty, achingly hard and with the wracking pain that comes with knowing that he truly is a freak.
Epiphany

Harry had never thought about sex before, at least not in detail.

His sex education had been a basic biology chucked at him by Aunt Petunia a year before stating that she didn't want the scandal of him 'knocking some trailer trash girl up' before running away with a look of disgust and horror on her face. He'd read the book purely because he'd finished his homework and had nothing else to do. He'd been far more interested in the chapters about genes and inheritance than he had about the actual sex.

At school, they didn't talk about sex explicitly but they did talk about girls. Seamus, in particular, was very crass when describing Laura King's body. They'd talk about which girl they thought was the 'fittest' and who they'd rather snog. Seamus would talk loudly and boast about whoever he'd kissed recently, although Harry was sure he was exaggerating over most of it, Dean and Ron would join in with their comments and Neville would sit there bright red and blush, seeming both confused and entranced with it all. Harry himself would have some sort of Quidditch magazine in his lap, trying to ignore the conversation completely and only talking when directly addressed.

Harry had thought nothing about his lack of interest, the book had said about puberty and he'd always just assumed he hadn't reached that stage yet.

Now he knew different. Harry was truly a freak.

Men didn't have sex with other men, not in the muggle world and not in the wizarding one. His uncle had always been extremely vocal about disgusting poofs and faggots, it had been one of his favorite insults to use against Harry as a child and apparently it was true. Harry was attracted to men, and more specifically Lucius Malfoy.

If anybody found out, the wizarding world would condemn him. The sanctuary he found would want to throw him out onto the streets in disgust. Harry curled up in the middle of the bed and let out a choked sob. Disgusted with himself. Disgusted with what he'd become.

Slowly, Harry started to cry.

It was 3 pm and Lucius still hadn't been joined by his houseguest.

He would be lying if he said he wasn't worried, Harry was punctual and it wasn't like him to be late. Of course, it could just be some typical teenage problem. Draco was like that all the time, getting hysterical over nothing and refusing to leave his room. Of course, his son was extremely overdramatic and Harry was nothing like that.

Up until then, he was hesitant to call a house elf to get the boy not wanting to invade his personal space, but it had been far too long. "Lottie?" he called out in an imperious voice. A house elf arrived dressed in dark blue and staring at the floor, not willing to meet his eyes. "Yes Master?" it asked meekly. "Bring my guest, tell him its time for afternoon tea." The elf disappeared.

The library fireplace beside him lit up and a tall man stepped out, he was dressed head to toe in black. He had unhealthily pale skin, dark greasy hair and a rather unflattering hooked nose. He sneered at the man before him, "Lucius".
"Severus!" he greeted him with fake cheer. "It's been far too long since we last talked, I find your letters to be rather lacking".

"I'm not here for a social call". Onyx eyes flicked around the room as if he was searching for something, before zeroing back in on Lucius again. "I was at home brewing a very long and complicated potion when I received a frantic call from the Headmaster. It seems that Harry Potter, who was supposed to be staying at the Leaky Cauldron for the next few weeks, has gone missing. And the last person he was seen talking to was you. Would you be able to point me in his direction?" He said all of this in a vicious cutting tone that would've made any other lesser being cower. Lucius merely gestured to the leather backed chaise opposite him and crossed his legs to show how completely unfazed he was.

"Your witnesses are right, I did have a very interesting conversation with Potter. The subject of which is of no matter to you. As for your question, I have no idea where he is. Perhaps Dumbledore should keep a closer eye on his wards", he suggested lightly even as the man's eyes darkened.

"I can tell you're lying to me Lucius", he snarled.

The blond man laughed, "Of course you can. You and your mind tricks, but can you prove it? If you're so sure he's here, why don't you find him and drag him back to your puppet master like a good little boy."

"I don't think you understand the position I'm in".

"I could say the same to you", he replied instantly. "Rest assured, the boy will be on the train on September the first. With or without my influence. Now if you'll excuse me I must go write a letter to my son, he's been pestering me for the last few days about buying a manor in Italy and you know how he gets when I ignore him."

He rose from his seat and brushed off some non-existent dust from his perfect grey robes before leaving the room. He waited just outside the door for the sound of the floo before he started heading towards the family wing where Harry was housed. Arriving outside the room, he heard the commotion inside.

"Master ordered Lottie to bring his guest!" the elf exclaimed indignantly.

"Tell your Master I'm not well", came the muffled voice of his guest.

"Lottie knows you're lying! Mr. Potty is being a very bad guest making Lottie lie to her Master. You must listen!" There was the soft sound of something being hit and Lucius pulled his wand, silently opening the door with an Alohomora he pushed his way inside.

Harry was curled up on the bed, dressed in his silk pyjamas with a tear-stained face as the angry elf threw pillows at him in an attempt to make him move. They both flinched at the sound of the door and Lottie dropped all the pillows with a wail, "Lottie is so sorry Master! Lottie didn't mean to disobey you. Please don't punish Lottie".

"Leave", he commanded. "Now!" The elf wailed and disappeared with a crack. Harry watched him from where he was sat on the bed with an angry look on his face.

"You don't need to be so rude to her!" He shouted angrily, his voice still croaky from crying. "She was only trying to be helpful."

Lucius completely ignored the complaint and stepped closer to the bed, "What troubles you?"
"I really don't want to talk about it". The boy sounded extremely distressed, nothing like Draco's petulant tears that he always handled with stern words and the promise to revoke his monthly allowance.

"If you don't talk to someone the problem will never be solved", he approached slowly. Trying to get the boy to talk to him was like getting dragons blood out of a stone.

He received an incomprehensible murmur. "Pardon?" "Bring Finley. Please".

"The stable hand?" he asked in confusion and insult. The boy was passing him off for a mere servant?

"I can't talk to you about this".

He rolled his eyes and muttered something about teenage boys before heading off to find the stable hand.

Finley arrived ten minutes later to find Harry in much the same state. "Harry? Are you ok?"

Harry lifted his head from his pillow to look at Finley with utter despair on his face, "No. I'm the furthest thing from ok possible".

"Do you want to talk?"

"I'm scared you won't like me anymore", he answered in a small voice like a broken child.

Finley laughed humourlessly, "Don't worry. There's nothing you could say that would make me hate you. To be honest I'm rather flattered that you asked me here. Usually, people only want me to put saddles on their horses."

"I couldn't talk to Lucius".

"He is rather intimidating at times..." he said lowly. "But he certainly is wise". The boy glared at him as if this made things a hundred times worse.

The boy let out a shuddering breath and stared at the ceiling, he was regretting bringing Finley here, regretting coming here at all. If he hadn't he'd still be innocent and unaware, he wouldn't have to deal with this. He could carry on pretending to be normal like everyone else did. Seamus liked girls, Ron and Dean did, for Merlin's sake even Neville did! Yet he, Harry Potter, who already had all eyes on him and the weight of the world on his shoulders, had to be the unnatural one. The fucking fruit loop. Who was he kidding, from the moment that curse hit his head as a baby he was destined to be a freak.

"I think I'm gay", he announced loudly to the room. Not even to Finley but to the universe, like a sickening revelation. An epiphany of all that was tainted in his soul. He turned to the man, as if acknowledging him for the first time. "Do you want to curse me now? Because I would".

Finley looked at him with shock on his face, "Harry. I don't understand..."

"What don't you understand?" he shouted in anger. "The fact that I'm depraved, that I'm a monster! Are your delicate sensibilities too shocked?"

"Harry there's nothing wrong..."

"Bullshit", he snarled. "Utter bullshit. I've seen how people look at gays, with horror on their faces. I
saw a mother cover her child's eyes because they thought it was too horrific for their innocent child to see. And now people are going to look at me that way. With disgust. And they're right, I feel like a disgusting human being".

"Harry", the other man put a hand on his shoulder. "I'm not going to lie. There are people out there who are homophobic, but that's not something wrong with you its something wrong with them. What you're feeling is completely natural and perfectly normal in the wizarding world. There are gay couples everywhere, just because it's not staring you in the face doesn't mean it's not there. It doesn't matter who you like or who you love."

"They told me it was wrong", he whispered as if in disbelief. "They made me believe it was wrong".

"From what I've heard about your relatives, their words aren't the sort of thing to put your faith into."

"What do I do?" he asked in confusion and Finley put a comforting hand on his knee.

"You do nothing. Because there's nothing to be done. It's not a problem so it doesn't need a solution. Just try to put faith back into yourself. You'll need it". Harry gave him a really weak smile. "If you want we can go and groom Giselle? Its very calming".

"Thank you".

"No problem", he grinned.

Harry sat down at the dinner table that day with a small grin on his face and a piece of straw in his hair. He poured himself a glass of dark red wine and took to sipping it as the steak was served, medium rare and sat upon a bed of vegetable grown on the grounds.

Lucius watched him warily with a raised brow, "You seem to have recovered.."

"Finley took me on a horse ride through the nearby woods. I thought I'd never find something as good as flying but riding is amazing!"

"Giselle can be yours if you wish", Lucius offered and Harry gaped at him.

"What do you mean?" He asked shocked. "I can't take her I have nowhere to put her!"

Lucius chuckled, "I didn't mean for you to adopt her. But you would be welcome at any time to come visit her, or me. We're allies now, and that means certain privileges".

Harry watched him with new eyes, taking in the man's stature and clothing. He repressed the disgust he felt creeping up his spine and instead focused on the man in front of him. Dressed in impeccable black robes, his hair shiny and soft where it rested on his shoulders. The man noticed his eyes, watching him with no small amount of anticipation as if trying to guess what he'd do next.

Lucius leaned forward and tensed his fingers together, "What are you thinking Harry?"

"Something that I shouldn't", he murmured quietly. Not wanting to break eye contact, to break the moment and the magic that seemed to be building and reacting in the air between them.

"You should know by now that I don't care for things such as legalities and social niceties."

"Its not them I care about", Lucius seemed to freeze in his seat for a moment, drumming his fingers against the table.
"It's your move Potter, you can leave whatever this is right here and we'll never speak of this again", he offered in a dark voice.

Harry rose from the table and took a step closer, a sudden burst of confidence filling his veins. "I've been thinking about a lot of things Lucius. What I am, what I want."

"What do you want?" he asked roughly.

"You".

And then he placed his lips on the older man's, nervous about his inexperience but it didn't matter as the man quickly grasped the back of his head and took control. Harry never felt such relief as in the moment, as he let the man dominate the kiss with his effortless seduction. Soft lips moved against his and teeth nipped against his bottom lip as he hesitantly joined in, trying to match the other man's movements. Soon they were moving in harmony.

Lucius leaned out of the kiss, both of their breaths were ragged. Harry's skin was flushed with shame and arousal whilst Lucius watched on with sharp eyes. "Do you understand what you're getting involved with?"

"Not completely", he said breathlessly trying to lean in for another kiss. "I don't care".

Lucius held him back, his fingers entwined in the teen's hair with an iron grip. "You're young, don't do something you'll regret."

"I want this more than anything else in the world".

"I'm 39", he said harshly. His voice so quite yet it reverberated through his bones. "That's a 26 year age gap. I'm old enough to be your father".

"My fathers dead", he said blankly. "And I thought you said you didn't care about social niceties".

"You're right. I did say that".

And then they didn't say anything as Harry was pulled onto his lap and into a kiss filled with passion and all of Harry's anxieties melted away into nothing.
Meeting the Family

Chapter Summary

Harry and Lucius get even closer, afterwards Lucius decides to visit a few very special people to give them what they deserve.

“You should eat your dinner, its not half as nice when its cold”, Lucius said in a matter of fact tone. Harry flinched back from where he was seated in his lap, his skin still red and flushed and the feel of rejection now weighing heavy on his mind.

He stood up slowly and retook his seat on the other side of the table, his eyes downcast.

“Was this just a joke to you then?” He spat, his anger now fizzling to the surface.

Lucius laughed coldly, “Do I look like the sort of man who plays childish jokes? I thought that perhaps we should slow down before we did something far less appropriate at the dinner table”.

“I don’t care where we do it”, he grinned acting fully like the teen he was.

"I don’t care much either but I’d rather not do it on my great-grandmothers 200 year old mahogany table. Its antique”.

Harry laughed and rolled his eyes as he ate a forkful of broccoli. “Well where would you rather be?”

“Would the bedroom not be more comfortable?” He asked with a raised brow. “Or at least chaise longue. There’s a perfectly nice one in the library”.

“The bedroom”. He concluded nervously.

Quarter of an hour later he was being led upstairs to a bedroom on the floor above the one he was staying in. It was much larger than his own, something he’d thought was impossible. The bed was a royal blue, sitting on a circular raised platform and there was a balcony that over-looked the orchard. The wardrobe was a room instead a large armoire with light curtains to separate it from the rest of the room.

He followed Lucius inside as he took off his over-robe to hang it up on the left hand side. Guilt pooled in his stomach as he noted the racks of formal dresses on the right. He remembered the image of Lucius’ wife from a family portrait downstairs although he didn’t recognise her name. The familiar sense of wrongness was returning to him, and fast.

Lucius watched his gaze, “Lets not talk about that now”.

”’That won’t stop me thinking about it”. 

Lucius came over to him, his hands to run through Harry’s hair in a gentle yet possessive grip. “Would it ease your mind if I told you Narcissa was in Sicily right now, very likely having sex with her lover. I’ve met him, his name’s Ilias and although his sense of style has room for improvement he makes the finest lemon sorbet”.
“But...why?” He stammered.

Lucius sighed and sat down on a white velvet ottoman. “Narcissa is beautiful, and I love her but never as a lover, only as a sister, especially as we grew up together. Most pureblood families attempt to arrange marriage contracts for their daughters as soon as they are proven fertile around the age of fourteen. Her father wished to marry her to Rodolphus Lestrange, a brutal and deranged man. Narcissa is strong, but he would’ve broken her, beaten her and raped her.” Harry felt sickened to his core by now. “I offered to marry her in his stead. The contract stated that she would provide me with one heir and in return her family received a hefty bride price. I had sex with her 3 times, to ensure Draco was conceived, and she’s slept in a separate room ever since”.

"Isn’t it lonely?” He asked in a curious sadness. “Being married but knowing you could never love her”.

“I certainly resented it as a young man, I felt trapped and spent most of my nights for the first year in a whorehouse in Budapest having sex with many young men and women. But Narcissa made me change my ways and I will never regret doing what was best for my family”. He turned to meet Harry’s eyes. “I’m a cruel man Harry, but I will always do what is best for my family. No matter what it takes”.

Harry nodded in understanding, because truly he did understand. Harry had never had a true family, no matter how hard the Weasley’s had tried to take him in and make him feel at home it would never be quite the same. Which was why if he ever did have one, he would never let go.

Harry wandered over to the man and placed a gentle kiss on his cheek, blushing at the contact that was more tender than the passion from earlier.

Lucius grasped his hand as he leant back and caressed it with his long pale finger, “You truly are a strange one Harry Potter.”

He sat down on the ottoman, basking in the calm and peaceful atmosphere. “After the summer, what will we do?” He turned around suddenly thinking he’s said the wrong thing.

“I thought we’d made a deal, your help for my guidance. Do you not wish to maintain it?”

”No!” He shook is head frantically. “It’s just we won’t be able to talk. I’ll be at Hogwarts all year and it would look a bit suspicious if I suddenly decided I wanted to spend the holidays with my ‘relatives’”.

”You have an owl, don’t you? We can correspond through letters and perhaps I can meet you on the Hogsmeade weekends”.

”I can’t. My Uncle refused to sign the slip so I have to stay at school”.

Lucius’ expression turned cool, “Don’t worry. That won’t be a problem”.

”What..?” He started but was silenced quickly with a kiss.

“Wouldn’t you rather return to our earlier activities?”

Lucius stood and picked him up bridal style, ignoring his shouts of outrage to let him down. He was dropped on the bed, bouncing lightly on the soft mattress as the man slowly started to unbutton his shirt, revealing his pale lean muscles, then leaning forward to grab the bottom of Harry’s t-shirt and pulling it swiftly over his head. Harry tried to cover up his chest with his hands but Lucius stopped him, “We wouldn’t be here if I didn’t find you attractive”.
Lucius captured his lips in a searing kiss, diving straight in with his tongue to taste the flavours in his mouth. Harry could still taste the wine from earlier and it was even more delightful in this setting. Strong hands traced his lightly tan skin, tweaking his nipples and bringing pleasurably sensations to a place he’d never thought to touch before.

Kisses were placed on his neck, sucking hard enough that it was sure to leave a mark, the man made his way down to his nipples, taking a hard nub in his mouth the suck and nibble on with his teeth. Harry moaned loudly at the feeling and the man smirked up at him. “My, my, Harry, its seems you’re rather sensitive”.

"Don’t”, he hissed as the man bit him and the pleasure began to mingle with the stinging pain. “Don’t stop”.

The man continued on his descent downwards, kissing and sucking on every available piece of the luscious skin. He noted on the torso a harsh red scar that seemed to wind its way from around Harry’s back. He traced it lightly with his fingers, gathering a small amount of his fingers. He wasn’t powerful enough to heal him but the mark did get lighter and less red and noticeable.

Harry was looking down at him, his eyes red and wet, “Please don’t say anything”. He whispered.

Lucius didn’t comment, merely taking a few seconds to undo the zip of his trousers and to slowly start to undo it. Harry hesitated, “I don’t want that yet”.

"There are other things we could do”.

He pulled down the boys green briefs to expose his manhood, hard and flushed against his skin. He carefully traced the head with his thumb, collecting the precum that had gather at the slit and savouring in the moans and near screams that Harry was now releasing. He took the head in his mouth and sucked gently then licked a stripe up the shaft. He continued like this for a few minutes, sucking and licking as the boy moaned. Suddenly he let out a loud scream as he released, his cum coming out in pearlescent streams. He’s lasted a lot shorter than Lucius himself would’ve, but still admirable for somebody his age.

Lucius crawled back up the bed to lay down beside Harry, the boy looked down hesitantly at Lucius’ trousers even as he was still panting from exhaustion. He unbuttoned his trousers and let the boy reach out hesitantly for his straining member, long and thin at 8 and a half inches. Harry was hesitant, yet curious as he ran his hands up and down, Lucius groaning quietly. He started to pick up rhythm, mimicking the mans earlier moves of playing with the head and doing what he himself had found good in an attempt to please the man. He was inexperienced and it took while for Lucius to find his release but the pleasure and the look of happiness on Harry’s face afterwards were worth it.

Lucius thought the young teen was beautiful as he curled up in his arms with his messy black head tucked under his chin.

"Thank you”, he murmured tiredly.

"You’re very welcome”, the smug grin wouldn’t leave his face, even as he fell asleep.

Petunia Dursley opened her door at 10 o’clock in the morning expecting it to be the mailman delivering her latest shipment anti-wrinkle face cream.

Instead on her doorstep stood a tall aristocratic man. He was wearing an expensive charcoal gray suit and a lavender shirt, his hair was a white blond tied back with a lavender thong and his face was smooth without any wrinkles to bely his age. He looked to be in his late twenties, a rich and
important businessman, very rich if the golden watch on his wrist was real and it certainly looked it.

"You are Petunia Dursley of Number 4 Privet Drive?" He questioned with a cursory glance down at her peach dress and the horrendous frilly pink apron that covered it. She flushed in embarrassment even as she took note of his odd accent, perfectly pronounced English with the smallest European lily to it. "I have come to speak with your family".

She beamed, "Well of course. Why don’t you come in. Vernon! Don’t mind he’ll be down in a minute. Would you like a drink?"

The man made a face, as if he doubted that no drink that she could provide would ever be good enough for him. "I suppose I will have chamomile tea if you have it, if not some earl grey”.

She led him through to the living room and he stood staring at the patterned sofa in distaste. She ran off to go make him his drinks.

Vernon stumbled down the stairs looking pissed off. However as soon as his eyes zeroed in on Lucius he piggy face lit up in a grin at the sight of the rich man and the prospect of money.

"Vernon Dursley, head salesman at Grunnings”, he announced proudly with his hand stuck out as if the man would know and respect him.

The man didn’t take the hand, "I came here to talk about a matter of great importance.”

"We would be very happy to help you”, Petunia said as she came in with a tray of drinks to place on the coffee table.

"I understand that your nephew lives with you, a boy by the name of Harry Potter”. The faces of the couple instantly darkened, Petunia looked like she was sucking on a lemon whilst Vernon was turning a nasty shade of puce.

"The boy is a menace. Leaching off our money for years, he attacked my dear sister just a few weeks ago then ran off with our money.” He lied furiously as the rich man watched on with an unimpressed look on his face.

"I see”, he said calmly taking a sip of the earl grey. He reached into his pocket and pulled out a long black stick, Petunia froze and Vernon stood, his face a picture of outrage, “Get out of my house you freak”. He tried to advance, to push the freak out of his house but found himself unable to move at all.

Lucius took a step closer to the man before him. “The thing is, Mr Dursley, I think you’re lying. And I don’t like it when people lie to me”.

He pointed his wand at the mans neck and a large red welt appeared as if someone had struck him with immense force, he let out an inhuman scream.

"You’re a piece of filth, not worthy of breathing the same air of any wizard, let alone one as powerful as your nephew.”

“Crucio”, he said harshly and the man fell to the floor writhe in pain and Petunia watched in shock and horror, frozen to the chair and unable to do anything. “You should be very glad your son isn’t in the house, because if he was he’d be dead already”.

He cast another spell, more welts appearing on the mens back, a rotting black and oozing pus, the smell of death permeating the air.
“Stop! Please stop!” The horse-like woman wailed as she cried. Lucius turned to face her.

"I’ll stop. But only if you do what I say."

She nodded furiously and he unfroze her hand, placing an inked quill in between her fingers. He placed a piece of parchment on her leg. “Sign on the dotted line”. And she did, her tears wetting the parchment as she went, her husband still groaning and crying out in pain where he bled black blood onto her clean cream carpet.

The man took the parchment and examined the signature, nodding in agreement. He cast a spell, effectively locking the memory within both of their brains so that they could relive the memory but they’d never be able to speak about it or show anyone. “If and when your nephew returns, you will treat him like you would a king. If I had my way you would be crawling around on the ground in your own filth like the worthless being you are, but I doubt Harry would find it nearly as amusing as I would. Instead I’ll settle if you kneel”. His eyes flickered to the pig writhing on the floor, “You should probably get moving. If you’re husband doesn’t get help within the hour he’ll die”.

He stepped back, checking the golden watch on his wrist. “My apologies, it appears I’m late. I sincerely hope we never have to meet again, your Earl Grey tastes like dishwater and I wouldn’t want to shorten my lifespan by drinking that poison another time”.

He disapparated, releasing the spell on the woman as he went. He didn’t see her crawling to her husbands dying body and calling the ambulance frantically. He didn’t see the paramedics arrive to a scene of horror.
An Appointment with the Judge

Chapter Summary

Lucius attends a Wizengamot meeting where Sirius Black is on everyone's minds...

When Lucius arrived back at the manor, Harry was in the library searching through the bookshelves.

"What are you looking for?" Harry jumped at the sound of a voice behind him.

"Just some books on runes", he replied as he picked up a book about Aztec magic and skimmed the blurb, taking into account some of the odd shapes and symbols lining the spine.

"You're looking in the wrong direction", a strong hand grasped his shoulder and led him to the other side of the library where there were quite a few thick and dusty old books. He pulled out the smallest one that looked relatively new. "This is a basic comprehensive guide, slightly more advanced than the one you'll be using at school this year. You need to read this before you go any further. Whilst I don't have any books specifically on Parsel Runes I do know a dealer in Knockturn who may be able to supply them. I also took the liberty of Owl Ordering your school supplies for the year".

Harry nodded in thanks, furrowing his brow he asked, "Where were you this morning? It's just I woke up and you were gone".

Lucius waved him off, "It's no matter. I had a business meeting that couldn't be missed, I apologize if I caused you any distress".

"It doesn't matter", he murmured as he opened up the books to the first chapter. A Basic History of Runes. "I'll just carry on with this then".

Lucius watched as the boy settled himself in a leather armchair by the fireplace, curling his legs up and sitting the book in his lap. He shook his head and left the room, checking his watch to ensure he wasn't late he disapparated through the wards and into a quiet alleyway in London where he knew very few muggles frequented. After ensuring that nobody had seen his arrival he set off down the road towards the telephone box on the corner of a street in Whitehall. He entered and dialed the numbers 62442 into the machine and waited.

"Please state your name and business", said a woman's voice.

"Lord Lucius Malfoy, convening with the wizengamot". A small black badge popped out the machine with the words Lord Malfoy, Wizengamot written in gold. He quickly transfigured his robes into the signature plum purple of the Wizengamot, sneering in distaste. The telephone box began to move downwards and by the time he'd reached the atrium his face was perfectly reworked into his normal cold, superior expression.

He exited the lift, his cane tapping against the floor signifying his entrance to those around him. A weak-willed young assistant bowed to him nervously, nearly dropping her stack of papers before hurrying off in the wrong direction. He headed towards the elevators, watching in amusement as the inhabitants quickly cleared out. He pressed the button for the lowest floor - Level 10 where the courtrooms were situated.
He stepped out of the elevator just as the one beside him opened. He recognized Amelia Bones immediately, her graying brown hair was pinned back neatly and she was wearing similar purple robes to his. "Lady Bones", he greeted civilly and she approached him at a sedate pace. "Lord Malfoy, I didn't expect to see you here today. I was informed you were exploring Europe with your wife".

He shook his head in a fake sadness, "Unfortunately some business came up so I had to stay behind. Narcissa and Draco are enjoying their time in Sicily immensely".

"That's good to hear." Her face took on a pensive look, "And how is young Draco? My Dear Susan talks of him often". The tone of her voice made it clear that it wasn't good things she talked of.

"He is doing well in his studies, as is expected". Another group of purple cladded men and and women came out of an elevator, "We should probably hurry, lest we be late".

They entered the largest courtroom where the Wizengamot meeting was to be held. The room was large and circular with rows of seats rising upwards out of the ground to look down on the empty centre of the room. From where Lucius was standing at the door, you could clearly see where the Wizengamot was divided into three groups.

Straight ahead were the ministry representatives. The heads of Departments within the Ministry all held a seat here, as well as the Minister of Magic himself Cornelius Fudge. Also in this section sat the court scribe and the reporter chosen to announce any new decrees to the public. The women, Louisa Dupres, would be under strict oath only to reveal certain information to her employers at the Daily Prophet.

To the left were the Lords and Lady’s, Pureblood families who had been granted their titles hundreds of years before. The families were all old and had been granted their titles for services to the country, which usually meant large donations or oaths of loyalty to the ministry by their ancestors.

On the right was the members who had been voted in by the public. There were 20 of them representing different sectors of society, whilst there were no creators in the Wizengamot they had the right to vote for a Witch or Wizard to represent them in front of the court so that deals negotiated with the Department for the regulation of magical creatures could be legalised.

Lucius took his seat on the left hand side of the courtroom on the highest level, it was an unspoken rule that the richest and most powerful would sit at the top as if they were looking down upon the unworthy. A few years ago he would’ve sat next to Lord Arcturus Black, but the man had died in 1991 and so instead he sat next to Renatus Lestrange who, despite his both his sons imprisonment has managed to maintain his reputation by playing the horrified and unknowing father.

As it so happened, the main topic of conversation today would be Arcturus Black’s grandson, Sirius.

"Lucius, I wasn’t expecting to see you here”, the man said in a rasping voice. He was weak and struck with illness, his once handsome features had aged and deteriorated into wrinkles and pallid skin.

Lucius wouldn’t be surprised if he died within the year.

It would be such a shame, yet another noble name fallen to ruin. Perhaps Rabastan could be salvaged and take the mantle of Lord if he was ever released. He had, after all, only been a boy acting under his brothers orders when he’d taken the mark, although he had changed severely during his years as a Death Eater and no man ever returned from Azkaban the same. It was probably too late.
"I thought the meeting would be too exciting to miss. It does amuse me so to watch Fudge’s government run around like idiots". The older man chuckled but the outburst seemed to be too much for his old lungs as not soon after he was pulling a monogrammed handkerchief from his pocket and coughing up phlegm and blood onto it with each heaving breath.

Both he and Lucius grimaced. “Forgive me”, he said dejectedly like a man giving up on life.

“It is no matter”, he said solemnly. The sound of wood smashing on wood filled the courtroom to signify the start of the meeting.

By this point, Albus Dumbledore had joined the group to take his seat in the centre group alongside the minister. He was Chief Warlock, an advisor and mediator for the court. While he couldn’t directly involved in any of the decisions and had no votes the opinions he voices in meetings could often sway many in the room.

All except Lucius and his compatriots who knew better.

“Let us begin this session of the Wizengamot, the date is the 18th of August, the time is 11:35 exactly. Now, for the first item on the schedule, Amelia?” He turned to where Amelia Bones was sat in the row below him, he sat down as she rose to draw attention to herself.

"The Department of Magical Law Enforcement would once again like to draw attention to the escape of one Sirius Black from the fortress of Azkaban”. Murmurs of dissent grew throughout the courtroom. “The muggle Prime Minister has been notified of the issue and as such the public has been notified and is on the lookout. Our leads so far have been inconsequential”.

"Have you tried contacting some of his possible allies?” Lord Alistair Greengrass asked as he rose from his seat. The Greengrasses were a notoriously ‘neutral’ family when it came to political allegiances, having not been involved in any of the previous magical wars. “The man is likely deranged, he wouldn’t be able to fend for himself without some assistance. He doesn’t have a wand after all”.

Lucius’ lip twitched slightly, it was a well known fact amongst most of the darker oriented families that you could find an untraceable wand in Knockturn quite easily if you knew where to look. The ministry somehow remained unaware of this fact.

“I think it would be best if we looked at this from a different point of view. Why would Sirius Black escape from Azkaban? What is it he wants?” Asked Saskia Farewell, a Half-blood author who’d been voted in by the public both because of her popularity and her extensive research on politics and criminals in particular. “Many of us have already come to the same conclusion. Harry Potter, the defeater of his so called master. Perhaps it would be best if we focused our resources on the school and protecting the students if thats likely where he’s going to be”.

"We could station a few Auror teams at Hogsmeade and around the school grounds”, suggested Bones.

“Hem hem”.

Lucius barely concealed the sneer at that voice, all eyes falling on the woman now standing next to the minister. She was a large women with brown curly hair and a simpering toad-like smile spread across her face.

“Excuse me for interrupting Lady Bones”, she said in a sweet patronising tone. “But ,unless I’m mistaken, your methods so far have been rather ineffective. I think its time we take some more
proactive measures, don’t you?”

”Proactive?” Amelia asked in a warning tone.

”Yes Amelia. Mr Black is a danger to our society, and like all dangers we should take extra care to stamp out the problem as efficiently as possible. Because of this, I could only recommend a kill order, on sight. The preferred method would of course be dementors”.

There was outrage from the right side of the courtroom, the left stayed stoic as ever. “You’re suggesting we release Dementors into a school of children”, shouted one voice in anger.

”With extra precautions of course”, she stated sweetly. “If the staff are as competent as Dumbledore always states then there will be no problem”.

”I’m afraid I must object Dolores”, Albus Dumbledore stated from where he’d been silent for the rest of the meeting. “Whilst my staff are all completely competent and able to cast Patroni, it would be impossible to protect all the students at all times. The Dementors are uncontrollable creatures, they only care about feeding and they won’t care if their food is Sirius Black or an innocent first year. I won’t let you put my students in danger”. His tone stated that there was no room for objection, his usually twinkling eyes were burning as they focused upon the women.

Lucius may hate the man, but at least he cared for the safety of his students. He didn’t no what he would do if Draco or even Harry fell foul of a dementor.

He suppressed a shudder.

”I agree with Dolores“, Cornelius stated. “All in favour of using the Dementors to guard Hogwarts, raise your hand”.

Unfortunately for Albus Dumbledore, the majority of the hands were raised. It was the first time Lucius had seen a display so wholly against Albus Dumbledore, but it seemed fear for the Dark Lord’s followers outweighed their loyalty to the Chief Warlock.

There were many people in the room who wanted to see Sirius Black dead.
Lucius and Renatus discuss their future options, back at the manor Lucius decides its time to teach Harry how to fight for himself.

“That certainly wasn’t what I was expecting”, Renatus said finally as they settled outside a small restaurant in Cordial Alley, one of the upper class districts in wizarding London. The two of them were now out of their Wizengamot robes having exited very quickly after the meeting ended.

“We should’ve expected it. Fear has always been the prime motivator for the weak in our society. An insane Death Eater, a Black, is something to be feared. Perhaps we should be scared”, he said lightly waving the waitress away who was trying to approach the table, simultaneously casting a silencing charm.

Renatus scowled, “Scared? What do we have to be scared of? The only thing I fear is Nurse Walkers and her affinity for shoving potions down my throat.”

”Sirius Black is an unknown variable”, he stated coldly. “You may not have been one of them but I was. Not once did I ever see him at a meeting. In fact, Sirius was widely considered a traitor. Abandoning his family to consort with the Muggles and openly condemning his blood. I find it extremely hard to believe that man joined the Dark Lord. So what problem are we dealing with: a master manipulator who could convince the whole wizarding world, even me, that he was an impulsive and reckless Gryffindor, or an innocent man who, if proven so, could use the extensive powers and alliances of the House of Black to help Dumbledore fight against men like us. Which would be worse? I for one pray that he is too insane to be either.”

He allowed the Waitress to come over and they both ordered coffee and french pastries.

“Have you spoken to the others about this?” Renatus asked. “I haven’t been in contact with them for obvious reasons.”

Lucius sighed deeply, “There are few of them who share the same mindset as we anymore. They resent the light side more than ever, they wouldn’t wish to co-operate with them. Even the ones who share our views. Tarquin may be able to be persuaded by Tiberius is still a fanatic. He’ll be loyal to the Dark Lord till the end. The best we could do at the moment is Serafina, she’s powerful and loyal to our cause but I wouldn’t trust her”.

Renatus looked distressed, “So? We do nothing? Magic is dying Lucius, I’m dying, and everyone’s either too lost in insanity or enamored with the light to care. Tensions are high, especially with Black on the loose, and if we make a move we’ll be thrown in Azkaban with no hope of bribing our way out. We can’t just give up”.

Lucius shook his head, a sly smirk now working its way onto his face, “I wasn’t suggesting that we did. I decided to take our plans in a different direction and approach somebody we hadn’t even considered before”.

”Who?” He leaned forward in eager anticipation.
"Who other than the Boy-Who-Lived?"

The man leaned back in shock, “Harry Potter?!?”

He nodded with a smug sense of accomplishment, “He was very open to our ideas once I explained them to him.”

The man examined his face, seeing in it something that nobody else would’ve. “Lucius...please tell me you didn’t”.

"Not yet", he answered. “But if his enthusiasm speaks for itself, very soon”.

Renatus hissed through his teeth in shock, “Lucius, I’ve never commented on your other dalliances, and I’m the last to judge when you take into account my own youth... but this is beyond anything you’ve ever done before. Of all the people you could choose! Harry Potter! If you break the boys heart, you could be risking everything we’ve worked towards!”

Lucius growled, “Don’t criticise me Renatus. You don’t know what I know. The boys power is a perfect balance to mine”.

Renatus flinched back in shock, “Like Adelia?” He asked in surprise, his heart clenching at the memory of his now dead Wife.

"Yes”, Lucius replied. “And I will do everything within my power to make sure he participates in the ritual, before he suffers the same fate as Adelia. This power could be what wins us the war.”

"I have to meet him”, he stated with finality.

"Not now. He isn’t ready.”

"When?"

Lucius shook his head, “I need more time”.


"What do you know about Sirius Black?” Lucius asked at dinner as Harry was tucking into his spaghetti alla puttanesca.

"Not much, only what I’ve seen in the Daily Prophet. He was a Death Eater, escaped from Azkaban”, he shrugged as he started trying to wind a piece of spaghetti around his fork. “He’s not one of your friends is he?”

Lucius let out a full-blown laugh that made Harry stare at him like he was an alien, “Me and Black were the furthest thing from friends there is”.

"So you were ‘enemies’?” He asked in amusement, reminded slightly of his own rivalry with Draco, the mans son.

"Sirius was a Gryffindor who, by all appearances, hated everything Dark with a passion. I was under the impression that he would’ve killed himself rather than join the Dark Lord. And yet, a few days after your parents were killed, he was found laughing hysterically in the middle of the street surrounded by burning buildings, the bodies of 13 muggles and the severed finger of one of his friends. They shipped him off to Azkaban the day after". 
"And now he’s escaped", Harry surmised. “What am I supposed to do?".

Lucius massaged his brow, trying to ease the migraine that was hammering his brain, “Its not as simple as avoiding the problem Harry. If I’m right, he’ll be actively seeking you out. I’m going to tell you something and you have to promise not to get angry”.

Harry rolled his eyes, “Fine. I promise.”

“The murders weren’t the only reason Black was arrested”, he began. “There’s a spell that allows you to hide your secrets within another magical human being. During the war, Voldemort was after your parents and they decided to use the spell to hide their home. Nobody would be able to find it, they could walk right past and all they would see was an empty plot unless the Secret Keeper explicitly told them the location. Your father and Sirius were very good friends, and he chose Sirius as their Secret Keeper”. He stopped waiting for the information to sink in, watching as Harry tensed and his emerald green eyes began to go dark with fury.

"So you’re telling me”, he started with his voice deadly calm. “That this bastard sold my parents out”.

"If what people say is correct”.

The boy growled. Like an animal. And said in a primal, fury-filled voice, “I’ll kill him”.

Lucius reached out and grabbed Harry’s shoulder in a vice-like grip. “You will do nothing of the sort.”

"Why not?" He shouted. “He killed my parents! Why shouldn’t he die for that!”

"When I took you into my home, I promised myself that I would protect you in any way I could. Sirius Black may be insane, but he’s also a grown wizard. He graduated from Hogwarts with good grades and became one of the best Aurors in the department. You are only 13 and despite how powerful I know you are, you are still inexperienced. I won’t let you do this”.

Their eyes connected, both fierce in their resolve. “What if he comes to me?”

"Then you run as fast as you can. Don't put yourself in harm's way, if not for your sake for mine", he said sincerely.

"If you don't think I can protect myself, why don't you teach me?"

"The spell I know wouldn't suit you".

Harry snorted, "Try me".

"I do know a very interesting one that slowly makes you vomit out your intestines", he said blankly and watched as Harry's face paled and took on a decidedly green tint. "Or not".

"I can't just bloody well sit around and do nothing can I", he growled as his voice slowly rose.

Lucius sighed, "Finish your dinner and then we'll go outside".

"To do?"

"I'm going to teach you something you should've learned a long time ago".

After dinner, Lucius took Harry upstairs to his room and searched through his wardrobe to find a set
of clothes before handing it over to him. "Meet me in the garden when you've changed".

He unfolded the clothes and put them on, examining them as he went. Everything was either a dark shade of black or green. A pair of tight-fitting trousers made from dragonhide that were tough and thick, nearly impenetrable yet somehow lightweight, a black shirt with an odd sort of padding and a belt with various different holsters for wands and other things, a pair of thick leather boots and a long coat made from a similar material as the trousers.

Harry pulled it on and put his wand in his belt before heading downstairs to where Lucius was waiting in the garden wearing similar clothes in grays and blues. Attached to his belt was a long silver sword and in his hand was another that he tossed to Harry on arrival. Harry caught it as deftly as possible, trying not to make a fool of himself.

"There are many ways in which you can attack your opponent", Lucius said as he circled him like a predator. "Politically, emotionally, with rituals and spells, with both weapon and your own hand, many people will become a master of one and neglect the others. It's my job how to teach you to be the best at them all".

He flicked his wand and Harry's came flying out of his belt to land on a tree nearby, Lucius ignored his shout of outrage in favor of pulling his own sword out of his belt and brandishing it before him, taking on a duellers stance. "The important thing is not how many weapons you have or how many spells you know, its how you use them. So, Harry, you have a sword and your own fists if you think you're strong enough. What will you do?"

Harry looked at him in shock and hopelessness, what skill did he have against a man with decades more experience than him. He grasped the sword with both hands and swung straight for the man's chest with all his strength. As he swung down, the other man's sword met him halfway to deflect, then stabbed towards his stomach, making him jump out the way.

He stumbled to the ground, using his arm to brace himself for the impact and has he smacked against the soil pain radiated up his right side. "You and I both know that was an idiotic move".

The man pointed his sword down at his throat, using the blunt end to tilt his chin up and face him. "Try again". He stepped back as if waiting for an attack. Harry grasped his own sword and swung for the other man's legs, hitting him in the shins and managing to falter his step even though the thick dragonhide boots remained unharmed.

He dropped the sword and lunged again, wrapping his arms around his legs and pulling him to the ground, hearing his sword clatter beside him. He straddled the man and lifted the sword high above his head ready to strike. A pair of hands grasped his chest and he looked down, feeling the heat rising in his cheeks at the sly look on the man's face.

His grip on the sword slackened and the last thing he saw was Lucius' smirk and the tip of his wand before he was flung away in a burst of blue light, he slammed into the ground hard, rolling from the momentum and nearly taking a mouthful of dirt.

"Don’t get tricked by a pretty face".

"You think you’re pretty?" He said spitting out some grass from his tongue.

"More of a classically handsome but that's besides the point".

Harry scanned the ground for his sword, his eyes falling on his wand that had been thrown aside earlier. He reached out and grabbed it quickly, turning hastily cast Flippendo on his attacker who
blocked it with a Protego.

He stood quickly, “You took my wand away but you didn’t say I couldn’t take it back. Stupefy!”

The next few minutes were filled with a barrage of spells as they attacked each other, Harry only knew basic spells whereas Lucius had a whole repertoire, some in languages he hadn’t heard of before. He pointed his wand at a rock and shouted, “Wingardium Leviosa” using his power to fling the rock towards the man who focused his wand on blowing the rock to pieces with a Bombarda. In that split second Harry acted. “Stupefy!”

Lucius was knocked out cold.

When he woke up he was lying in his bed with a cold compress on his forehead and the sun setting outside. Harry was sitting on the edge of the bed gnawing on his knuckles with a nervous expression on his face, “I’m so sorry. I forgot the spell to wake you up and I had to go get Finley and you’d hit your head and....”

”I’m fine”, Lucius pulled off the rag on his head. “Did Finley give me any potions?”

Harry nodded quickly, “He called for Lottie and she checked to make sure you weren’t injured and she gave you a mild pain reliever. I’m so sorry”.

”It’s no matter”, he waved him off. “I’ve suffered much worse than a bash to the head”.

Harry reached down and kissed him on the forehead, wrapping his arms around his chest and collapsing, “I was worried ok”.

He pulled the boy into his lap and let him curl up there, releasing his magic in soothing waves to calm him down. “Just go to sleep.”

The boy sighed but slowly his breathing calmed as Lucius stroked his hair and his eyes drifted shut as he went to sleep. Lucius soon followed.
A Kiss Goodbye

Chapter Summary

It’s Harry’s last day at the Manor before the rest of the Malfoy’s return and Lucius has a special surprise planned.

The holiday was ending far quicker than Harry intended. He spent the days outside in the sweltering heat, wearing little clothes and either studying, floating around in the pool or talking to Finley.

Lucius was around 70% of the time, if not he’d be at the multiple Emergency Wizengamot meetings or trading artefacts for both business and pleasure. When he was here, he spent all of his time with Harry, or at least in the same room. He’d teach him Runes and their defence lessons had continued, Harry was accelerating fast at his spellwork but his sword work has still rudimentary at best.

Evenings were spent in the library or in Lucius’ room in an intimate embrace and whilst they hadn’t gone all the way, Harry enjoyed every thing they did together immensely. He was quite happily a virgin, and would probably remain that way for quite some time unless Lucius used his sly words to convince him otherwise.

In 2 days he would board the Hogwarts Express back to school for another year of learning. He hadn’t talked to his friends since he’d left the Dursley’s and despite how much he was enjoying himself he found himself missing the company of Hermione, Ron and the rest of the Weasleys a lot.

The only problem was that he had to leave tomorrow. Draco and Narcissa were returning from their holiday in Sicily so that he could have the last day of the holiday to pack and spend time with his father.

This meant Harry had to leave, he likely wouldn’t spend a full day let alone a night with Lucius until next summer. He was leaving in the morning, just before Lucius’ family arrived, and the man had reluctantly arranged for him to stay the night in a muggle hotel.

This was his last day and he felt like he was going to cry.

He’d woken up early in the morning to a passionate kiss. They’d shared a bath together in Lucius’ massive pool sized tub which had remained remarkably chaste even as they washed each-other off with soaps until their skin was soft and silky. Harry had even been allowed to clean the mans hair and had lavished in brushing his fingers through the silky tresses. Once dried, they’d both dressed in a silk robes that were hardly decent and indulged themselves in a continental breakfast on the patio where any of the staff could’ve seen them.

Harry had been embarrassed the whole time whilst Lucius looked perfectly normal as if it was a regular occurrence.

"I've organised a surprise for lunch”, Lucius commented as he sat with his legs perfectly crossed not caring that he was exposing his ass the the elements. Harry fought the flush of arousal that threatened to creep up on him.

"Really? What is it?!”
"That ruins the point of a surprise, doesn’t it", Lucius retorted. “What would you like to do in the meantime?"

“I don’t know. What are you hobbies? I mean what do you like to do in your spare time?”

“Other than making business deals and indulging myself with young bodies and fine cuisine?” He asked with a raised brow.

“Young bodies other than me?” Harry asked coolly although there was still a small amount of jest in his tone.

“Never again my sweet lion”, he kissed Harry’s hand lightly exposing himself in the process.

“I was being serious”, he whined as he yanked his hand away.

“As was I. But if you were wondering, I do quite like music, the operas in Italy are some of the finest in the world. They use their voices to weave magic and create beautiful visual displays. Of course, I can’t do that but I do know how to play piano.”

“Really?” Harry’s face lit up. “I once tried to learn piano as a child, I had a really nice music teacher in primary school who tried to to teach me. Then she went to my Aunt and Uncle to suggest I had lesson and they shouted at her and complained to the headmaster. She was gone within a week”.

Lucius suppressed his growl at the reminder of Harry’s mistreatment, he felt the sick pleasure boiling in his veins as he remembered just what he’d done to the family and what he planned to do next if they ever stepped out of line again. Come to think of it, he wasn’t even sure that Vernon Dursley was still alive.

The curses he’d cast would’ve caused a lot of nerve damage and the man’s whole back had been infected by an old curse called the Black Storm, named because of the dark tendrils that remained tattooed to the victims skin if they survived. The marks often appeared to look like lightning and could never be removed.

“Perhaps I can teach you some now?”

Harry nodded eagerly and finished his Pain au Raisin quickly before he was lead back into the manor, still dressed in the flimsy robe, and back to the main entrance hallway where the grand staircase was. To the left was a set of double doors that lead to a room he hadn’t explored yet.

Lucius waved his wand and it clicked open to reveal a large ballroom nearly the size of the Great Hall. It was mostly empty except for a few tables and chairs that had been stacked at the side ready to be set up when the time arose. The room had pale blue wallpaper with golden embellishments and a massive chandelier that hung down from the ceiling and decorated with gold and what almost appeared to be ice. There was a raised platform at the head of the room where classical instruments like a piano, violins and a harp were set up ready to be played.

Lucius led him over to sit on a small leather piano stool beside him and he carefully lifted the lid of the white piano. He held his fingers in position over the keys and closed his eyes as if waiting for some sudden inspiration, then he began to play a low and haunting melody.

The sound echoed throughout the room and vibrating across his skin. He felt the hairs on his skin stand up as a shiver went down his spine, his magic tingled in his veins as if the music was calling to him and this felt like that time in the hallway at Hogwarts, after the Chamber of Secrets, except dialled to a thousand. It was calming and spoke to his core, it felt like both immense sadness and indescribable pleasure.
He rested his head gently on the other man’s shoulder, basking in the feeling of utter completeness he felt. As if his and Lucius’ magic had become one.

Then it stopped and suddenly Harry’s body felt weak and heavy, as if he’d lifted 1000 tonnes.

“What was that?” He asked in quiet awe.

“A sort of lullaby. A wizard, Lawrence Astor, wrote it to be played at his wife’s funeral. She’d been tortured by muggles for her magic hundreds of years ago, during the witch trials. She’d spent a month after floating in and out of consciousness, all she felt was pain. When she eventually died, he wrote her this song to send her off to the afterlife. To bring her peace and finally let her rest”.

Harry felt the tears welling in his eyes, “That’s...”

"Beautiful? Horrible? I know. But my Aunt taught it to me so that I would remember to cherish those closest to me”. He turned to Harry, “Would you like a dance?”

"Honestly I don’t know how!”

"Nonsense”.

Lucius grabbed his hand and pulled him up, with a flick of his wand the violin was floating in the air and beginning to play a simple waltz. He was led into the centre of the ballroom and pulled closer to the other man’s chest, horribly aware of how unclothed the two of them still were. He felt a pair of hands rest on his slim waist, he reached up to wrap his arms around the other man’s neck, he was still quite a bit shorter than him and it showed.

Harry was awkward at first, accidentally stepping on Lucius’ toes to his dismay, but eventually he relaxed into it and let him lead them around, gently swaying in time to the music.

"Do you do this with all of your conquests?” He asked softly.

"You’re special Harry, don’t you ever forget that”.

After the dance Lucius and Harry quickly changed into some more appropriate clothes for the day

For lunch, Lucius took him to the stable where Finley was waiting for them with Giselle and another white Abraxan that had a small black bag attached to its saddle.

"Everythings ready for you Lord Malfoy”, Finley said politely and received a nod from Lucius in return who turned to lift Harry up on Giselle.

When Lucius turned away Finley grinned at him and gave him a big thumbs up before the started riding off into the woods that surrounded manor.

It was like a scene out of a German fairytale rather than one of the british countryside. There were flowers blooming on all sides, bright pinks and yellows and oranges, the trees loomed tall over them on either side of the clear cut path to their destination, providing some much needed shelter from the sweltering heat. There were large shrubs on the side of the path and from the odd animals he could see scouring the forest floor, this place was clearly magical, like a less menacing forbidden forest.

As they travelled, Lucius pointed out various berries and flowers, describing their scents and uses. Each seemed to have an equally interesting story that Harry delighted in hearing Lucius’ voice retell to him. There was so much about the wizarding world that Harry had yet to learn and Lucius was
always the best teacher.

Eventually after an hour of riding the path opened out into a large meadowy clearing with a stream of pure blue water running down the middle. Lucius helped Harry down from Giselle before untying the small black bag from his own Abraxan’s saddle. The 2 animals were left to roam the meadow and Harry took the time to take his shoes and socks off and feel the grass underneath his feet.

He sat down by the stream and Lucius sat beside him. “This was my favourite place as a young boy”, he said as he laid back to stare up at the few clouds in the clear blue sky. “I brought Draco here too when he was a child, I’m sure he still comes here sometimes”.

He reached over the the small bag and began pulling out a veritable buffet, Harry’s eyes instantly zeroed in on a plate of chilli prawns on bruschetta. He moaned at the taste as he bit into his first slice, “How will I ever go back to Hogwarts meals after weeks of this?”

“One time Draco tried to convince the Hogwarts house elves that he had dietary requirements and needed food to he delivered from home”, he laughed. “Unfortunately Severus found out and told him off”.

Harry scowled at the Potions Master’s name but brushed it off in favour of basking in the atmosphere and pouring himself a glass of hand pressed lemonade.

Lucius reached into his pocket and pulled out a small square box, quickly enlarging it and passing it to Harry. Harry opened up the box and gasped at what was inside, it was a golden amulet, the jewel was a sapphire and he could feel the familiar magic pulsing from it. “Its a Portkey”, Lucius announced. “Its not strong enough to go through the Hogwarts wards so you’d have to be at least at the edge of the forest for it to be able to activate. The activation word is Giselle. Use it whenever you wish to see me”. Lucius reached into the box and unclasped the necklace to put it around his neck, kissing him on the throat as it clicked into place.

Harry kissed him fully on the lips, the action tender and loving to communicate his feelings for the gift. Lucius dove in biting on his lip and plunging his tongue into his mouth in a passionate kiss that tasted like love and lemonade. Harry responded eagerly and lay back as the man hovered over him, the man settled between his legs and they quickly began to undress each other. Harry’s skin was bronzer than before with all the days in the sun and his small amount of muscle ever so slightly more defined as his body continued to grow into that of a strong and handsome young man.

Lucius was as perfect as ever, his white blond hair glinting as metallic as his eyes in the light of the sun. His skin was only slightly darker and the tan covered his whole body, even places where it was impossible for it to have reached and it made Harry suspect he’d used a spell to even it out. Nothing less than perfection for a Malfoy.

The man started sucking and biting on his neck, working his way down to his nipples and showering those in attention until Harry was flushed and moaning loudly. Further downwards he travelled, missing his slowly member and instead taking his time to massage his balls and to kiss further down. Somewhere he’d never touched before.

"Lucius”, he hissed in warning and pleasure as the man started massage the rosy cheeks of his ass a blow lightly on his hole.

"Don’t worry darling, we won’t be doing that yet. I just wanted to try something new”. Without warning the tip of the mans wand was resting against his hole and a tingling cool and wet sensation filled him that made him groan slightly from the unfamiliar feeling.
A long slender finger creeped its way up to the hole, gently massaging the rim and Harry squirmed feeling embarrassed and slightly weirded out. “Shh. I promise it’ll feel amazing”.

”You’ve had this done before”, he asked in shock. The man had always seemed like the one to be in control. While he was heavily refined, his aura had always represented that of the Alpha Male. He would submit to no one.

”I am no stranger to all the delights of the human body”.

The finger, which now felt slicker than it did before, slowly started to push into his passage and he instinctively clenched to push out the intrusion, horrified by the sense of wrongness that filled him.

“Shh, I promise it’ll get better”.

The finger pushed in further and he squirmed again, it was slightly less painful but no less weird as the finger searched around inside him, probing his most intimate parts.

The finger was soon joined by another and this time he let out a cry of pain, a tear streaming down his face that Lucius leaned up to kiss away even as the source of his pain remained inside of him. The fingers moved apart in a scissoring motion and he felt himself stretch slightly inside and the pain began to ease as his passage seemed to mould around the intrusion.

Then they moved sharply and touched something within him that he didn’t know existed but pulled a loud moan from his throat, pleasure streaked up his spine and he savoured the glorious feeling. “Found it”, Lucius whispered smugly.

His finger started to speed up, slamming against the spot repeatedly until Harry was moaning loudly, his mind consumed by the pleasure.

Lucius watched the beautiful boy let out the prettiest whines and noises he’d heard in his life. Reaching down to touch his own straining member to pump himself in time with his fingers, Harry was pushing back, riding his fingers like a man possessed.

Harry let out his loudest moan yet, his back arching and his body tensing as his member let out stream after stream of pearly cum. Lucius roared, like an animal in heat as he reached his own release.

He collapsed beside the boy, admiring the image of bronze skin flushed pink, sweaty black hair and legs spread wide. He was panting in exhaustion as he curled up in Lucius’ side, the man picked him up and carried him over the stream, sitting them both down to was the evidence of their pleasure from their bodies, savouring this memory forever.

”Thank you”, the boy whispered lovingly. “For everything”.

Lucius smiled and kissed his damp hair lightly as he let the water wash over the both of them with the sweet caress of nature.

”Lucius”, the woman said happily as she walked quickly over to him. He leaned down to kiss both of her cheeks sweetly.

“My beautiful Narcissius, how was your trip?” He asked kindly brushing a lock of honey blond hair from her face.
"Oh you should see all of the gifts I’ve bought for you Lucius. I found a delightful little store outside of Palermo where the seamstress had the most beautiful gowns. I ordered a lovely one in icy shades that would be delightful at the christmas ball.” She turned to Draco, gesturing him closer quickly to approach.

"How are you Draco?"

"I’m well father, as I hope you are too”. He spoke in a posh tone with his head held high in confidence as he snapped to a house elf to bring his luggage with him.

"Are you ok Lucius?” Narcissa asked in a worried and almost mothering tone.

"Of course darling, go unpack your things whilst I check on the gateau”. He waved her off with a smile on his face.

Everything was not ok.
**A return to ‘Normal’**

Chapter Summary

Harry and the gang return to Hogwarts for another year.

When Harry woke up, something felt wrong.

The bed felt too cold, the sheets too coarse, the whole room was too small and far too dark.

Gone was the silk sheets and the light and airy room, gone was the warm body that he had spent so much time curled up against.

He was alone.

Harry rubbed his eyes and reached over onto the side table for his new silver rimmed glasses, the amulet still weighed heavy on his neck, both a reminder of what he had just left behind.

He sat up and wandered over to where his trunk was stashed under the desk. The trunk was fuller than before, an expanding and lightweight charm had been added so that he could store his new clothes and books. All of this courtesy of Lucius.

He wasn’t sure whether to cry or hit something.

The last morning had been bittersweet, they had barely talked, they hadn’t even got out of bed. They just laid in there for hours and hours until it was time for him to go. Then Lucius had apparated him and his things to an alleyway outside the muggle hotel. There they’d shared a slow kiss before he’d been left on his own once again.

Harry sighed and ran his hands through his hair, which had gotten longer and messier since the start of the summer. He quickly pulled on a pair of jeans and a t-shirt before packing all of his things into his trunk and grabbing Hedwig’s cage, the owl hooted softly and he bent down to scratch her head with his finger.

He gave his key to the lady at the front desk and went to cross the road to kings cross station. There were already loads of people coming out, commuters going to work probably. He entered the building, avoiding colliding with the mass of people heading through the doors.

Not long after he’d arrived at where the entrance to the platform was. He stood waiting around for the train that had just arrived to open its doors. As soon as it did and the people began rushing out, Harry ducked into through the barrier between Platforms Nine and Ten, his actions hidden by the commotion.

Platform nine and three quarters was mostly empty, there were a few groups of older students hanging around and buying food from a small stand nearby. Harry avoided their gazes and made a bee line for the train waiting at the platform. He hopped on quickly, hauling his trunk behind him and finding a compartment right at the back of the train.

He was shocked to find it already occupied by an older man. He was asleep, taking up one whole side of the compartment and covering in a brown ratty coat that did little to keep him warm.
Harry examined his face. He was probably only in his thirties, but his face was scarred and he looked tired and weary like he hadn’t had a full nights sleep in years.

Harry sighed and collapsed back on the opposite seat, pulling a book out of his bag and prepared for a long ride. The book was one that Lucius had bought him, he didn’t know where from and thought it best not to ask. The book was on Parsel runes and there were many examples throughout the book. At first, they always just looked like shapes made out of squiggly snake like lines. However if he concentrated hard enough the lines would rearrange to form words.

The words on the page never formed sentences, only words like Fire or Water and verbs that when combined together could be used to create spells. The book, which was written by one of Salazar Slytherin’s great-great grandsons, talked about how his ancestor had created the language to craft his own spells. Some of the spells were even listed in their runic form and when Harry focused he could even pronounce some of them and had managed to conjure an odd sort of black fire that made his nerves tingle and sent a funny feeling down his spine. He’s extinguished it quickly afterwards.

He was halfway through the eighth chapter that was actually discussing making spells. The book had said that you were supposed to trace the runes in the air whilst announcing their meaning in Parseltongue and focusing on your intent. The wording of the spell was often uninspiring but the results were a lot more powerful than normal spells.

He reached into his pocket and was just about to pull out his wand when the door slammed open and he was attacked by someone with lots of frizzy brown hair.

"Get off me ‘mione!” He said even as his voice was muffled by a mass of hair.

She pulled back and faced him with a stern gaze, “You haven’t replied to my letters in ages! I was so worried!”

"Seriously I was fine, how was your summer?” She grumbled quietly about ignorant boys but she quickly focused her attention on the mystery on the other side of the street.

Harry’s attention was drawn by a whistling noise, Ron was leaning against door with a crooked grin on his face. “Merlin you’re tanned mate, I spent a week in Egypt and all I got was skin like a lobster”.

“I was just hanging out in the garden a lot, it was bloody roasting”.

"Who’s this guy?” He gestured to the man on the other seat.

"Professor R.J. Lupin”, replied Hermione matter of factly.

Ron’s eyes widened in fake awe, “‘Mione....you’ve gotten so smart you’ve become a psychic!”

She blushes slightly, “Oh be quiet Ronald. Its written on his suitcase”. She pointed the worn leather case on top of the rack.

"Reckon he’s Defence?”

"Its the only available space”.

"Unless they’ve finally found sense and fired Snape!” Ron said excitedly and rolled his eyes at Hermione’s stern glance. “Seriously ‘Mione, even you can tell he’s a git”.

"Yes but he’s still a good teacher”.
Ron snorted, “To the snakes maybe. I haven’t learnt anything useful in the last two years”.

"Well maybe you could just pick up a book and read if you feel you’re so far behind”.

"Didn’t you know Ron was allergic to books?” Harry commented. “Last time he read one, I had to take him to Pomfrey because he was in shock”.

A meowing sound started coming out of Hermione’s bag, following by more growling that started to get louder. Suddenly, out shot a large carrot orange cat, lunging towards scabbers who was looking particularly out of sorts on the seat.

“Oh piss off crookshanks”, Ron groaned as he leant down to pick up the rat and petting him consolingly. “You almost killed scabbers”.

"Oh honestly Ron. Crookshanks isn’t hurting anyone”.

Harry stared at the squashed face of the cat with slight disgust on his face, “Mione why are you keeping a cat in your bag?”

"Well I bought her, obviously. Isn’t she the cutest, yes she is”, she started making odd faces at the cat and petting it even as it glared at her.

Harry shuddered at the both of them, “Not to be rude Mione but it looks like roadkill”.

"What’s roadkill?” Ron asked in a confused voice whilst both the cat and Hermione level terrifyingly similar looks on him.

”Nothing Ron”, she ground out.

The compartment door slammed open and there, framed in the doorway, was Draco Malfoy himself with a superior look on his face.

“Scarhead, Mudblood, Weasley”, Ron growled and Draco’s eyes flickered to the cat. “And who’s this Weasel, another sister? It certainly looks better than your current one”.

Ron lunged forward, his wand pointed at the blond’s chest. “Open your mouth again Malfoy and I’ll spell all of your head off”.

"Oh really?” The boy held his hand to his chest in mock hurt. “You mean like how you made me eat slugs last year”. Ron’s face turned decidedly green. “Yes thats what I thought”.

He examined Lupin with a disdainful eye, “Oh look Weasel, you’ve been promoted. You’re now only the second poorest person on the train. Of course you still share the spot with the other hundred of your siblings but its still an achievement. Perhaps I should make you a badge?”

“Oh fuck it”, Harry grumbled and flicked his wand with a quiet Flippendo. The boy was thrown out of the compartment with a loud clatter. Hermione rose quickly to close the door.

Note to self: apologise to Lucius for assaulting his son

Ron collapsed on the seat, his face red with anger and he was panting slightly. Hermione patted him on the shoulder lightly, she herself was looking pissed off and her hair seemed oddly frizzier.

Hermione wisely decided to change the topic of conversation and reached into her trunk to pull out a bag. “I bought you both gifts from France”, she announced as she handed them both a book and a gift box.
Harry’s gifts were a book on seeker techniques and a box of fancy smelling toiletries. “There was a really nice Parfumerie on the Seine that my mum dragged me into.”

Ron looked up from where he was examining his book on the European quidditch league that came with a poster of a team called Paris Pixies who were flying around dressed in lilac gear with a wing shaped emblem in silver. “Thanks ‘Mione”, he then looked sheepish. “Sorry I didn’t get you anything from Egypt”.

Hermione waved him off quickly, “I’ve had enough gifts over the holidays. Now who wants to play Exploding Snap. I bought a pack in Paris that actually create fireworks when the explode.”

Hours later they were all very tired, having eaten a few too many pumpkin pasties.

Ron was full out snoring and Hermione had her face in a book about Arithmancy. Harry was resting his head on the window, absently fiddling with the amulet around his neck through the shirt of his school uniform that he’d changed into a while back.

He felt his face begin to get colder and scrunched his face up in discomfort. His face got colder and colder, until it so freezing that it was like ice biting into his skin and he had to pull away. The whole window was covered in frost that had spread from once corner in a flowery pattern until the whole pane of glass was like a sheet of ice.

”Mione”, he hit her lightly on the shoulder to get her attention.

Suddenly the train rattled to an abrupt stop, almost flinging him off the seat, the light all flickered off and he had to cast a Lumos to see in the dark. Hermione had dropped her book by now and was staring out the window if the train, Ron had woken up and was looking around blearily, wiping sleep from his eyes.

“Harry”, she whispered. “I think somethings coming aboard”.

She shivered as the whole compartment dropped to freezing temperatures.

The compartment door startled rattling, he hit Ron on the shoulder and dragged him upwards and behind him. The door slammed open and the most horrifying creature he’d ever seen reached forward in the semi-darkness.

It’s fingers were gray and skeletal, almost non-existent, its whom figure cloaked in ratty robes that dragged against the floor, as it got closer its face was revealed. The hole where it should’ve been was almost empty. Grey spectral vision floated in and out of existence but the one thing that remained constant was the mouth, its wrinkled skin opened wide as it began to leach the world dry.

Harry’s body slumped as a feeling of hopelessness came over him. Like everything in the world was worthless. His family didn’t want him, his friends hated him, everything was his fault. He’d never see Lucius again. His parents were dead, he’d be doing the world a favour if he just went ahead and joined them.

He let out a sob as his mothers face appeared in his brain, deathly pale with wide bloodshot eyes. “Not Harry, please not Harry”.

”Step aside you silly girl”. The cold high voice that he recognised so well.
"Please, kill me instead!

The vision filled his brain, his body, his memories. It was the only thing he remembered now, not his past, not even his own name, just the terrible sensation of sadness and death as his whole being was pulled away from his being and transcending the mortal realm.

Then the world was filled with a bright white light and the horrid creature screeched. Harry collapsed into darkness.

When he woke, it was to three faces peering down at him. Hermione with tear stained eyes, clutching Crookshanks to her chest as if her life depended on it. Ron looking extremely stressed and the scarred man from the other side of the compartment with his brow furrowed and his face carefully blank.

A bar of Honeydukes finest milk chocolate was shoved into his hand, “Eat. You’ll feel better”.

He thought the idea to be ridiculous but did as the professor said and unwrapped the bar, taking a large bite. As soon as he swallowed his body started to become less tense. “What was that...and the light?”

"That was a dementor”, Lupin said as he peered out the window and the lights flickered back on. “They guard Azkaban Prison. The light was a patronus, the only spell that can be used against one”. He focused on Hermione, deeming her to he the most sensible of the lot, “Make sure he eats the whole bar. Send a prefect for he if he gets worse. I’m going to talk the the driver to see whats going on”. He shot Harry one last reassuring smile before hurrying off.

Harry took a large bite of chocolate, “Well he seemed nice”.

"Do you reckon the Dementors were looking for Black?”

"Almost certainly. How could Dumbledore let Dementors onto a train full of children!” Hermione looked flustered and angry.

"It probably wasn’t even his decision. You know how the ministry is, remember the chamber?”

"It still doesn’t make it right!” She hissed.

"When have things ever been right around here?” Ron said in answer.

Harry was left with the unshakeable sense that something was very, very wrong.
There’s a Boggart in my Closet

Chapter Summary

Severus suspects that there is something dark going on between Lucius and Harry. Back at Hogwarts it’s Remus’ first class and it’s time for Harry to face his worst fear....

“Did you really think I wouldn’t realise?”

Lucius swirled his glass of vintage bordeaux gently, not taking his eye off of the liquid as it moved, splashing gently against the sides of the glass like ocean on the shore. Except this ocean wasn’t clear blue or even murky green, it was a dark crimson. A sea of blood.

The man on the other side of the room watched, sitting straight backed in the leather chair in the office. He was dressed completely in black, his hands folded perfectly in his lap, his blank mask would’ve been perfect if it weren’t for the angry lines marring it. He was the picture of controlled fury, whereas Lucius’ stance held an almost feline grace.

He was leaning casually on his chair, one arm on the arm rest and the other holding the wine glass, his legs were crossed gracefully and he was dressed in a dark red robe, the sort that rich men would wear late at night for after dinner drinks.

”I remember”, he said slowly, his voice rolling through the air at the same pace as the wine rolled around the glass, “when you were a lot younger Severus. You were never naïve, not with your upbringing, but slightly less aware of the world were living in, unfamiliar with the games that purebloods liked to play and still clinging to that...mudblood like she was your dying breath.”

The man flinched imperceptibly at the word, like a bad memory festering within his soul.

”But you soon learned that this world was no better than the one you’d left behind. You were bitter, angry, delving deeper into the Dark Arts day by day. Nobody could’ve saved you, not even her”. He stopped, meeting onyx eyes for the first time that night. “Nobody even tried, did they? The mudblood did at first but she gave up, just like your mother did, just like your filthy muggle father did the moment he first laid eyes on you.”

”I didn’t come here to listen to you insult me, Lucius”, the man spat out angrily. Bitterly. They both knew what he was saying was the truth.

“They gave up on you. And you gave up on yourself. You joined the Dark Lord because there was nowhere else to go. You used the missions and the torture as release for the anger that surged through your veins every hour of every day. You were searching for a purpose, and then it came. In the form Albus Dumbledore”.

Severus froze slightly, his hands clasping together and his knuckles white, “Be careful what you’re suggesting”.

“The man gave you a lifeline and you clung to it, like any poor rejected orphan boy would. You did what he asked and when the war ended everything went in your favour. You were acquitted of your crimes, became a Professor, was given a place as a Master in the Potions Guild. Everything was
perfect, and it would’ve stayed that way”. His legs uncrossed and the glass was placed against the side table with a ringing sound.

“Things aren’t so simple now. When the war comes, Severus, where will you stand?”

”You didn’t answer my question”, the man said with a sneer. His unhealthily pale face rearranged by now.

”Not until you answer mine”.

They stared at each other for a few moments before Lucius let out a loud chuckle. “You wouldn’t, would you? Us Slytherins never do. Your question, Severus? I’m afraid I misunderstood”.

They both knew he hadn’t.

”The boy returns having been missing for two weeks. He’s healthier, more confident, wearing better clothes...”

”Which he could’ve bought himself. The Potters certainly weren’t short on money”.

Severus sneered at the comment, “The last person he was seen talking to was you. And if that’s not proof enough, I have records from your personal seamstress of you ordering hundreds of items of clothing that fit his exact measurements”.

“Draco wanted new clothes to take on holiday”, he said without hesitation.

”He’s almost a foot taller than Potter”.

”He had a growth spurt over the summer”.

”The boy is wearing a family heirloom around his neck”, he snarled. “Your Aunt is wearing it in her portrait. You’d have to be blind not to know they were the same”.

Lucius smirked, “So maybe you’re right. But there’s nothing wrong with any of that”.

”Did you imperius him?” He asked bluntly. “Because I see no reason why the boy would ever come running to Lucius Malfoy for help”.

”Maybe he had a change of heart”.

Severus laughed. Laughed! It was short and derisive, heavy with disgust, but it was still the first time Lucius had heard the sound in years. “Potter is stubborn and arrogant, he never listens to anyone let alone you. He’d be more likely to spit in your face”.

“I wouldn’t be so sure Severus. The boy is unpredictable, even to somebody as intelligent as you”.

”You think he could outsmart me?”

Lucius laughed as he stared down into the glass of crimson, seeing his own reflection in the liquid. “I don’t think Severus, I know”.

Harry slammed the book on Parsel Runes shut angrily. His search had come up fruitless once again.

”Jesus mate. What got you so stressed?”
It was Dean Thomas who’d taken the seat opposite him. In his hand was a sketchpad and a pack of muggle art pencils that he’d received from his mother that morning from the Post Office in Diagon Alley. As a muggle herself, she didn’t own her own owl.

“I’m trying to find something but apparently its impossible”. He was being deliberately vague but the other boy didn’t seem to mind.

What he was trying to find was a rune that he could use to kill dementors. The nightmare from the train had been haunting him ever since they got off the train, a shiver went up his spine as he remembered the deathly cold.

Unfortunately for him, there was no rune in the language relating to dementors and he couldn’t find anything less specific that he thought would work. He remembered the Patronus Charm that Lupin had used on the train but somehow Harry thought it would provide less satisfaction than tearing them to pieces.

“Yeah well I just narrowly escaped the common room. Seamus was really getting on my nerves”.

Harry raised his eyebrow and the boy decided to elaborate, “The smarmy git was bragging about how he got to 3rd base with some muggle girl back in Ireland. I’d bet 10 galleons he was lying”.

"Bases?” Harry asked with a weird look on his face.

Dean slammed his palm into his face, “How come not even the Muggle-raised ones get my references?!? Bases, like in Baseball? Please tell me you know what baseball is!”

"So he played baseball with some girl”. Harry didn’t think that was very much to brag about.

Dean groaned, “No. They’re like slang, for sex and dating and that. My cousin taught me about it. First base: kissing (with tongues). Second: groping. Third: oral. And finally, fourth, or the home run: full on sex. There is absolutely no way some Irish lass gave Seamus a blowie. Absolutely ridiculous!”

Harry blushed darkly and stammered, “We really should get going or we’ll be late”.

Dean stared at him slightly confused, “Sure thing mate”.

Harry gathered his books up quickly and ran off towards the defence classroom, even as Dean remained at a sedate pace behind him.

He entered the room a few minutes early and panting, having ran the last few flights of stairs when Dean was out of view.

Professor Lupin looked up from where he was organising the things on hid desk to smile broadly at him, “You’re a bit early Mr Potter”.

Harry took a few deep breaths to steady himself, “Sorry...I...I ran”.

"I noticed”, his tone was slightly amused.

The door open and in waltzed Draco Malfoy, followed by his goons and a few other Slytherin students trailing behind.

"Sit wherever you want but don’t make yourself comfortable”. He wandered over to his desk to pick up a large rusty key on an equally as rusty ring, he was whistling a jaunty muggle tune all the while.
Harry took a seat on the back row and Ron and Hermione soon followed. “You’re looking a bit flustered mate”.

"Dean..." he mumbled.

Hermione looked at him sharply with narrowed eyes, “Dean made you flustered?”

“No!” He squeaked in a childish voice, his voice breaking slightly. Her lip twitched and Ron seemed to have missed both of their expressions completely.

"Books away, wands out. Today will be a practical lesson". Grins spread throughout the Gryffindor half of the class, it’s been a long time since they’d had a practical lesson especially after the Pixie Incident with Lockhart.

“Follow me everyone”.

They were lead through the halls and down a short set of stairs. There was a commotion nearby and the sound of echoey cackling as a transparent poltergeist shot around the corner of the hall as if it was running away from something. It stopped abruptly as it saw the Professor standing in the hallway, then it let out a massive cackle and started shoving gum into the keyholes of one of the doors singing “Loony loony lupin” in a whimsical tone all the while.

"Good morning Peeves” the man said in an amused tone. “I’d take the gum out of the keyhole, I doubt Mr Filch would be impressed”.

The poltergeist made a childish face at the professor before flying off quickly. Lupin pulled his wand and pointed it at the door, “Waddiwasi”. The piece of gum flew out if the hole and straight down the hall where Peeves had just flown, shooting through his head and causing the spirit to curse loudly and rather inappropriately. Lupin nodded in satisfaction and led them through a different door.

It was a large panelled room with lots of odd furniture and patch-worked chairs. Snape was sitting in the corner watching them with a sneer curling on his lips.

“Morning Professor Snape”. The man stalked forward, glaring at his fellow teacher and not returning the greeting. Instead his eyes rounded on the group of students huddled by the door.

"Be careful Lupin, Longbottom’s in this class. You might have to send for Filch when the pathetic wets himself over the floor”.

Remus frowned, “I was actually wondering if Mr Longbottom would be my first volunteer”.

Snape sneered and started to head for the door, pushing through the group until he paused and his eyes landed on Harry. Onyx eyes narrowed and searched his face as if looking for something, suddenly he snapped out of it and was off again with a sweep of his dark black cloak.

"Right”, Lupin clapped his hands in excitement. “Neville, if you please”.

He led the squirming boy up the front of the class and planted him beside an old rickety wardrobe that seemed to be rattling and moving around every few seconds. There was something trapped inside.

"Can anybody take a guess as to what’s inside?”

Hermione, in true Hermione fashion, had her hand straight up. “Yes Miss Granger?”
"A boggart sir?"

"Yes quite right, ten points to Gryffindor. And does anybody know what a Boggart does?"

This time it was Parvati who put her hand up, "They turn into what we fear. Right?"

Some of the people in the class seemed to shiver slightly at this, remembering their own personal fears. "Spot on Miss Patil. Another ten points. You see Boggarts are shape-shifters, they like to hide in dark places and when a human comes by they turn into the thing they fear the most. They feed on the fear of their prey and so the only thing that can repel one is happiness. Or more specifically laughter. Everybody wands at the ready”.

The class pulled their wands out, "Repeat after me and follow my wand movements. Ridikulus”.

"Ridikulus”, the class chorused in unison.

"Excellent. Now the most important thing about this spell isn’t the wand movement or the pronunciation, its your own imagination and force of will. You have to think of a form that you and your classmates will find amusing and then use your mind to force the image upon the boggart”. He turned to Neville who was looking very nervous by now.

"Now Neville, what do you think you fear the most?"

"Professor Snape sir”, he mumbled and Draco Malfoy let out a large laugh from his side of the room that did nothing to ease Neville’s nerves.

"You live with your grandmother, yes?” he received a nod.

"Well what I’d like you to do is focus very hard on your grandmothers favourite outfit, understand? Great!” He pointed his wand at the wardrobe that was now rattling more frantically than ever and whispered Alohomora. The door clicked open and a long pale hand started to reach out.

Slowly the image of Severus Snape was revealed, his skin somehow paler, his eyes sharper and his stance more intimidating than ever. All of his fury was focused on Neville who was trembling in fear. His wand hand was shaking as he held it out before him, “Ri..Ridikulus”. The long hands and sharp nails were suddenly encased in pink, black robes had turned an emerald green complete with frills. The man stumbled backwards, magenta heels clicking against the floor as the class roared with laughter, his large vulture shaped hat and fox scarf threatening to fall off as he grasped the cupboard door in shock, shrinking beneath the force of the attack.

"Everybody get into a line. Next one up”.

Seamus was scared of a banshee, a gaunt and rotting women who’s mouth opened in a deadly screech, Parvati of mummies, stumbling like the living dead and wrapped in bloody bandages. Ron’s fear was a massive spider that looked suspiciously like Aragog who he made slip and skate around on roller blades with an idiotic tutu on.

Hermione sobbed as McGonogall told her she’d failed all of her tests and would have to drop out of school.

Harry would’ve laughed if he didn’t think it would’ve been seen as insensitive.

All the while that this was going on, Harry tried to think of what he feared the most.
He though of Voldemort, the man who’d killed his parents and tried to kill him. He remembered the feeling of helplessness as a young Tom Riddle had loomed over him, Ginny’s body lying lifeless a few metres away from him.

He thought of his Uncle, calling him a freak, telling him that he would never belong anywhere, nobody would love him. The heavy feeling of a belt coming down on his back and the blood trickling over his skin, the ache every time he bent down to lift the wheelbarrow in the Dursley’s garden and feeling the badly healed scabs crack. The fear of infection, of dying locked up in the smallest bedroom. Helpless and alone.

But then he felt the cold, creeping up and over his spine like a hand trailing over his skin, a freezing that not only permeating his body but his very soul. It was like his mind froze, all conscious thought stopped as he remembered the feeling of losing himself, of being completely helpless against a faceless creature. He could feel the cold sweat break out across his body as he started to step forward for his turn.

The creature started to shift, a skeletal white hand began to form, tendrils shaping into a torn black robe and the whispers from the mouth of a soulless husk floating through the air.

And then it was gone, his view blocked by a tall man in a ratty robe, in the air shone a bright white ball, hidden behind some sort of mist. “Ridikulus”. The ball deflated like a balloon and shot back into the cupboard which slammed closed quickly behind it.

The whole class stood gobsmacked and staring at the place where the Boggart had just been. Harry was panting with his hands braced on his knees. He was shivering violently and his eyes had glazed over like a sheet of ice forming on a pond in winter.

"Class is dismissed for the day”, Lupin announced and people slowly started to file out. Hermione started to come towards him, her mouth open ready to say something and a look of askance adorning her face. Ron gave him a sad look and dragged her away, “Give him some time to call down”, he whispered quietly as they left. No doubt they’d be waiting outside.

"Harry?” Lupin asked, his hand on his shoulder as if trying to shake him out of his sleep.

"Professor?” He asked wearily.

He was quietly handed a bar of chocolate and the man sat down on a desk opposite him to observe him whilst he nibbled on the corner.

"Would you like to talk about it?”

Harry cringed and moved away slightly. His mind had practically shut down, locked away in a dark box as he relived his darkest memories. The only emotions he felt now were primal, instincts.

His body was telling him to get away, to get away from this stranger, to go find a safe place and hide where nobody could find him. The only emotion he felt was fear. Fear for his life, his sanity, his soul. He felt helplessness, like an animal trapped in a perspex box and all he could do is peek inside like all the other zoo goers. All he could do was sit back and watch his life fall to ruin.

He felt like a little boy, wrapped up in a ratty blanket in a small cupboard under the stairs. Wondering why nobody loved him and why nobody was coming to take him away. He was helpless.
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