The Ruined Peoples

by Pascal_in_Quebec

Summary

Harry was imprisoned at the Dursley's since his parents' deaths but with very distant and lax supervision. Harry gets help to free himself from the bindings starting in primary school and then attends Hogwarts for first year as he had no choice, lest the Ministry force him or puts him in Azkaban. However, after the first year in Hogwarts, the house-elf Dobby will help Harry to escape for good and start planning how to destroy the culture that allowed Dumbledore to rule so mightily so long.
What happened and why

The author wishes to express thanks to anyone who may read this story and encourages them to leave reviews, comments or even flame it hard. As with any who try their hand at publicly expressing an idea or story concept, all feedback is important and welcome.
Disclaimer: I do not own Harry Potter, the Torchlight games, nor any other sci-fi or fantasy series, movies, comics, cartoons or news items used in this fiction as they belong to the creators, broadcasters or publishers who put them out for consumption by the public.

Author's notes about the story and development

The story is rated "M" not for smut or porn despite the sex scenes that may happen at some point but because of life events that happen in spite of our best intentions. Kids swear, smoke, drink alcohol and take drugs because the adults around them are like that. Violence permeates families, schools, churches and the streets we walk. Police brutality and corruption is rife and cheap to buy. Politicians have no care beyond the next election or big contribution to their hidden retirement stash. The Earth is raped, maimed and murdered every day but nobody cares unless they are paid to care or a person they love becomes sick and dies. Medicine saves us but do we want to see and feel the blood and guts being worked into, or share the pain and humiliation of the person getting cut up like cattle on the butcher's block?

The story is rated "M" because life is not for the faint of heart. Survival takes guts and passion and rage and a dose of killer instinct. Unlike the empty promises of religion, I can guarantee that the meek, the weak and the poor will not inherit the Earth at the End Times; they will all be dead or enslaved in the armies that fight for control over the scraps, but they will not inherit anything.

The story will be a multi-crossover with mainly with the video game Torchlight I & II while adding a Cthulhu Mythos and steampunk slant to the context of the tale. Some TV series, movies, cartoons & comics will be referred as part of the background mundane culture of the epoch, but not actual crossovers. Historical British persons will be referred, as will governmental functions and military positions. Some rewriting of mundane history will happen, but not that mush as it isn't the focus of the tale. The magical system used is a merge of HP canon, HP fanon, Advanced AD&D, RoleMaster/SpaceMaster, Torchlight spells, powers & Ember crafting, alchemy & transmutation from FullMetal Alchemist, shinobi from Naruto, magicks from Dresden Files, most of the Cthulhu Mythos beasts & magicks and Steampunk tech. Many of the deities or celestials mentioned are from the "Forgotten Realms" book series, as well as all the previously mentioned sources. Everything is mixed and proportioned to their species, race, culture and job specialization so it all gels together pretty correctly without having anybody overly powerful unless they are in fact Exalted, Celestial or Godly.

Full summary of story

Poor little Harry's early life was worse than Dumbledore could have imagined, or would ever have admitted, even if he saw it with his own eyes. The "Greater Good of Wizarding Britain" had established that the sacrifice of the Potter bloodline must be made, and so it would be, so that the rest of the population could avoid a return of the Dreaded Lord of the Darkes, Voldemort.
This deplorable state of affairs meant that when Harry Potter arrived at Hogwarts, he already had life experiences and survival skills that were more fit for the street gangs than polite society, and he was far from being a pliable pawn, no matter how meek, weak and docile he acted. For you see, Harry had learned young to hide his mind, aptitudes and temper for fear of being beaten by his relatives or teachers. Hogwarts soon proved to be no different than his life to date, and the events of First Year showed the child that he had no real future if he stayed.

Then arrived that fateful night, whence the mistreated house-elf Dobby came to warn him of dire perils coming to Hogwarts, aimed right at his life. Harry chose a far different path than the abnegation and self-sacrifice Dumbledore thought him groomed for. The discussion with Dobby took several days, and results in a far different situation than anybody wizardly or muggle could have ever thought. Dobby takes Harry to a sector of the English Isles that was forgotten by Time and Society, a grouping of abandoned ruins that have stood empty for centuries. From this almost blank canvas, young Harry will build an alliance that will shake the foundations of Britain to remake the wizarding world back into an open, pluralistic magical society that it had been in far Antiquity.

THE RUINED PEOPLES

First chapter: What happened and why

The Manipulator's hidden hands

(Harry Potter - theme)

1981
Moving around
The British Isles & Realms

When the events of 1981 occurred in Godric's Hollow, turning poor baby Harry into an orphan, many underhanded plots and schemes were enacted to insure the infant would have no choices in life other than to follow the path laid before him. By the will of a cowardly manipulator who dwelt in shadows, the boy would be astrained to plod along the tracks set in place by the secret conductor, like a locomotive bound to its railway, without any hope of ever leaving them for better roads.

Albus Percival Wulfric Brian Dumbledore was born in the late 1800's, and was very much a product of the culture and mores of the era, including that despite being a scholar and erudite of strong mind, he was also quite superstitious. Like most well learned men of his day, he believed strongly in spiritism, seances, augury, oracular testimony and prophetic visions granted by the Old Gods and Providence. As such, the elderly magus had no mental problems or moral qualms about being a highly trained alchemist who valued pure science while following naturopathic and totemistic philosophies. When you live in a world where ghosts fly around your dinner table at all hours of the day, it is hard to keep a stable, rational mind over the long term. But Dumbledore was not alone in this deviance; thousands in the wizarding world develop similar mental quirks and logic faults without realizing the slippery down-slope they are sliding on. You never think you are
evil, if the entire population around does the same thing, and you certainly can't be wrong if they
adulate you and promote you to all the positions of power they have to offer.

Just ask the German people, after 1945, what they have learned about those societal and
psychological mechanisms; it will be enlightening as much as frightening.

Suffice it to say that Albus Dumbledore, headmaster of Hogwarts, Chief Warlock of the British
Wizengamot, and Supreme Mugwump of the International Confederation of Warlocks, had all the
proofs in hand that he was more intelligent, more educated in the arcane, and more morally pure
and exalted, than any others because the entire British population said so. Therefore, why would he
ever have reason to doubt his own superbly blessed judgment of Things To Come?

HE had heard the prophecy, as it was told to him and none other.

HE had seen the pieces on the board, and moved them to fruition, not anybody else.

HE had the moral authority to influence James Potter and Frank Longbottom into going under
Fidelius, with secret keepers of his choosing. Like worshipers in a church, the families obeyed the
diktats of their priest as they thought he was 'inspired from above'.

HE had timed the betrayals of both boys involved in the prophecy so as to control events for their
placement, education and personal development from afar, without anybody seeing it happen.

HE had manipulated the mental instability of Sirius Black to send him after the true traitor, then
warned the aurors about his 'suspicions' concerning the future Lord Black's morality, lawfulness
and stability. So warned, the aurors didn't waste time with questions or investigation when they
arrived at the sight of the explosion that killed 12 muggles. Sirius Orion Black III was chucked in
Azkaban prison without a trial, an audit or even a family visit, as Albus planned. With Harry
Potter's primary oath-bound godfather out of the way, the plans for the Child of Prophecy could
proceed apace.

All the blood relatives of the Black lineage were set aside quickly, by custom, family law, or false
decrees passed surreptitiously in the Wizengamot by bribed, intimidated, potioned or spelled
members who voted what Dumbledore put in their minds with legilimancy. A few who would have
objected beyond his capacity to bribe or spell were attacked by imperiused muggles dressed as low-
rank Death Eaters during the fallout of the war, so nobody ever linked these deaths to his hands.
Said muggle pawns were then obliviated, confounded and killed with their corpses incinerated and
vanished. Albus was an old warhorse who'd seen the trenches of World War I and II, he knew how
to run counter-intelligence operations competently, especially since he absolutely FEARED any
sorts of direct combat against strong opponents.

The Longbottom Lord and Lady were tortured into a coma, and Dumbledore made regular visits to
Saint-Mungo's hospital to insure they were fed an alchemical concoction he brewed, thusly keeping
them in their enforced reduced mental faculties. Augusta (née Rosier) didn't like him one whit, but
she was distraught enough to not perceive the small doses of weak loyalty potion he put in her tea
when he visited her at home, the hospital or the Gamot offices. Likewise, those healers he kept
under imperius and loyalty potions were barred from harming anyone, just report all comings &
goings of importance, and keep and few patients in their states of illness and mental incapacity so
they no longer troubled Britannia.

The solicitors for the Potter family were attacked and burned out of business by the true Death
Eaters, on fake orders that Albus had them receive through Severus Snape, as if Voldemort himself
had given them. Since the Dark Lord was well happy with the resulting fear and chaos, nobody
ever looked further. This later allowed Dumbledore to illegally, and falsely, seal the Potter wills &
testaments to have himself declared legal guardian for the Potter Heir. He could not reach the copies of the documents stored inside Gringotts goblin bank, but he tried to pass unlawful national security decrees through a potioned & spelled Gamot meeting to force the Goblins to not reveal the wills to anybody who wasn't a Potter by blood. The person asking for the paperwork had to be present in person and submit to a mandatory Heritage Blood-Tithe Ritual. This intrusion into the inner working so the bank almost started yet another Goblin Revolt, which needed multiple concessions from the human wizards towards the sovereign nation to appease them back into their usual harmless grumbling.

In his attempt to outwit far better and craftier people than himself, Dumbledore had essentially rung the death knell of his manipulations and treasons as the Goblins never forgot anything done to them, regardless of payments and bribes the Gamot may have paid. They knew who was guilty, and suspected why he acted this way therefore the vaults and accounts of -BOTH- Potter and Longbottom houses were shuttered under an emergency decree by Ragnok Backsnapper, head of clan Gutspiked, 471st king of the British Goblins. This meant that only those payments necessary for the upkeep of properties, businesses and contractual debts would be processed, while revenues would be received and tabulate as normal. Each heir already had a trust vault as was the custom, so their own schooling and health fees were secure, as well as the allowance that each family had stipulated in the vault service contract. Likewise, Ragnok shuttered the Black house vaults and accounts when it was proven that the Wizengamot had put the future Lord in prison without lawful arrest, investigation or any form of audit or trial to justify the gesture. The Gringotts bank tried to publish the event in the Daily Prophet but was rebuffed by the editor, so they went to international periodicals, most notably the Washington DC Magical Herald, the Paris Libre et Magique pour Toujours, the Berliner Haexenzeitung, the Muskovita Gazeta, and the Tokyo Nippou Mahō no shinbun.

The governmental and popular backlash against the British Gamot and Dumbledore was so bad that Albus was at risk of losing his posting as Supreme Mugwump in the ICW and his diplomatic rights as British Member for the ICW general assembly if things proceeded along the path he had plotted. With his back to the wall and thousands of wands aimed at his face, the Manipulator had no choice but to improvise, so his potioned minions put Sirius Black in front of a cockamamie Secret Unspeakable Court and found him guilty of, you guessed it, 'Unspeakable & Anathema' crimes that couldn't be reported in public for fear of triggering a panic amongst the sensible, innocent souls of Britannia. The man was hence-with condemned to life-long banishment from the UK, British Isles and Realms until some future Wizengamot chose to give him a public trial to see if he had 'repented' his sins against magyck. Showing a rare moment of awareness of his limits in life and society, Albus didn't try to have the Black vaults and accounts seized or shuttered by ministerial decree, as he had thought of doing. Especially since Black immediately petitioned the ICW general assembly for a public trial on their stage, with Gringotts backing the request. This happened despite all that Albus tried, and Sirius Orion Black III was cleared of all charges levied against him by the British, upon which he assumed his Lordship and headship of the Most Ancient and Most Noble House of Black, peer of the Britannic Realms, regent Duke of the Zezetshire Cairnhills in the English Midlands.

Upon his elevation, Sirius wanted to petition the queen for recognition of his innocence to have his citizenship back, but Dumbledore used his usual curses, potions, and a bevvy of chicaneries between the Wizengamot and muggle parliament to stall any process for years to come. He could not stall eternally, but as long as it all blew up after Harry and Voldemort killed each other, then the crowds wouldn't give a damn what he had done to keep them safely out of the fight. Sirius could waste his time, life and the Black assets on getting a trial in England, Albus wished him the best of lucks because the boy didn't have the intellect, astuteness, acumen and magical prowess to counter a mastermind of the caliber he had chosen as enemy. Well, Dumbledore was wrong yet again, but
only time would tell, and there were no guarantees he'd listen when it happened.

Now, in order to insure the two boys of prophecy were raised to be docile, pliable and low-powered, Albus hijacked as much of the few riches and valuables present in the Potter's Godric's Hollow cottage, on the night it exploded. Because of those bastard sub-human Goblins, he was lowered to the level of sifting through catastrophe zones for forgotten loot, just like a pauper teenager fresh out of school. He used these ill-gained monies, tools and artworks to bribe the workers in the ministry department that managed the Trace charms placed on children and convicts that were sentenced to penal labor in the community or probation periods. He had the workers place multiple ward crystals in a containment circle around the houses of the two boys to make sure he would have a complete record of their accidental magic and any wand spells cast in the area. This was especially vital with Longbottom Manor as any medical or alchemical spells could mean that Augusta was trying to free herself from his loyalty potions and compulsion curses. Later on, it would let him see what kinds of spells the two boys were trying out in the privacy of their homes, and intervene to crush them back down if needed.

Albus Dumbledore did not believe himself to be an evil man, no matter how many deaths or broken souls he left in his wake. In his messianic syndrome, he thought himself to be just an 'Agent of Providence' doing as the Divines had tasked him to accomplish so that the rest of society could eventually live without the threat of Voldemort hovering over their heads. Consequently, he NEVER told either family to belittle, harm or damage the child in their care. His only explicit orders were to be firm in their strictness so that the children grew up humble, level-headed, stable, and hard working, not letting them wound up savage, snobby, bigoted, or air-headed. He never once told them to be violent or injurious, and certainly not to withhold medical care from their charges. If either guardian did this to a child, it was on their own conscience, not Dumbledore's.

What a bloody fucking hypocrite!

Once each child was in position, Albus pretty much ignored them unless a truly spectacular act of accidental magic was recorded or a message came from the secret watchers he had placed near the homes, just to make sure. Unfortunately, both sets of paid eyes sent multiple messages concerning emotional abuse, physical coercion and even beatings the kids suffered from their caregivers or other adults. Dumbledore always dismissed these letters as the watchers being too softhearted or not experienced enough in education to see it was normal parenting.

What's the point of having 'eyes' if you're too blind to see anything?

What's the point of having 'ears' all over the country if he never listened to their reports?

Because he was DUMBLEDORE and he was always right, due to his superior intellect, education, erudition, greater magic and multiple societal jobs. He had convinced himself in the back of his mind to believe that the external watchers he set were to -confirm- what he knew as truth, not tell him reality was different. That subconscious mindset would come back to bite him quite badly, and very quickly.

Infant Harry Potter

(Harry Potter - theme)

1981 - 1986
Dursley neighborhood
Little Whining, Surrey, England
Harry's first 15 months of life were ordinary for a Pureblood Heir. He was raised mostly by his mother who was studying from home to finish her charms and potions masteries in prevision of becoming a children's healer for Saint-Mungo's hospital. Lilian Mary Evans Potter, spoken Lily by her friends, was assisted by her in-laws and by an elderly house-elf that had helped raise James until he entered school. The boy's father was present in his life every day as he was studying to participate in the family's vast business holdings. He was assiduously following the tutorship of his father and grand-father in the arts of Family Magicks, which he would then pass-on to his children when they reached their own majority, at age 17, as was the Potter tradition.

James and Lily had married right out of Hogwarts at age 18, mostly because the Blood Purity War was already picking up steam and there were no guarantees for anybody's survival anymore. Lily was already depressed because her parents died in a traffic accident when she had just turned 17 years old, in her last year of school. She had missed their funerals because the muggles hadn't remembered how to contact them because of the war-time wards around those sectors under Wizengamot control. Immediately thereafter that deplorable incident, her sister renounced her and refused to attend their wedding, nor invited them to hers.

Then catastrophes happened one after the other for House Potter.

Harry's great-grand parents, Fleamont Potter and Euphemia Bones, were murdered in Diagon Alley on their usual Sunday shopping, which they did after attending the Lunar Temple to worship the Old Gods and Forest Dwellers with their friends and relatives. Barely twenty hours after their deaths, Voldemort himself attacked the venerable Potter Manor, trying to raze it to the ground. Despite the nominal master's death, the wards, animated golems, human hirelings and house-elves managed to fend-off the monstrous creature, pushing his troops back with heavy losses and multiple handicapping injuries to all involved. In a short pause during the tail-end of the conflict, the house-elves activated an old sacrificial War Ward that the British Ministry had made illegal several decades earlier, by giving the life of three captured Death Eaters to the manor's Keystone. The entire Potter Manor -shunted- its entire ensemble of buildings and territory to a hidden location that was under a religious Fidelius and Primal Essaence based Siege Wards.

Taken by a tsunami of boiling rage at his public defeat, Voldemort turned around, immediately attacking Jame's parents in their well appointed urban manor in Wales. Again, the Dread Lord suffered many losses to his followers, but this time he managed to penetrate the wards of the relatively new building, barely 178 years old, to kill both Charlus Potter and Dorea Black with all their elves, then set Fiendfire to the wrecked house after plundering all valuables that the auto-vaulting recovery spells hadn't removed to Gringotts for safe keeping.

With both primary residences of the family locked away or destroyed, James and Lily had no choice but to take refuge in the family's 'bachelor flat', the cottage of Godric's Hollow. The large two-level house had historically been the lodgings for the Potter children after their Hogwarts years, if they didn't want to live glued to their parents' sides, but still have contact with the family. The homey dwelling could easily accommodate a family of eight plus two human servants and two house-elves without being overcrowded. That was not by any stretch of the imagination a dump or blue-collar homestead, unlike where Lily had grown up, in Cokeworth.

Given that the Potter Cottage was not a well known place, Dumbledore easily convinced James to put it under a Sorcerous Fidelius that he would cast for the young family, supposedly to guarantee the stability and longevity of the enchantment. Unknown to them, that spell would have kept both Voldemort and the Manipulator out if they had cast it themselves, then chosen any secret keeper other than the traitorous Peter Pettigrew. Unfortunately, the young couple trusted Albus already,
thusly the scheduled betrayal was accomplished forthwith.

After the events of Voldemort’s Fall, Harry’s life took an immediate turn for the worse.

Dumbledore had Rubeus Hagrid retrieve the baby and bring him to Hogwarts so that Madam Pomphrey could give him a checkup, before placing him with his new guardians, Lily’s estranged sister Petunia and her husband Vernon. The matron did her best by the child in her care, but being potioned and spelled by Dumbledore for obedience, blind loyalty and discretion towards his much vaunted ‘Greater Good’ meant she actually did less than half of what was needed to heal the child's numerous injuries, to say nothing of the curse residues.

Thusly, young Harold Jamieson Evans Potter, Heir of Potter and Heir Presumptive of Black, was deposited on the doorstep like a milk bottle, in the depth of night, without ringing the doorbell or giving the inhabitants any sort of warning. What Dumbledore did leave was a heavily ensorcelled letter that would push the Dursley's to treat poor Harry as a difficult, dishonest child that needed 'maintenance' corrections and unyielding discipline to keep him from becoming wild and unmanageable. Here, Dumbledore could probably try to lie his way out of being declared an abuser and sadistic bastard, but he really couldn't. He set the mental programming in the curses to make the entire household, including occasional visitors, treat little Harry as if he were a hardened delinquent being held in a Borstal Reformatory from the years 1800. That meant that what Dumbledore considered "mild maintenance punishment to keep him docile" and could be excused away in the wizarding world because of potions and healing charms being so easy to find and use, became outright cruelty and torture with muggle guardians who had no access to those remedies to heal the injuries they inflicted on the child.

As usual, Albus had played on words and intentions; having one thing in mind, saying another and hoping that the people he addressed understood something else, then went away to commit acts that were yet another thing entirely. Having the habit of calculating 4 degrees of separation between his lips/writings and what happened in the real world made Albus Dumbledore the sort of enemy that nightmares were made of, especially given how amoral and narcissist he was. But, as was now usual for him after a century of practice, his written, cursed words were put into action in a manner so different from his orders that he had several legal & moral defenses built into the situation by the gestures and intents of others.

Little infant Harry would suffer greatly, in the Dursley household.

From the start he was refused the proper amount and quality of food since Vernon thought that a starving child would be less energetic, less prone to fits and tantrums, unlike his boy Dudley who was actually overfed and becoming pudgy by the day. Because Petunia had a limited amount of patience for anything related to domestic chores or active child rearing, Harry often went without changing his diaper in a timely schedule, was rarely washed as it would mean taking care of said diaper too, and neither adult wanted to hold him, since they disliked him already. In point of fact, Petunia tried repeatedly in the first 12 months to drop the child at diverse churches or group homes to rid her household of his pestilent presence. Nothing could separate the baby from his unwilling keepers, as Dumbledore had foreseen the situation, solving it in the laziest way possible by tasking a Hogwarts elf to discretely watch and report directly, without ever telling anybody else, including castle staffers. After the first two months of such aggressive attempts to rid themselves of the boy, including abandoning him in a subway station, a bus terminal, in a public library just before closing time, and in a truck-stop restroom at midnight, Dumbledore change tactics. He wrote down a list of situations in a "If – Then – What" style for the elf to follow without bothering him about it, unless the problem was not in the existent list.

The invisible, silent, house-elf would be present for the first five years then, when Harry passed
his 6th birthday, becoming eligible for compulsory public primary school, Dumbledore pulled him back to regular duties in the castle. The little child was left to his own devices, and the headmaster never looked at the written reports the elf had compiled about the grievous violence and abuses the Dursley's had heaped on the poor lad. As far as Albus was concerned, he only needed the boy alive, moderately healthy, with low skills and sociability, and almost no survival aptitudes or self-esteem to speak of. Anything else could be gleefully ignored until it was time to eulogize the martyred boy, after Voldemort was buried for the rest of Albus' lifetime.

But things didn't happen the way the self-absorbed elderly Manipulator wanted.

The cursed letter and bastardized prison ward scheme he had applied to the house interacted with the innate dislike and distaste the Dursley's naturally felt for their charge. This meant that they put efforts into correction & discipline only if he was in arm's length, or they received a complaint from an adult they regarded as important in society. Being clannish and parochial by nature, the two parents were prone to ignoring anything bad spoken about Dudley, and reacted the same for Harry when it was a pure stranger who tried to say or do anything. This meant that Harry, who was not a genius but intelligent and observant all the same, quickly divined the behavior patterns and saw a way out by the time the poor traumatized house-elf was pulled away from his silent service.

Harry's bad turn that turned good

(Harry Potter - theme)

August 1986
Dursley neighborhood
Little Whining, Surrey, England

From the age of 6 and up, once he started going to elementary school, Harry did the strictest minimum of anything ordered from him in the household. He usually disappeared in the streets from after Vernon left for work, staying away right until evening tea. Whenever the calendar predicted a long weekend, a family or religious holiday, or Vernon's fat sow of a sister visited, the infant found ways to stay completely away from the house for several days at a time. In fact, by age 7 it became normal for him to get out before Petunia cooked breakfast for her family, and come back only just before they closed the house for the night, near ten-thirty. If by any chance he got locked out because they turned in early, he had found a truly safe area in the neighborhood that he could use for shelter, even in the harshest of snowy winter nights.

Not far from Little Whining where he lived was an old concrete tunnel that passed under a railway that served the local branch of the suburban trains that linked with London City. The tunnel dated back to the reconstruction period after World War II and was in bad repair, but it had something nice that saved Harry from weather, gangs and pedophiles on countless occasions. The tunnel had been built with an integrated workman's shelter that had a heavy steel-plate door, cast iron wood stove, 12 steel-framed bunk beds, and three wet stalls containing each a sink, toilet and shower-head. The door had no built-in lock but it did have eye-screws on the outside to set in a padlock and a pair of stout deadbolts inside. Harry only had to filch some of Vernon's loose change while cleaning the couch, sofas and laundry to buy a good padlock with four sets of keys included. That would allow him to have keys hidden with his emergency stashes, just in case he got mugged or searched by a policeman.

After that, he picked dead wood from the public park the tunnel gave access to for the stove, and
promptly stole wooden matches, candles, lighter fluid from the Dursley's, and scrounged old newspapers or magazines from the waste bins in the neighborhood as tinder. With the basic necessities in place, Harry only needed to grease and heat the old valves to unstuck them so that running water would flow again. As he had been drafted by Vernon to do just such a job in their garden shed after the last winter, the child knew how and had little trouble to accomplish the job. He was helped by having stolen a few of the older, less used tools in both the shed in question and the garage where nobody but Vernon and himself went to do stuff.

One day both adults took Dudley to see a pediatrician for vaccines and a regularly scheduled checkup, followed by a friendly visit at the home of a business partner of Vernon's afterwards. During that rare time alone in the house, Harry managed to find the keys for the attic and basement to let himself into the usually forbidden places.

The attic held only old stuff Petunia wanted out of the way, and especially out of sight, since all of her mementos from her childhood and sister Lily were stored there, untouched for longer than Harry was alive. The child found a huge old steamer trunk with a weird lock and colored heraldic crest on the flat top, but could not open it yet as he had no key. He did manage to find a very old photo album that was not secured, containing pictures of his mother when she was a child, something he shamelessly stole and brought to his concrete bunker later in the evening.

The basement was an altogether different story. That was normally Vernon's reserved domain, because he had set up his home office to keep all of the Grunning's paperwork in order in large filing cabinets. He had been loaned a heavy manual typewriter by the company to speed-up the composition and producing of his weekly reports since he had been promoted to department manager just two years before, when Harry was age 4. The basement was split into multiple sectors of high interest for the young explorer. Almost useless were the publicly accessible second living room with its small, menial wood-burning brick fireplace and matching diminutive windows, with the small powder room next to the staircase. Much more fruitful were the actual office portion, the machine room with gas furnace, water heater, main electrical box and several shelves of loose tools, parts and sundries, and a tightly shut cold room for long-term emergency reserves.

Harry took the time to scrutinize each square inch of Vernon's office to see if he could safely nick anything without it being traced back to him. He found a deep drawer in the file cabinet nearest the desk that held all the worn, no-longer needed office supplies and knickknacks that Vernon had been too lazy to throw away properly. He found several spare pencils of diverse colors to draw with, a few very old pens that still worked, an antique metal dipping pen that Vernon had used during his engineering classes to manually draw mechanical parts, a brand new box of colored chalk sticks, some worn-down erasers stubs, plenty of lined or checkered paper pads and rulers. All good for Harry to write lists, schedules, or draw what he wanted to fix in his bunker. Plus, he liked to draw plants and animals, so that would pass the time nicely; it wasn't like he could have a telly in that cement crypt! There was no electricity in the shelter because it was too old; the public works of the day had used diesel trains, not electric, and all their stations or shelters had oil lamps and wood stoves. Even using gas for the lamps and furnaces was deemed too expensive for such low-browed usages in blue-collar environments.

In-between the huge, plush, desk chair's segmented cushions, Harry found a wealth of loose small change that had accumulated for years on end, almost 18 pounds' worth of it! That gave him the idea to check all the drawers to see if Vernon didn't have a hidden stash of coins or bills that he could slightly lighten, just to round off his capacity to buy necessities at the antiquated Pawn Shop in the next district, some 9 streets passed the public park where he hid and lived. He was rewarded by the discovery of not one but four small jars of coins hidden in diverse drawers and spread between different pieces of furniture. He stole only a few coins from each, normally less than 5 pounds Sterling to make certain his pickings weren't easily seen to the naked eye. Given the layer
of dust on some, he believed that Vernon was just as lazy with his money pinching as he was with everything else in life.

With the office searched, Harry went through the machinery room, a glorified walk-in closet with little moving room due to the large devices occupying most of the space. What attracted his attention was the quantity of old but still good tools, most of which were small enough to fit easily in his childish hands. A few minutes of silent inspection explained to him why that was the case; most of the control valves and electrical connections on the machines were small and located in uneasy spots where full-sized tools would be hard-pressed to reach and move. The solution was to use the long-handled but smaller versions of those tools needed, such as screwdriver, wrench, hammer, pliers and crowbar.

Harry was happy as the layer of oil residue covering the tools meant that nobody had moved them in several years, and the same on the floor confirmed the absence of human presence in the room at all. That gave him the impetus to take what he felt useful for his shelter, because he knew full well that anything he took here was something he would not have to buy, find or steal from somewhere else. Since money was in short supply despite his windfall of nearly 38 pounds today, he was wise enough to see the menial amount would not last, so he'd better be smart about saving and spending sparingly from the start of things.

The key for the padlock to the cold storage room was hidden quite badly in the machinery room, on the shelf right next to the door on the way in. Apparently, Petunia was afraid to lose the thing and Vernon was not the one in charge of stocking and maintaining the storage, so that was how things went. Shrugging it off carelessly, the young child unlocked the heavy door and blocked it open by sliding down the safety dead-bolt that was designed for just that; preventing the accidental closing and locking of the door with a person inside the room. Harry perused the thin metal trellis shelving with a critical eye towards finding edibles that were small enough to pass under his watchers' eyes without trouble, but good enough that he'd want to make the effort to bring them to his hidey-hole.

However, his problems were suddenly solved with a partial heart attack when the phone rang thrice before the voice of his uncle sounded through the speaker of the cassette tape answering machines, both in the office and upstairs. They were delayed by traffic on the highway due to a massive accident with over two dozen vehicles piled-up, and his own car had gotten skirted rather badly on the passenger side before they ended in the ditch with nearly six other cars. Because of the stress shock incurred by the relatives, plus the slowness of the police investigation into the causes of the catastrophe, they would be stuck on the spot for several hours. This would force the three Dursley's to sleep in a cheap motel for the night and return home in the early after-noon tomorrow, just after lunch and a bit of shopping. Unless they had to stop by the garage to fix the car to have it road-safe per the police instructions, in which case they could be delayed even further. They would call to warn him.

Then his uncle actually thanked the empty air, stating tartly; "I know you're in the house and listening, but I have to say that I appreciate you not picking up to force your damned flutey voice on me, given all the stress I already have to endure. Maybe you do have a few brain cells to rub together after all, and maybe smacking you around won't be needed, now that you're showing some discernment in how you interact with adults. Hummmph! We'll see when we come back how it goes." Beep!

Harry was so stunned by the vitriolic, blind demeanment he had just suffered that he stood there paralyzed by emotions for several minutes before the importance of what the older man said finally penetrated the fog around his mind. He had almost an entire day to himself to finish his pilfering and go stash it in his new home! Yay for him! It was about damn time that luck changed
Enthused by his new schedule, the child climbed back up the stairs to fetch a pair of rucksacks from Dudley's second bedroom where he stored his junk and unwanted toys that weren't cool or fashionable anymore, usually because he broke them to make sure he got new ones instead. This occurred regularly now that he got play dates with that mongrel Piers Polkiss, who kept telling Dudley that what he had was either lame, out of date or not good enough for a kid like Duds.

Harry sprinted back to the open storage room and began his 'shopping spree' with the alacrity and sternness of somebody who had spent the last two years accompanying Petunia Evans to the grocery store every Saturday that God gave them. He had heard her acrimonious complaints about lack of service, lack of choice, lack of freshness, lack of proteins, lack of vitamins, lack of fibers, and lack of essential oils so many times that he sometimes dreamt about it, when the usual nightmares about evil cackling laughter and bright bursts of green light left him alone. That meant that the child went straight for the three things most necessary in foods; dry packed, pickled in brine and canned. This was because dry packed could be eaten as-is without any prep or heating, while brined needed some water to wash and butter/oil to cook. Canned foods were much more varied, from fruit slices to baked beans in gravy to meatloaf, but you needed many items to open the can then prep the meal. And some like the fruits and vegetables were not a meal by themselves, they needed at least another item like bread, crackers, rice or potatoes to make it a semblance of a plate. Adding meat and condiments was vastly preferable, anyways.

The boy chose wisely a pair of boxes of specially made emergency 'shelter crackers' that had been a staple of British life since WW-II, when they were distributed by the army across the entire kingdom to palliate the food shortages following the destruction of entire cities by Nazi bombings. Everybody in Britain knew the look of the boxes, and schools taught kids that these hard, dry, salted biscuits could be good for nearly a hundred years if their packet wasn't open to let air and moisture inside them. For anybody in dire straights, these were a must, and it reminded Harry that purchasing more would be easy as they were common and cheap to this day.

After that, he realized he needed some butter as spread for the crackers or sandwiches, some oil, salt, pepper and a few spices to cook his canned food to a point where the taste from the metal can and preservatives wouldn't affect his tongue anymore. He took a few cans of fruit and mixed beans, a jar of brined sauerkraut, and several cans of pressed meatloaf or meatballs in gravy that were a big favorite of campers like the Boy Scouts. Towards the end he decided that he was British as everybody else, so he also took a large packet of bulk loose-leaf tea with two jars of powdered 3% milk, a jar of brown sugar and a jar of castor sugar to properly fix his food or drinks to his liking.

As the six year old was about to leave the cold room, he saw a few items on the farthest top shelf that got his attention in a hurry. With his relatives absent for more than 20 hours to come, he had the time to fetch a small folding chair to step on to reach the new loot. It was a reserve of 'adult' materials set aside for Vernon's personal needs, or as bartering goods in case of a real crisis. There were several 250ml bottles of cheap gin, four 1,5L bottles of good whiskey, two 1L tins of cheap bulk tobacco for pipe or rolling your own cigarettes, several bottles of 500ml of lighter fluid, a few different models of lighters, a miniature oil lamp with a 250ml reservoir, boxes of wooden matches, and...

There was an odd lump wrapped in an ancient oiled leather sheet with thread tied around to keep it in place. The thing stank of mineral oil and abandonment in Harry's small hands. The child carefully untied the threads and unfurled the wrapping to unveil the prize, or prizes as it was two distinct items bundled together. Unbeknownst to him, the poor child had found the proof of his uncle's secret folly. He had found an antique dagger with sheath and matching Walther P38 pistol dating back to 1945. Both were standard Nazi Waffen SS equipment that would have been worn by
an officer in the dreaded army of the German enemy. Harry's memory of history was not good because he hadn't yet been to school, and what little he knew of the war was from all the books that littered the second bedroom upstairs, where Dudley threw them as he hated reading with passion. Harry had read what he could given his rather passable skills in that vital art, but there was only two books that spoke of the dreadful period of history and as children's picture books, they had scant details and nothing too traumatic to explain.

What he could tell was that the dagger was double edged, straight, with a pair of stylized eagle wings for guard and a flared pommel with a wooden handle, stored in a wooden sheath with steel fittings. The sheath and blade had many engravings of the eagle, swastika and German flag, and a grinning death-head on each. The pistol had a single magazine inside but no bullets; it was dull black with brown wooden handle. It also had eagles, swastikas, German flags and a single death-head on the top of the slide. Stamped along the left side of the barrel was the word 'Totenkopf' but Harry had no earthly idea what that meant.

What the boy did know was that he had just hit the lottery. Every night he heard the radio news programs about how tough British gun laws were, and how hunters, sportsmen and farmers wanting to protect their lands had to fight the constables to have their very few rights respected when they intervened and firearms were involved. Harry knew for a fact that his fat uncle did not have a gun permit, and most certainly had not registered this weapon with the police as the law demanded. Since he couldn't hunt with a pistol and they didn't live in a rural area with wild animals like foxes or crows, the chances of the bobbies giving him a license were nil, so the chance that he did register was not in question. Plus, if what Harry remembered about these symbols was true, then nobody in their right mind would want to show it in public, not unless they were desperate.

Looking at the unholy devices, Harry Potter realized that -HE- was desperate.

Desperate enough in fact that he wrapped the bundle anew and stuffed it in one of the rucksacks for transport to his hidden haven near the park. Since the gun was empty, Harry decided to look for the bullets, on the off chance that Vernon had actually wanted to use the gun for real, in which case he'd need the munitions nearby. It took almost a half hour, but Harry's lucky run kept on giving today; the box of 50 bullets, 9mm Parabellum, was hidden inside a partially emptied tin of cheap coffee that nobody in the family ever drank. Blinking owlishly at the find, Harry realized that like the key for the room, it was placed right next to where the bundle had lain, in case the contents was needed. Furthermore, the child realized also that it was the only tin of coffee in the entire storage room that he had seen, so it would be hard for Vernon to grab the wrong one during a rushed response to an emergency.

Harry grabbed a pair of 250ml bottles of gin since he knew this brand could actually be used as a wound disinfectant or fire starting fluid in a bind. He also took the mini oil lamp with lighter fluid, more matches, three of the lighters that could stay lit when you let go of the trigger and the tin of tobacco. Three months back, he had watched television when the Dursley's were out for the evening with the preacher's family and saw a news report about the homeless in London. Many smoked the pipe or cigarettes because the nicotine affected the stomach, curbing hunger pangs and cutting the need to eat, something these poor souls knew about far too much. So Harry being forewarned, took what he foresaw that he would need quite soon. With both sacks full, he took the old but completely full box of bullets last, then placed the tin back on the shelf and moved the bottles and boxes to hide the empty spot where the bundle had been stashed.

Carefully resetting the shelves in the storage room just as his aunt liked her pantry and closets to be managed, the boy erased traces of his passage as best he could without putting back everything he took. Then he carefully hugging his bounty up the stairs and closed the door locked, after making certain he hadn't left footprints on the hard wood risers to betray his movements in the forbidden
area. He did a quick tour of the house to make sure everything was closed and secure before
grabbing his thin windbreaker and ratty baseball cap, put on his taped-up trainers, got the spare key
from the hiding place under the flower vase on the vestibule table and got out to do his emergency
run to his hidden safe-zone.

Thankfully, he was able to get there without troubles or attracting unwanted attention, unpack the
bags and order the stuff a bit, then return home before the time the Dursley's normally had evening
tea when thy stayed home. Since the car was not present, nobody paid attention to the house, and
since the lights would not be on until Harry came back, it attracted the eyes even less.

Harry did not know it yet, but the decision to steal the Nazi gun and dagger would be the changing
point of his young life, since it indicated that he had already chosen, in the depths of his heart, that
he could have to be violent, deadly even, to guarantee his safety. One secretive master Manipulator
would see his plans destroyed by this, and he personally would never recover from the shock when
he realized the depths of his mistakes.

Poor, miserable, no-good house-elf Dryskholl does good at long last

(Harry Potter - theme)

August 1986
Dursley neighborhood
Little Whining, Surrey, England

The great, mighty and implacable 'Servant of -THE- Greater Good' Albus Percival Wulfric Brian
Dumbledore, he of the many titles and acclaims, was yet again proven to be a no-good bad master
whiskers to all of elvendom.

Over the last five years, the elderly crone of a magus had obliged the poor, miserable little house-
elf named Dryskholl to accomplish the lowest, basest of ignominious chores. The felon wizard had
forced the gentle, serviceable being to watch silently, from afar, what the poor cursed and potioned
muggles inflicted upon the defenseless infant Harry Potter. The elf was witness to all of the
indifference, setting-aside, abuse, brutality and eventually, the family turning their backs on the
poor child when he began to disappear for hours and days on end without giving any explanations.

Dryskholl was as severely limited biologically and culturally as all of his elvish kindred, needing
external magic to survive and thinking that only serving wizards or goblins would provide this. As
he had been 'given clothes' at a young age by the evil family of dark wizards he was born into
because he was too small and sickly, the poor creature had little choice to find an alternative home
post haste to live. Albus saw this clearly and shamelessly exploited the vulnerabilities of yet
another innocent for the glory of his own image and the furtherance of his evil schemes.

Thus, Dryskholl was bound to Hogwarts, and through her the will of the felonious headmaster who
wanted nothing less than to enslave all beings to his whims while he still lived. The only small
relief that was granted the elf was the sure knowledge that Dumbledore was too squeamish to
practice necromancy to elongate his life or bypass Death's dominion. All the elf needed to be fully
free was to outlive the cruel bastard, which shouldn't be that hard given how old the man was.
Even the greatest transmutations that could heal, prolong life or transfer souls between bodies
demanded a price, an 'Equivalent Exchange' for what was produced, and again Dumbledore
wouldn't pay those particular tithes, fearing the loss of his magicks or sanity.
So, in accordance to his stated chores, Dryskholl watched silently over the Potter Heir to insure his survival and basic health, but never interfered unless he was truly at risk of death, coma, maiming or permanent handicapping of a necessary bodily function. Those were the terms set by Dumbledore; he could intervene but never upon a human directly, and never interact with them in a manner that they became aware of his presence & identity. So, the elf used basic household charms to clean & fix the child's meager clothes until they were so worn that the spells no longer took hold. He used invisible micro-portation to place healing herbs into what little food he could get to eat, especially away from the Dursley's. This led the elf to debasement as he began to pop around the bins and dumpsters of restaurants in nearby cities to find enough food that was still edible to cobble together snacks that he would 'lose' near where Harry was walking by, making it appear as though another human had dropped or abandoned it half-eaten. Dryskholl also had to magically put the child in deep healing slumber when he slept in his cupboard, under the house's staircase, because his innate magic just didn't have the resources or reserves to cure his ailments or repair injuries his kin had inflicted. On a few occasions, the elf had stolen potions from Albus himself to spell them into the sleeping boy's stomach to save his life and health.

Then the boy reached the age of 6, at which all muggles are to attend primary school near where they lived, a practice know as 'compulsory' because the only legal alternatives were a private school or a certified home tutor, which would be verified. Vernon would never spend any money on his nephew as long as Dumbledore's elixirs and curses flowed through him, so the boy was sent, quite unwillingly, to the local elementary. This caused a fit of anger because they now had to spend time and money on fixing the kid's appearance and health enough to not trigger an investigation by the Child Protection Services (CPS). Thusly, Harry finally got some glasses to partially correct his severe nearsightedness and was even taken to a dentist to clean his teeth. After that he had to go to a pediatrician because both the optometrist and dentist threatened to report the adults if they didn't get proof of behavioral changes on their parts inside the very week. This meant that the poor boy finally received the muggle vaccines he should already have gotten at the same time as Dudley, and a full record of his injuries was made.

Normally, the doctor and nurse would have reported the family to CPS or the police, but Dryskholl bent his orders yet again. He imitated his evil lord's methods by using strong compulsions that were attached to the photos and paperwork to convince the personnel to harangue the Dursley adults themselves, then negotiate with them better living conditions for the child. In reality, the elf understood that they would not feed or heal him any better, but they might be scared of the authorities enough to at least leave him at peace. This would be such an improvement for his health that the elf wondered if some natural instinct or curse-mandated reflex inside the Dursley's wouldn't make it unachievable.

As it were, the compulsions on the doctors held, and they managed to bullshit the family enough to make them pull back from physically hurting the child in their care. However, as Dryskholl had foreseen, they also stopped paying attention to his well-being and movements altogether. This was good because when Dumbledore rescinded the elf's chores and orders, he never commanded him to ignore the family or abandon Harry Potter to his mess. The only order he was given firmly was to never speak of the manipulations with any house-elf, portrait or ghost that was bound to Hogwarts, as well as no humans or Goblins at all, which still left the door wide open for quite a few things to happen. After all, Dumbledore had not mentioned house-elves, portraits or ghosts in service to other people, nor did he bar him from speaking to half-breeds like Hagrid or Flitwick, or other species like centaurs, dwarves, halflings, fae, minotaurs, orcs, ogres, trolls, and even snakes or dragons if a parselmouth could be found to translate the animals.

Yes, Albus thought he had been quite wise, ingenious and masterful in his manipulation of the lower life-form that was the servile, juvenile elfling. He was wrong, as he often was, but did not see it because his hubris and bigotry blinkered his eyes to the reality around him.
Dryskholl promptly took his partial freedom to watch over Harry Potter from afar, silently and discreetly as always. The child was ignorant of magic and the ministry laws stated that only his family, magical CPS or the school that had his name in the Book of Souls could tell him. But it didn't keep the elf from helping far more directly than before, so long as he kept invisible and never touched the boy unless his life was in dire peril. That meant that the small elfling was joyful when the human boy found the abandoned workman's shelter, under the railways that led towards London's center. It was Dryskholl who fixed the potable water plumbing to insure the child had running fresh water, just as he cleared out the drainage pipes, and then the ventilation grates that allowed outside air to circulate inside the enclosed space. The elf unstuck the flue in the stove pipe, repaired the rusty old wood burning stove, and solidified the rickety old bed frames. While Harry was stealing from his family, the elf went around the cities he knew to find abandoned or discarded mattresses, bedding and cushions to pile up in a secure location. He then cleaned, sanitized and fluffed all the items that would be dropped near the tunnel's entry periodically, as if some lack-wit idiot had just dumped his trash in a public place as happened often, specifically for the child to find when he walked around his haven.

Upon seeing just how autonomous Harry had become since his medical visits and new glasses, the elf realized that he could perhaps help in different ways. One manner was by moving more of the park's dead-fall wood near the tunnel's entry, in the area Harry searched for fuel and materials for whittling little devices he thought were necessary. It was a harmless amusement and if he botched something terribly then he could just burn it in the stove. Dryskholl combed the entire park and piled up all the lost objects he found, repairing them as good as new then sporadically placed them in or near the tunnel so the child could find them. The elf was surprised that the human boy would often sell the objects at the pawn shop or trade them with the schoolkids for other things that were more useful in his life. That was a smart move showing a keen mind and capacity to plan ahead for prolonged jobs or harsher times of worsened poverty.

Amazed by the boy's innate cleverness, the elfling popped into muggle bookstores at night and browsed the shelves to find what he believed would help the boy even more. His old family had stressed quite firmly that "knowledge is power; therefore keeping mudbloods ignorant is an act to insure our dominance" so he would find the best books and magazines to help educate the abandoned child for the life to come. Dryskholl selected survival & camping guidebooks made by the Boy Scouts of Britain, with homesteading manuals designed to help small farms endure and prosper. A domestic first aid guide and familial health booklet from CPS were added the moment he saw them, plus another book for growing medicinal herbs in a home garden. A few hobby beginner's guides for home-crafting with wood, wool, rope, leather, metal and glass were put in the basket, along books on plumbing, electricity, carpentry, pottery and forging.

Then the elf found about a very tightly controlled set of books that few shops carried but would be directly helpful to his unknowing charge; 'doomsday preppers' and 'sovereign citizenship'. These books didn't all look very serious or credible, so the young elf had to take the time to skim through and evaluate each, instead of just reading the abstract on the rear cover like sufficed for all the previous texts. However, he did find better, more complete survival guides dedicated to the British weather zone, as well as a homesteader's guide to dealing with predators and thieves when far removed from urban areas and human help. He was surprised to find seriously written guides about living homeless in a big city or rural area, back-packing & squatting, dealing with bullies, street thugs or gangs. The nastiest bit was when he accidentally discovered a specialty therapy booklet destined to children surviving and recovering from violence at home, in school or having fled a warzone. To this lurid lot he added one last guidebook, entirely about the laws of the UK by territory and what were the limits of police powers and bureaucratic bosses, "something that all children, street dwellers and independent-minded people needed to read" the abstract said.

Powerfully disheartened by some of his latest finds, Dryskholl nonetheless decided that it was
worth the risk to take some time in those questionable bookshops that specialized in serious, professional survivalism and warfare prepping. Given that the UK had suffered the Nazi raids not long ago, the elfling thought Harry could use all the help he could find, and he had stolen the big knife and pow-pow from Vernon, so he must have made some decisions about that already. The lonely elf soon realized that the bookshops he wanted were in fact army surplus stores or even unmarked, not-so-legal warehouses where discrete trades of texts, weapons, munitions, chemicals and forbidden military or governmental knowledge occurred in the dead of night.

Motivated by his true desire to see the young child alive, healthy and free from the shackles some would bind him with, the elfling patiently scrutinized the more deleterious inventories he found, regardless of how disturbed he became at the sight. Due to the bearded bastard and his long-term plans, he took a manual destined to train soldiers against commercial, religious or governmental propaganda to educate the boy’s mind against verbal and emotional manipulations. This was followed by an antique MI-5 guide, dated 1967, about drugs, poisons, antidotes and using small doses of toxins to slowly build-up tolerances or immunities. With a great shiver of shame, the elf took a just-published British SAS officer's guide to surviving capture and imprisonment by the enemy, resisting interrogation & torture, and passing through the trauma without losing their sanity.

Seeing the great evils that human could do even without magic, the poor elf became vicious in his choice of books to bring back. He selected one of the first known copies of ‘The terrorist's cookbook, ed. 1988’ and another old MI-5 manual about infiltration, spying, sabotage & traps in a guerilla context. Remembering again what Harry had stolen from Vernon, the elfling began to peruse for seriously written, professional books about World War I & II from all perspectives, with a specific emphasis on the personal lives, training, discipline and equipment of the soldiers on each side. Then he had to truly search long and hard until he found a guide about farmers' guns, their usage & safety measures. The elfling struck gold when he chanced upon an old trade-school gunsmithing manual from 1974 that was used in the British army to train armorers.

After much internal debate, Dryskholl searched for beginner's books about self-defense, fighting, combat and formal warfare, which lead him to finally find some texts about World War II and the many resistance & insurgency movements it spawned across the planet. The poor elf took the horrid college-level tomes with shaking hands as he thought of Dumbledore and the many crimes he had in the works. Poor Harry Potter would need to know these things if he were to stay free.

There were a lot of pamphlets, guides, manuals and books in the secret cache the poor lonely elfling used as his home-base away from Hogwarts, but it was giving him ideas too. First he would order everything by how immediately important it was for Harry to learn and master the skills taught in the texts, then sort the books into piles by level of competency to make small packages of mixed subjects all at the same degree of complexity. This would allow the child to develop across many domains and choose those he wanted to put efforts into, thus aiding the elf in choosing what to drop near him on the subsequent 'gifts'. None of the books would be thrown away or sent back, as Dryskholl had decided that if Harry bypassed a subject presently, nothing kept him from reading it later when the need or desire manifested.

The frail elfling realized in his few last sorties through the survivalist shops and army surplus stores that he too was in grave danger from Dumbledore. He knew too much, and his oaths of silence and obedience were towards the school, not the man himself. If he was ever removed from his headmastership, then the elf could ignore his orders and speak his dire secrets to anybody willing to listen. So, the decision was easy; as he sorted and prepared the educational care packages for his charge, Dryskholl read through everything thoroughly, becoming one of the first house-elves of Britain with a radical socialist view of race relations, civil society, police powers and government at large. He was also the very first house-elf that he knew of who managed to
learn how to operate and maintain several types of small guns that he stole from petty muggle criminals in multiple cities. He set up a secondary home-base in a wild area, deep in the forest on the Calf-of-Man island, in the central oceanic channel of the Kingdom between England and Ireland, to store his guns and munitions. He quickly spelled himself an underground practice tunnel to shoot at empty bottles or wooden targets he crafted manually as a way to pass those times when Harry was in school and didn't need him nearby. By necessity of his lonely life, the elfling became quite good at cooking diverse types of foods or whittling wood while reading books or newspapers of muggle and magical origins, with the wizarding wireless playing in the background. Due to his isolation when he was away from Harry, the elf clung to each scrap of culture or education he could find, thusly slowly making himself amongst the most erudite and well informed of his kindred.

By the end of the first year of elementary school, Harry Potter would have several dozen practical books in his bunker, sitting on wooden shelves he made himself, plus several highly questionable street-smarts, homeless & off-grid living, and tactical survival guides. Occasionally, he would find and bring back a historic or political book that he felt a 'gut feeling' about bringing home to read, because he felt an innate certitude that if he had more and better general knowledge, then people wouldn't be able to use him as a damned doormat to wipe their feet in his defenseless face, like his relatives had done all his life.

Albus Dumbledore's grandiose criminal plans, seditious schemes and treasonous manipulations of the magical and muggle populations had just been broken in secret by a young, frail and sickly house-elf who refused to let his morality and dignity be profaned by a fool. Nobody would know about it for a great many years to come, and by then, it would be far too late to change course.

Harry's elementary mis-education

(Harry Potter - theme)

1986 – 1991
Dursley neighborhood
Little Whining, Surrey, England

Petunia Evans was as she had always been; jealous of her sister and disdainful of her supposed otherworldly powers. She also knew that her sister had stopped believing in their Lord Jesus in the third year of her magical schooling for reasons that were still nebulous as the younger woman had never explained herself. What Petunia knew to be true was that witches were wicked, cursed fools and she would have no truck with them, as commanded by the Bible of their Lord Savior.

Vernon was a bit more direct in his approach to the situation; he could have accepted magic if he had seen examples of it being useful around the house, or for healing illness and injuries. Should it have been demonstrated clearly that these capacities were for more than scaring or hurting people, then he would have accepted it in his life, even if only as a work tool. Therefore, his way of handling Harry was to 'beat the stupid and snob' out of him the moment he became aware of a misdeed or errant behavior, but he was prepared to reward the child if he did something truly helpful for the household. However, given that Vernon had a bad case of innate bigotry and was himself rather lazy, the chance that he would ever reward his 'indentured serf' was nil. The boy was simply far too useful as a meek, pliable servant to start bolstering his pride and self-worth.

The strange thing though, was that despite both adults being indisposed towards their nephew,
neither ever did any genuine effort at finding out where he disappeared all day since April of 1986 had passed. The two parents knew that it was not normal or acceptable to let a child barely six years old haunt the streets all day, and some nights too, but something inside their minds made them not care. They no longer cared for his welfare, but most telling was that they also no longer valued the opinions of the neighbors, school officials, police or CPS if it came to that. For better or worse, the Dursley adults had completely disconnected from their nephew and nothing, not even Dumbledore's curses and alchemies, would ever change that.

Poor little Harry Potter had to trudge his way from wherever he had spent the night, with a full backpack, over to the disheartening, soul-warping patch of malevolence where the poorest kids from all over Little Whining were obliged to attend. Dudley instead was sent to a private primary school in Greater Whining, which sent a noisy yellow minibus to pick him up on the street corner next to Wisteria Lane with two other pupils. Dudley had a classic grey pants & white shirt uniform whilst Harry had whatever rags he managed to cobble-up for himself that day.

{ HP } --- { The root of evil } --- { HP }

So it was, on a dreary September 1 of 1986 that Harry Potter entered officially as a pupil of the local school; the Vice-Archiduke Ulyrance Van Uttebatten - GCVO public elementary academy. As befits an establishment with such a grandiose antiquated name, the buildings were old to the point of decrepitude as they had more-or-less survived the World War II bombings just enough to be repaired rather than torn down.

First built in the late 1700's as a wooden five storey tower to hold orphans and sickly children too poor for even the local church hospice, it burned down in 1789 due to the kids rioting against the abuses they suffered. It was then rebuilt as a Borstal type of corrective school from 1799 to 1868 when yet another massive riot by the juvenile inmates caused fires and a partial collapse. The second rebuild was done in 1873 as a pauper's public school for ages 6 to 12, at which age guilds and companies could hire apprentices to tend the basest menial jobs. That incarnation lasted until the 1939-45 period when the WW-II bombings destroyed the edifice, making the city planners of the day draft up a much bigger and modern design. The deluded buffoons had hoped the new layout and utilities, electricity & gas, would make such an upgrade from wood stoves and oil lamps that it would forcibly change the social atmosphere from the ancient decadence and violence over to a new openness and free learning. Instead, the imbeciles produced a large complex that was still cramped and decrepit-looking, even where it wasn't actually rotting to pieces.

The very worse part though, was that the new complex still made everybody inside it's brutalist cement walls feel claustrophobic and ground-down to nothing, pushing them towards emotional break-downs and outbursts of unmanageable anger and violence. The living, working and teaching conditions inside the ill-built school complex were such a mental hardship that the district reserved this posting as a punishment for those personnel that they hadn't managed to rid themselves of yet, and as a tool to break-in the idealistic young fools the ministry of education tried to send them every once in a while.

The cold, unwelcoming play yard was half asphalt and half cold, drab dirt and gravel without a piece of greenery in view.

The main building was the academy proper with the ground floor assembly hall, first floor mess hall and three floors of classrooms. A glass walled solarium on the rooftop served as lounge for the staff members between class times, during the ever-present British rains and snows.

The second biggest building was the gymnasium & swimming pool that was built all the way across the play yard so that the noises from the over active children didn't bother the classes or
administrators. The gymnasium had been built in early 1946 so it was made of solid steel framing covered in thick concrete with a rounded roof so as to deflect the explosive forces of bombs. The building had been viewed as a civilian shelter, in case the war started up again, so there were large communal bathrooms & showers, a commercial galley kitchen, and several fireplaces molded directly into the concrete walls to warm the refugees that would sleep all over the main floor. The basement was practically abandoned since construction; it was split into eight storage bunkers and the machinery room for the pool's pumps and filters. Under the gym's machinery room was located another level, a sub-basement with two large tractor engines that served as generators in case of emergency, making just enough electricity to light up the panic lights across campus. In this level were located all the hubs that spread utilities to the school; the junction box where the city's power lines entered, the main natural gas pipe, the potable water aqueduct, and a hatch to the antique brick sewer tunnels that ran under Little Whining for close to 150 years.

The administrative building was built in the same period as the gym, because the predecessor had gotten a bloody big Nazi V-2 rocket in the broad side, collapsing on impact. The new structure was built on top of the still usable foundations of the wrecked edifice, saving work and money but creating a dark, dank basement level where nobody ventured. The visible part was split in four sectors; the ground floor with the receptionist & mail desk and the staff mess hall, the two floors of teacher's offices followed by the two floors of actual administrators, and finally a glass walled solarium on the rooftop. The only fully renovated and up-to-date place in the building was the principal's office suite which included his secretary's desk & waiting area, his own office, the reserved bathroom and butler's pantry for his tea set and snacks. Under the edifice's used spaces lay the foundations, two levels of ancient brick and mortar structure that had survived two centuries of hardship and violence. The first basement was a long corridor with ten locked supplies bunkers, five to each side, holding the wartime civilian safety & rescue materials to make the population endure through another conflict. The second, oldest, basement was split in three large rooms; the building's ancient machinery & boilers, the coal bunker and finally the school's dirtiest secret from a bygone era – the Renaissance Era's punishment room.

On the left side of the administrative building, between it and the gymnasium, had been added about ten years ago a small brick and galvanized steel garage. The structure was only the ground floor with four double-space roll-top doorways giving place for 4 large trucks or vans. This was the newly revamped "technology initiation & machine-shop" classes were held instead of the dreary old basement beneath the admins. The slanted steel sheet roof and foggy tiny windows gave the place an air of being abandoned to squatters right from the opening in 1977.

Harry had been warned by his relatives about the kind of school he was being sent to attend; they had no care for his welfare and even less for his mind or learning. They had chosen to not spend a penny on him, and as long as he was registered at Van Uttebatten academy, the bloody CPS would not look further. They especially would not look at any injuries or welts he had as that might lead back to the teaching staff's heavy-handed approach to instilling discipline and docility into the litter of mangy mongrels they were saddled with. Vernon gleefully explained that as the school's personnel were all unionized, none could be fired without dragging them, and the school district's uppity bosses, through a public trial in Her Majesty's court. Something that nobody in their right mind would ever do for a wastrel bum like Harry 'your parents were drunks' Potter.

Lesson #1 before he even left the door of Number 4 Privet Drive; shut the fuck up and obey or you'll hurt something fierce, and the adults will enjoy doing it to you.

Lesson #2; the morality or humanity of laws doesn't matter, because of you have enough coppers and guns on your side even the most inhumane laws will be applied.
Lesson #3; give enough people money or a parcel of power of their own and they'll gladly help you crush others to your liking, no matter how monstrous the method and result.

Lesson #4; he was alone, he had no outside help, and the kids would probably treat him like Dudley had done, so no succor from them. Each child would be trying to survive the schoolyard bullies, the violent teachers, the perverted admins, and the other perverts that would be roaming around the complex to grab the weakest of the lot.

Harry had been secretly reading the local and national newspapers for several months, stacking up the periodicals in his bunker as fuel for his stove so he made the effort to read them before they helped him to stay warm in is safe little hole. That meant that he knew already what hellish den of perdition his relatives had consigned him to, and he had tried to prepare his mind and body as much as any abandoned 6 year old boy could manage. One of the things he had come to learn from the papers and a small battery-powered radio he had scrounged from a neighbor's bin was that Van Uttebatten academy was NOT the worse place he could go. The academy was still near where he had made his small home, and he would only attend during regular school hours.

In comparison, the church-run Saint Ignatiorus da Repentatori residential school, secure center for holding street-kids & young male delinquents, located in the forested rural area farther south by about 30 kilometers, was built like a genuine castle-prison. It was wrapped by 15 feet high stone walls dating back 131 years, and the buildings were around 174 years old with precious few utilities or services to be found. The austere sect of catholic Jesuits that operated the establishment had never allowed the local council nor the national ministries of Justice of Family Services to come poke their heads into their affairs. They had no choice but to modernize while repairing the damages suffered from WW-II like everybody else, but that was the limit tolerated by the doddering elderly priests. Harry's poor, miserable life would end very shortly if he were sent there, as he would be incarcerated around the clock, without family visits or furloughs of any sorts. The papers were rife with St-Ignatorus' reputation for cruelty, injuring and handicapping the boys in their custody, and almost every boy that left the place had been raped repeatedly by multiple priests or lay custodians.

Shivers of dread crawling down his spine as he remembered the alternative while staring up at the massive drab gray building of Van Uttebatten's façade, the abandoned child decided that he would do absolutely -ANYTHING- to avoid going anywhere worse. He would probably have to endure torments of mind and body, but as long as rape or whoring himself wasn't asked, he would try to endure. His only alternative was to ditch formal primary schooling and any chance to a secondary school afterwards by living in the streets full-time. However, Harry had quickly realized that he was the only child of any age that was completely abandoned in his village. If the coppers wanted to find him, they would have little efforts to make before they found his precious bunker and belongings. His only truly safe alternative would be to go off-grid in a rural area, far from prying eyes, but he had never done any camping or scouting in his life, so he wasn't sure if he could survive in the harsh British winter, given how young, small, underfed and meek he was.

Want it or not, this inhuman monolith of concrete would be his life for the coming five years, and he -HAD- to adapt, find ways to survive and dodge trouble, or else he might as well jump off the roof to end it on his own terms. What a joyful thought on his first day of school. It certainly wasn't the freedom and help he had dreamed about when he was locked in his cupboard!

{ HP } --- { Year 1; 1986 - 87 } --- { HP }  

The first year was harsh, demeaning and beyond brutal in many ways for all the children who were forced to attend the Van Uttebatten institution. All of them were bloody well aware they were the shittiest turds floating in Britain's sewers, beneath the feet of their betters in life and society, as was
Just, Proper and Civilized under God. Any suspicion that a child was not blindly accepting of this propaganda had the culprit dragged by the ear to the front of the classroom for a thrashing on the seat of their pants with a swishy rattan cane. If more than just one teacher or staffer complained to the principal about the child's indocility or lack of blind belief, the little hellion was then grabbed by a pair of stout custodians and dragged kicking and screaming to the antiquated punishment room in the second basement of the administration building. Few children ever spoke aloud of what the actual sanctions were, but they always came back littered with welts, bruises and occasional broken arm or leg because they tried to struggle free of their tormentors' vices. Apparently, getting summoned to the head office for a bare-arsed caning that left bleeding stripes on the skin was still proven as much safer and less painful than whatever was done by the school's thugs in the hidden basement room.

Right in the first week, Harry heard, and verified, that two different boys had been dragged to the basement and come back injured enough to require a trip to the nearby pauper's clinic to be patched up. Likewise, he saw with his own eyes no less than four classroom canings and heard a pair of teachers at noon meal brag about "having hauled a fucking little trublion to the principal to set some cuts on his chubby lower cheeks". Seeing and hearing directly the proof of the staff's utter lack of care for their wards, the poor neglected child lowered his head and affected an air of silent, compliant despair from then on. He never raised his hand in class, answered -VERY- politely to all adults, and absolutely never questioned the rules or protocols in place, even when he could see they were stupid or obsolete in today's society.

Having six years of life with the Dursley's may not be much in terms of experience, but it was enough to have comparatives and know that the people in Van Uttebatten academy weren't really trying to teach anything to anybody. The school was truly just a part-time, cheaper version of what St-Ignatorius claimed to do thoroughly full-time, with permanent results. That meant that Harry concentrated solely on his studies, books, and handing in completed homework or tests without ever challenging the grades given, foregoing any ideas of making friends for moral support and a social life at long last. This wasn't the place or time for that sort of self-delusion, and pretty much anything, including sneezing while the teacher was lecturing, could earn you an immediate six strokes of the cane, which no kid in their right mind would contest as they all knew what the other punishments would escalate into.

The good thing about tyrannies that are run by multiple tyrants at the same time was that such characters rarely played well together as a team. Normally, tyrants were lazy bums who brutalized their victims to enslave them into doing the work for them, so they rarely put a lot of effort into anything that wasn't their vices or the violence needed to keep slaves at work. The very predictable result of the staff assembled in Van Uttebatten was that the principal had a few favorite teachers who were given badges as "Senior Educator" while the rest were simply "Teacher" or "Junior teacher" as per the regulations. The senior educators could punish a child in their classroom any way they wanted, including removing clothing by force to hit skin, or they could convoke the culprit to their personal office for a 'severe sanction' that was still beneath the notice of the admins. Woe betide the poor foolish child that didn't realize quickly that trying to dodge the summons or denying it was issued would mean an automatic trip to the head office followed by an even worse descent to the cruelties of the basement's punishment room.

The kids had to hurry to learn which teachers were neglectful, lazy, passively cruel, actively cruel or genuinely perverted, and react accordingly if they wanted to survive with most of their limbs and organs functional. After the first month, nobody was stupid enough to think about coming out of the place healthy or completely sane. It was like living in a trench with both enemy sniper fire and rogue assassins happening at all moments of the day, sometimes without any actual reason too. The traumatized kids who were better socialized, or better at living on the streets, also came to perceive that many of the adult personnel had been severely impacted by their workplace and the immoral,
criminal rules set by the directorate. Several teachers overtly smoked tobacco or weed, drank tea or coffee with alcohol in it that smelled throughout the classes they taught, and often enough a nameless custodian would sit at the desk, telling them to read silently because the teacher was out sick today. Some teachers were sick a lot, it seemed.

In October, the second month of school, Harry saw one of the few young girls, aged 8, that attended their sector of Hell on Earth step unto the parapets of the administrative wing and jump down to die as she impacted the unforgiving asphalt of the yard beneath. All the children watched from their classroom windows as the black hearse bearing the official crest of the municipal police came to recover the mangled corpse in utter silence, without a bobby in sight to investigate or write a report. The child's suicide was later attributed by the rumor mill to the fact she had just been in one of those 'special convocations' in a teacher's office, and she killed herself immediately after. That weekend, while Harry was discretely skulking around the back alleys and commercial streets in search of food and winter gear, he heard a pair of elderly constables talking on a bistro's terrace, as they spiked their cheap tea with even cheaper gin from hip flasks that had been stamped with their precinct and unit names as if it were normal. The two old bobbies chatted about the poor little tyke that the sawbones had gone to pick up from Creep-Utte, as they called the school. Both men had sighed forlornly about the fact she had just been raped before she jumped, given her hymen was torn and she had lesions in both vagina and anus still bleeding fresh, wounds that a head-first jump off a building would never produce.

Harry stayed silent as he crept away from the dangerous source of information, and never discussed the facts with anybody, not even when outside the school's campus. If there was one thing that life with the Dursley's had taught him young, it was that criminals always had plenty of friends in low places you couldn't see, and you were never as alone or secure in your secret talking spot as you believed to be.

{ HP } --- { This means WAR! } --- { HP }

Harry had learned much from his books about surviving the harshness of homeless life on the streets in a city. The stories about street gangs, thugs, perverts and how the youngest kids could sometimes act like wild dogs when they were starved or sick had impressed him in a bad way. That was why Harry had made efforts at finding small pieces of metal that he could file down into small shivs or stouter medium shanks to defend himself from grabby hands or bullies. There was no logical way he could carry his Nazi dagger & pistol in school where there was no privacy at all, and an army of scared kids wanting to earn reprieve from the adults who would denounce him the moment they saw any abnormality. The metal shivs were barely two inches long by a half-inch wide, and thin like a cheap letter opener. The shanks were five inches long by two inches wide, thick like a good dinner knife. Both types of blades had a three inch handle wrapped in plastic sheeting to keep them thin and easy to hide under his too-large shirt sleeves or hems.

It was a good thing he had been armed since one of the younger teachers had 'convoked' him to his office on the last day of class, just before the mandatory Christmas break. Little Harry had to cut the man across the tops of his hands and forearms to escape from a rape attempt after the man tried to forcibly rip-off his ratty clothes, supposedly to apply corporal punishments, without telling the boy what he had done wrong or what the pain would be. When the enraged felon tried to prevent Harry from escaping his office by jumping on him like a wrestler, the desperate child had no choice but to flail around wildly with his blades still in his hands. It wasn't like he had any fighting training, but what choice did he have? He ended up hitting the domineering male several times around his face and neck before the massive weight dragged them both to the floor. Harry was knocked out for a few minutes, only to wake up in the puddle of congealing blood, still under the cooling corpse of the dead rapist. In his panicked resistance, Harry had struck the man in the left eyeball, in the right ear, twice across the chin, four times across the throat, and a dozen times
around the collarbones. The inevitable result was death by blood loss from too many cut arteries. The man bled out inside of roughly 40 seconds, well beyond any help the other staffers could have given.

That was the moment that Harry realized just how thickly insulated and sound-proofed the teachers' and admins' offices were, so they could attack and molest kids at their leisure without ever having witnesses. Taking advantage of the providential silence, the child decided that he had to plan for the worse case; being discovered and forced to run out of town to live in a remote rural zone. He started by the obvious, searching the body's pockets for any tools or valuables, then the desk and the rest of the small office. The wooden desk drawers weren't locked, thus allowing the boy to quickly find a small trove of pocket knives and artisanal blades like his that the teacher had seized over the years. A more modern multi-tool based off the Swiss Army knife system was the biggest and most reliable piece in the pile, so Harry took that one first, plus two five inch folding knives that looked matched, and the only obviously dedicated combat knife that had a two-edged 8 inch straight blade with a matching sheath. Next to the blades was a small black box that looked like a garage door opener; a battery-powered contact stunner. Harry triggered it to see if the sparkers worked, and also added that to his pockets. A short 12 inch metal rod with a rubber handle and round ball at the end wound up being a telescoping baton, similar to those used by juvie cops on the telly's news programs, when they visited a reform school or took delinquents to court. Since that was a good, reliable and very silent device, the child took it as well without hesitation.

Besides, it was free... Why let something pass and miss out when he needed it?

The other drawers held four new 12-packs of cheap French tobacco cigarettes and a dozen small 100ml glass bottles of English alcohol, gin, brandy and scotch whiskey mixed in a lot. In the same drawer were several candy bars and small sacs of jujubes or hard candies. With a disgusted face, Harry realized that he had stumbled on the pervert's 'rewards & payments' for getting his victims to cooperate willingly to his demands. Never before had the phrase "Stranger – Danger!" made so much sense as it did now. Especially when he looked at the three individually wrapped cakes that were normally sold eight per carton. The pastries were probably safe to take, but the small glass vial and antique glass syringe next to them was clearly a bad sign. Trying to read the label on the vial, Harry saw it spelled in bad handwriting "Happy sleep" and nothing else.

Shivering in dread at what could have happened to his poor self if he had ever accepted a cake or candy bar from this man almost had him vomiting in the bin next to the desk. Except that Harry had lived on the streets enough to have developed a stronger stomach than most 6 year old's. Taking his courage with both hands, the boys stole all the edibles and the syringe as he had almost no medical supplies, so this could be a boon in disguise. At worse, he could sell it to a junkie in an alley for a pair of quid. The other drawers were useless, filled with school paperwork or students' homework assignments that should have been graded over the holidays.

The rest of the office was a better help. The tea set was ugly as a wet turd, but the small utensils on the tray were sterling silver wrought in an old style that nobody liked anymore. That was good tradable stuff so Harry piled it near the door. Seeing the quantity of what he was going to loot out of the room, the child realized two problems; he would need a way to carry it all, and he couldn't be seen in the corridors with sacks full of loot. The other kids, at the very least, would bitch and pester him, but, at worse, another teacher or custodian could become interested and ask questions they should never think about. Thinking slowly, Harry's eyes fell upon the dial of the old clock mounted above the brick fireplace that each office had, in case electricity and gas gave out in the middle of a rainstorm or winter. It was nearly 17:00pm, almost an hour passed the end of the last class. And it was a Friday, too! That meant that almost all of the kids had already left, unless they had gotten hijacked by an adult for a last bit of perving before Hols. In any case, even most adults would have begun leaving if they hadn't already. The secretaries certainly closed their section of
the campus by 15:15pm every day, no matter what. The women wanted no truck with the depravities that regularly occurred after class hours, and did their shifts specifically to avoid being witness or accomplice to anything they could avoid being aware of.

Smiling nastily, the child walked to the windows to discretely look outside, towards the small patch of the play yard and parking lot he could see. Almost all the cars were gone, but he didn't know who drove what, so it didn't help any. The yard was deserted, but then again it always was since no child wanted to stay near the hellish pit if they had an option to go elsewhere, including the few group fosterage homes that were located in the neighborhood. Harry pulled the curtains closed tightly and closed the harsh fluorescent tubes mounted to the ceiling, opting for the dimmer stained glass reading lamps spread around the room. Their softer, shaded glow had less chance of being seen from outside to attract attention where he wanted secrecy.

Now ensconced in a warm and locked room, he had all the time to search for bags or a caddy to haul his loot safely. Opening the closet built into the wall near the entrance door, he found a short jacket that could serve as a winter trench-coat for his diminutive size, an old umbrella, a pair of rubber galoshes that were far too big, and a small rucksack that seemed half-full. Opening the bag, Harry snorted in amusement as it seemed that the pervert had thought like him; he had prepped a go-bag in case he was discovered by somebody who didn't accept bribes or threats. Smirking at the cold corpse lying on the bloodied carpet a few feet away, Harry pulled out the three breath mint tins that held folded bills and coins totaling some 400 pounds in notes plus another hundred pounds in small change. Nodding approvingly at his haul, the child pulled out a camping hatchet, a cheap 12 inch Bowie knife, a cheap imitation Swiss Army knife with barely a dozen tools on it, one 6-pack of 8 hour candles, wooden matches, a cheap compass, a cheap rubber & plastic wristwatch, and a road-map of the county with four red 'X' marked.

The one thing that lit-up Harry’s curiosity were two small leather pouches that were closed with a metal zipper. One was rather rectangular and bulky; it was a travel hygiene kit with a bottle of dehydrated shaving cream powder, a little furry thing to lather the cream, a straight razor with a packet of 5 extra blades, a comb, a wooden hairbrush, a toothbrush and paste tube, mouthwash, a bottle of paracetamol, some Gravol tablets and cough syrup. Yep, all good to go, and useful too!

The smaller kit was flatter, and opened like a note binder, with small thread loops on both sides to hold the instruments in place and quiet any noise they could make. It was a beginner's lock-pick set, with only some twenty pieces for picking the oldest and easiest locks publicly sold. Harry had heard of these kits, and only seen one, bigger and better, in the counter at the pawn shop where he did many trades. The child was happy since he had a whole chapter in his homelessness & squatting booklet about lock-picking but had never been able to practice since he had no picks. Well, that was a good find, and it also explained why this young teacher was put in Van Uttebatten by the district's bosses when he always dressed well and arrived with a meal bought at a restaurant every morning. If the guy had been stealing on the side to have the cash to purchase what he wanted to maintain his -supposed- social status, then it could explain why he wanted to be here. Nobody in this school would give a crap, as theft and fraud were probably considered clean, healthy jobs compared to what most people did inside these walls.

Walking slowly all around the office, Harry munched on one of the sugary vanilla cakes to silence his stomach and occupy his hands as he perused the 'catalog' before putting it in the pile of loot. There were a few things like the stained glass lamps that could easily fetch fifty quid each, but he could barely hold one with both hands, let alone lug the rucksack at the same time, so those stayed put. Baubles like the silver letter opened and decorative bronze desk organizer from the 1930's would leave with him. A small copper vase could fetch 15 quid, and its matched sculpted candlestick an easy 35. opening the drawers of the low dressers placed under the bank of three windows on the outside wall, Harry found an old flashlight with batteries still in the pack. The date
said they were long gone, but maybe not. He opened the torch and pack, fitted the batteries and flicked the button. Bummer! The kit really was dead!

Oh well, he already had plenty here, hi hi hi!

Honestly, the rest of the office was a sheer disappointment, except for when he finally searched the long winter coat hanging on the brass hooks on the back of the door. That was the coat the teacher had worn when he arrived this morning. A brand new one, too. Harry whistled softly as he found a billfold with nearly 300 pounds and 500 Euros neatly stacked, all in 50's. In another pocket was a small zippered leather coin wallet holding some 20 pounds in small change and a plastic pillbox with four yellow caplets inside. Harry didn't know the pills, but he knew somebody who could tell him what they were, and the street worth. In another pocket was a flat leather card holder where the man had put his social security card, driver's license, teacher's union health insurance card, and a shooting club membership card. From the cardholder extended a lanyard that ended with the man's key ring; car, apartment, and a few others, including two that were identified as 'Uttebatten – teachers' and 'Uttebatten – custodians'.

Harry did a little gig of joy as he realized he had found the bloody jackpot. Firstly, he could wait until the school was truly empty since he now had proof that people other than the principal or head janitor had the keys to open the buildings. And, it was well known that the antiquated institution had never installed an electronic alarm system or cameras anywhere. With what happened to the kids, only a fuckwit of considerable ineptitude would record events in this dump! That meant the entire staff were free to come & go as they pleased, or as their illicit business was finished, regardless of the clock. Also, it meant that Harry could now leave and return all through the holidays to loot each and every room until he had a good amount of food, money and useful goodies to insure he could run off-grid if the damned CPS or bobbies wanted to blame him for the perv's well earned death.

Sitting in the comfy wheeled chair behind the desk, Harry checked the time again and came to the conclusion that he could do a little kip before packing up and moving around the desolate edifice to see what else the kids were barred from knowing. Supposedly, the school had no library but he'd heard a few teachers speak of one under their breath as they met in the bathrooms or in the yard to share a smoke. And, Harry was curious about that damned basement punishment room and what happened there. He could guess, but if he could damage or lock-out the room, maybe the bastards would stop hurting kids because they no longer had a secret lair to do it in.

It was passed 19:30pm on the clock when Harry awoke from his light nap to check out of the window to confirm he saw no cars left but that of the man he had accidentally, but happily, killed. The brand matched the ornate key-ring and logo on the actual key, so it should be it. Closing the lamps in the office and shouldering his first bag of loot, the child made sure to have the Bowie hanging in his belt and hatchet in hand before he ventured through the dark, abandoned building. With almost three solid weeks of holidays coming, the janitors and custodians had wasted no time in shuttering the building thoroughly, not caring that one or two staffers stayed behind to satiate their baser needs yet again. This cemented in Harry's mind the fact that each employee had the keys to access the school at will, and nobody would ever say anything about any weirdness they discovered come morning.

Listening to his basic wisdom for survival, Harry went down to the ground floor, to pilfer the reserves from the administrative mess hall. The moment he entered the dry pantry, the child saw how much better the quality was than for the student's mess. Instead of institution-grade bulk vats and drums, this pantry was stocked with liter or gallon sized containers with clearly labeled brands that came from Tesco or the local family grocery shop. Sneering in satisfied anger at the petty theft, he carefully selected according to his survival training; dry-pack, brined and canned, in that
order. The tin of loose-leaf Earl Gray tea from Twinings quickly found a home in his pack, as did the jar of instant minestrone soup with noodles & veg already mixed in. Two large packets of Bovril beef broth cubes were grabbed, along two boxes of rice and a sack of noodles to make some variety with everything else he had at his underground home.

With his rucksack now having a problem at staying closed, Harry scrounged for another sack, finding an ancient but usable canvas shopping bag with a logo from a grocery store in a different district than where he lived. Not caring, the child carefully took several bottles of salt, pepper, ginger, cinnamon, paprika, cayenne pepper, cloves, minced garlic – onion & lemon juice mix, and a small tin of strong mustard seeds to grind and prepare to taste. The new sack allowed him to take some cans of corned beef, baked beans in gravy, and three peanut butter jars more.

In the walk-in freezer, that he stuck open with a step-stool, the child looked for easy pickings that could be carried discretely and be eaten quickly before it spoiled. He didn't have a fridge or camping cooler in his bunker, so he had to eat all the meat or fish the day he found it or lose it, unless he made the effort of brining the stuff. Which, honestly, he had tried to do, but vinegar was hard to buy in big enough quantity, as were the glass jars needed. Now however, he did have some cash so maybe he could regularize his food storage method. Thinking about it, he seized several 24-packs of frozen breakfast pork sausages, two packs of frozen ground beef and one large frozen turkey breast to eat as tonight's dinner and a midnight snack. As he moved around the cold room, Harry wondered if the people had done here as Vernon had, so he jammed his newfound Bowie in the door's hinges to keep it open while he used the step-stool to check the higher shelves for secret stashes. Bah! No luck. If there were anything important, the cooks had probably taken it home for the holidays.

With his food shopping (irony) done for the day, Harry closed the door and smiled as he saw the one thing he had wanted but been denied to date; a flashlight. The small emergency light was hung under the steel food prep table right next to the cold room's door, so the boy had not seen it when he opened the door on his way in. Flicking the switch, he smiled anew as the short, narrow beam lanced out across the low lighting of the kitchen, allowing him to search again in case he missed anything important or tradable. Being done here, the child decided to satisfy his curiosity once and for all, even if it was a very bad idea.

Looking around the kitchen, he saw the door that led down to the basement, one of three staircases that were set into the building's frame. All three went from the deepest basement to the rooftop solarium, to facilitate escape in case of fire or some other catastrophe. Using the middle stairs was neither good nor bad, it was simply the closest before he changed his mind. Making sure the door didn't lock from in or out, he slid into the shaft and silently descended two flights to the bottom of the hellish pit that was this school. The moment he exited the stairs he felt a cold shiver pass down his back, and it seemed his senses were now wrapped in cotton wool, making his perception of events less accurate, less precise. His mind felt slightly foggy, but it dispersed after a few minutes of trying to shake his head clear. Walking out of the shaft, he saw that he was in the empty coal bunkers for the ancient water boilers that had fed heat and hot water to the school when it was still a single building, before World War II. It was public knowledge that the boilers and water plant were on the right hand of the edifice, on the parking lot's side to facilitate access to workers when the machines broke down, as well as for coal delivery, back when that was a thing. Given he had come from the kitchen, that meant he had to go left to find the damned dungeon and his answers.

Walking for a few minutes at a slow pace because he was loaded with loot, Harry eventually arrived to a section of the foundations that was made out of dressed stone blocks rather than the poured cement and bricks the rest was made of. The corridor arrived right in front of an old oak
wood door covered in iron strapping but no manner to lock it from the outside. There were no lock, eye-holes for padlock or chains, and no metal or stone supports to lodge a crossbar. The door was slightly ajar, without any light or noise coming from inside.

Taking his meager courage with both hands, the child held his flashlight in one hand and the hatchet in the other as he pushed roughly against the heavy, armored door to move it all the way into open position. What he saw at first glance was nightmarish, but not enough to inform him of what exactly the room's true purpose was. Panning the light around, he quickly found an electrical switch near the door and flicked it, illuminating the horrid chamber in the cold, artificial glow of industrial fluorescent tubes.

It really was a feudal dungeon, built as part of the first structure on the site. The floor, walls and ceiling were cut dressed stone blocks that had discolored from age and exposure to things best not imagined. three large stone fireplaces were present, one to each wall that wasn't the door where he came in. That meant that on the far outer wall, near the door to the staircase, was an hearth, as there was in the middle of the others. The chimneys had cast iron fittings to hang kettles or pots, and a metal rack of sorts to set logs on so that air flowed underneath to bolster the flames. All three hearths were cold dead, and it was a good thing. The cold air helped dim down the stench of piss, shit and vomit that came from several places around the dank, moist chamber.

On Harry's left side, the wall had an alcove shaped into the masonry wall, right next to the fireplace. It held a built-in box-bench with a hole in the top. A crude primitive toilet. On the other side of that same hearth an alcove that was obviously a washing stall of sorts showed a stone floor that had holes drilled through the blocks, but no water plumbing. On the other hand, there was a modern garden hose rolled-up around a plastic drum mounted to the wall near the outgoing staircase. A cheap plastic janitor's sink had been added right next to the hose support.

The right hand wall had a series of floating wooden shelves pegged to the walls on each side of that hearth, but nothing special in terms of structure. Likewise for the walls around the door where he stood.

That left the main floor of the chamber. This is where humanity's depravity was exposed to the naked eye of any who came here. There were four large wooden contraptions whose uses were pretty self evident. An old birching block from when the school had been a Borstal, the heavy wood and thick leather straps serving to hold a child or teenager in position while the rods, straps, canes or else were applied to the back and ass of the victim. What looked like a pommel horse for gymnastics but was in fact a whipping pony, where a child that was docile and didn't fight back against their punisher would bend over and hold-on by their own power until the beating was done. There were probably other uses too, but Harry wasn't a torturer so he didn't know them. The third device was a classic flogging triangle that you could tie the victim to in standing position, but slightly canted along the two angled face-beams of the frame. Being tied with their arms stretched over their head under tension augmented the pain of the beating while adding humiliation and powerlessness to the process, especially since the child so tied would normally be fully naked. The last device was the dreaded rack; a horizontal table with a drum-winch at each end to tie the person by the limbs and pull them apart until they broke the arms and legs off the torso. Or in this case, they could set the child face-down and beat or rape them at leisure, as it was like a very large, durable bed but without any cushions. Then again, the bastards probably thought the child's job was to be their pillow as they enacted whatever crime they enjoyed.

Harry didn't need to go look at the shelves along the walls to see they held assortments of whips, straps, canes, paddles, batons, shackles, chains, padlocks, a few old and partially used-up first-aid kits, a few mostly empty bottle of cheap booze, a cheap porcelain tea set and iron kettle, tins of tea, coffee, coco and Bovril. There was a shelf above the janitor's sink with a few almost full bottles of
all-purpose household soap and generic drug store body-wash. A pair of dirty sponges and a pile of used flannel washcloths reflected moldy colors under the harsh lights from the ceiling. The odors of human waste came from the decades of unwashed misery that had crusted onto the devices and seeped into the mortar between the stone blocks of the floor. The room had apparently never been designed to handle the drainage needed when washing it out with a hose.

Small wonder, that? Harry sarcastically mused as his eyes took in the den of cruelty. So this was why so many bad teachers and admins were sent here and stayed for so long despite the horrible working conditions and miserably low pay. They had 'marginal benefits' that couldn't be found elsewhere.

Closing his eyes, the child said a prayer to the souls of those poor infant that had been dragged down here to assuage whatever pleasures the felons had dreamed of that day. From what he saw since he attended the school, not a single child here deserved to be treated like a murderer, rapist or arsonist in an adult prison. And yet, here he was, and here were those hellish devices.

Magicks and Gods are real

(Harry Potter - theme)

1986
Dursley neighborhood
Little Whining, Surrey, England

Shutting the lights off, Harry was almost scared to death as he saw that several spots on the floor, torture devices and tools glowed a sickly pale whitish-blue in the dark. The phenomenon lasted for a few minutes then stopped naturally. It was as if something had absorbed the light while it was active then glowed it back, until it was adapted to the darkness anew. Not knowing what this was, or why, Harry decided to willfully ignore the event and walk back up to the ground floor.

However, that was when his entire life went to a worse Hell and back again for this one.

The antiquated torture room's door shut itself on its own power, and the whitish-blue luminescence started up again, emanating from what coalesced into strange circular drawings based upon pentacle stars, hourglasses, the sun, the moon's phase cycle, scales & weights, and a plethora of small sigils that looked like phrases or equations that Harry had seen only in cartoons or comic books about magic and faeries. Then golden lines of energy began to link all the drawings together like the web of some insane radioactive spider from the void.

Out of each sigil emerged transparent humanoid shapes that seemed to be dressed in clothing that was several centuries out of date. A few were actually wearing chain-mail hauberks covered by engraved field plate armor and great helmets. Some had pantaloons with puffy tunics and wide brimmed hats struck with many long feathers and much jewelry upon hands and necks. Others, the few women in the group, wore long flowing robes that hid everything of their shapes except their faces and hands, with shawls, veils and hand fans matching their outfits. One figure seemed the oldest of the lot, he was dressed much more simply in what appeared to be formal black trousers, button shirt, neck tie, vest and tailcoat, with a top hat bearing a golden crest on the front. The crest that was engraved above the doors of the school and printed on all its official letters and mailing envelopes. The crest of Van Uttebatten – GCVO, peer of the Britannic Realm.
The ghost floated away from the sigil that granted it shape in this reality, feeling the magic of the room and epoch as it glided slowly through the air like a collection of glittering dust motes rather than a corporeal person. The elderly features were severe, frown well in evidence on his now more defined body and face. Gazing upon the shaking small child standing near the closed doorway, the ancient village magistrate and ennobled knight raised a gloved hand to incite the boy to move towards the center of the ritual room so that they may begin the Awakening Rite.

"Come hither, yon lad." the stately alderman whispered ethereally, "We will not harm thee, in the name of Victoria my Queen do I swear, as the magick of Britannia is my guide and judge. So mote it be."

Harry's eyes were wide open, pupils dilated fully as he tried to control his fear and comprehend what he saw happening. It wasn't real! It couldn't be real! His relatives had always told him that magic and fairies were just superstitions, never real or to be believed unless he wanted to be declared mentally ill on top of being a freak and the child of drunkards.

Pointing at the honorable badges on his tailcoat chest, the magistrate explained "I am the humble owner of this ritual chamber, as it was passed through my family for more than 17 generations, as we served the Crown and Throne of Britannia. I myself am Ulyrance Van Uttebatten, the last Heir and Lord of the Van Uttebatten bloodline to have lived. I served in the land armies until I reached the rank of colonel, whence I retired to civil life and became Reader of Laws for Her Majesty's courts, earning the Bar only three years after I left the uniform. I served with distinction until I attained the function of village magistrate, upon which my poor wife died of a broken heart when our only son, a soldier as well, was killed in service. In recognition for all that my family had done, and what would disappear once I died in my turn, Dame Victoria ennobled me to the Victorian Order as Knight Grand Cross and seated me amongst the Peers of the Realm. It was, as you can see now, a mostly symbolic event. I only lived two short years after that happy ceremonial."

Harry shook his head violently, like a dog trying to dry itself while it was still raining upon it's back, to no avail. The ghostly apparitions were still all around him, and a few others now tried to speak as well, all of them related to this room and the Van Uttebatten family. "Enough! Please! Enough! I can't understand what you're all saying! I can't understand any of it! Let me go, please, just let me go... Haven't I suffered enough already?" begged the distraught child as he held his face in misery, long lines of tears running down his cheeks as he cried out his torment.

"what is the meaning of this depravity?" barked an ancient ghost dressed in the vestments of the Anglican priesthood from the 1600's, "Ulyrance! Descendant of our blood! What be the meaning of this calamity? No child should be experiencing such pain or shame inside the blessed effluves of the ritual chamber! The Awakening Rite is a holy and joyous occasion, not a time of penance and martyr!"

"Alas, my forebear, I know not what ails the boy. It has been many decades since we have last been convoked for the Awakening of a Magus unto our Laand." Floating closer to Harry's prone form, the distinguished gentleman asked kindly "Tell us child, of what ails thee so that accessing your magic gives you such tremulous emotions, rather than bombast and exultation?"

Shaking his head sideways slowly as if to deny what he was living, Harry rubbed his forearm under his nose to wipe way the snot and tears from his mouth so that he could speak without the foul taste making him puke. Not seeing the scowls his crass gesture caused, the boy simply tried to focus on the knot in the alderman's necktie so he could ignore it was a ghost that spoke to him.

"I don't know what an 'awakening' is. I was always told magic was superstition, something that poor folks and peasants came up with to explain what they couldn't. Faeries and ghosts were made
up to scare people into following morality and laws, by telling them they'd suffer after death if they disobeyed their lords or priests. I was told only the insane or the drunk see spells and ghosts and demons and stuff of the sort. Fantasies and legends, but not real. Never real."

One of the genteel women floated near the prone child, looking at him kindly from behind her open fan and the thin lace veil that prudishly covered her features. "Then tell us, young one, why did you venture so deeply into the ground, down into the domain of our forebears? Did you not see the stone walls and wrought iron gates that surround the estate? Were you brought here without being told of the import of events?"

An other old man from the back of the ghostly conclave muttered mulishly "He could be one of those mudbloods that sprout up all the time, amongst the muggle hordes. Maybe he has shown signs of the Gifts and Blessings, but his family could not understand them?"

The woman near Harry shook her head sideways minutely in denial, declaring "We may have been asleep for several decades, but I can still ferret out the signs of orphan-hood, abandonment and living meagerly in the streets. These ratty clothes, calloused hands at such age, ill-kept body and uncouth mannerisms all speak loudly of a child adrift, without a beacon to guide him."

One of the knights in metal armor strode forth boldly, decreeing "Yon Lady hath the truth of the Divines in her Sight. Well known to us are her Gifts. If she declares him to be adrift, then so he is, and a Beacon to guide him we shall find. It is our sacred and sworn duty, despite that Time and society would like to forget that we had once existed. Tides of vermin and hordes of sinners shalt not see the End of our Creed in Mother Magyck, no they shalt not!"

Nodding sagely, the alderman with the top hat finally looked around the décor of the chamber, taking stock of the ancient hall for the first time since the late 1800's when it was last used. "What manner of abhorrent criminalities be this, boy? Who hath desecrated our Blessed Ritual Chamber by converting it to the Devil's workshop? Never in all my years of living have I seen any of these foul things outside of the London museums or history books about the Dark Ages and Renaissance epochs. What calamity hath befallen our estate, pray tell us!"

Shaking his head very slowly to clear it while avoiding disorientation and nausea, poor Harry was still too stumped to answer coherently. After a few minutes of respite, he began to look each entity in the eyes, making an effort to understand and memorize each person so he could try to think of what their presence meant, and how to answer them when they spoke. Trying to make an honest effort at being polite and truthful, the boy began to speak in his reedy, shaking voice. He explained what time period they were in, how the building above them was a school since a great many years in the past, and it kept being rebuilt on top of the old foundations. He confirmed the institution was named after the last Van Uttebatten, but nobody cared for that beyond that it was written in the stones of the edifices and on the stationary. Then he told them of the horrid crimes that were inflicted upon the children since the building had become a Borstal and then a public elementary school. He finished by telling them of what the teachers and admins used the room for in the last few decades. Because he had lived through too much trauma to handle alone and his mind wasn't right anymore, he told them about the attempted rape, killing and looting of the teacher and kitchen, before coming down here to validate the awful rumors. He had seen the truth and was about to leave when they emerged from... wherever they had been.

Frowning in anger and humiliation, the last Lord Van Uttebatten hung his head in shame as he wondered where his society and kingdom had gone so wrong to become this farcical caricature of what justice and orderliness were supposed to be.

As the ghostly conclave murmured their imprecations of shame and dismay, one of the youngest
phantoms elocuted clearly above the din "We need the vordak to assist us! We have no bodies and can't move objects unless they were enchanted to react to ectoplasmic beings or Gifted souls like ours used to be in life. To help this child set right what has decayed, we shall need the Servant of the Creed to be our hands and senses outside these dreary walls. Call the vordak."

Again, murmurs floated amongst the group until a consensus emerged, mostly by lack of any alternative and the child's utter ignorance of anything useful in either mundane or magical life.

Addressing Harry, the Lord Van Uttebatten beckoned him kindly to stand in the middle of the room, between the four despicable tools of pain, on a faded circular engraving set in the stone floor. He guided the boy in reciting a prayer as he folded his hands over his heart and closed his eyes to focus on the intention of rousing and summoning the disappeared family's Servant from the deep sleep whence he awaited. A loud grinding of stone upon stone was heard as the back of the washing alcove near the left-side chimney pulled back sideways into the wall opposite the hearth to reveal a black masonry tunnel with stone stairs. Soon enough, a hushed whisper of clothes dragging along the stone floors and stairs beneath came hauntingly towards Harry's senses, making him wonder why exactly he had accepted to say the prayer to call the Servant upstairs.

When the figure emerged from the tunnel, Harry dropped to his knees in miserable fear of the horror he had awakened unto the mortal world. It was a floating beast, a shape from nightmares that the child would never forget. Hovering about three feet above the floors, covered in faded but rich vestments that reminded strongly of Anglican clergymen of high rank, wearing an abbatial mitre hat and holding in its clawed right hand a long wooden staff topped with a golden abbatial crosier, and a cast iron funeral urn in the left hand. From under the low brim of the mitre gazed out the empty, literally empty holes, of the floating undead skeleton as it peered at the child that dared summon it, with the indolence of those for whom power was as easy as thought.

As the trembling, miserable child thought his mind would give out its last whimper, the eldritch entity moved the clawed index of its right hand, aiming it at his face, incanting "Gaia mater, puer purus in insanitum dolorificat. Invocatum geos esspiritu sancti. Puer purificatum et sanitatum non tenebrans. Cruore sancti ut esspiritu benefactum. Ameno Gaia mater."

(Translation from elden Latin; "Mother Gaia, this pure child suffers an ill mind. I invoke the Blessed Spirit of the Earth. This child be purified and his mind repel the dark sleep. Blood be blessed and soul benefit of health. Mother Gaia, amen.")

Flowing from the undead thing's finger came a beam of hallowed golden light that bathed Harry in soft, benevolent healing effluvium gifted by Gaia, the Mother Earth, the Vessel of All Life, as she accepted to restore the poor, victimized orphan unto a state closer to the good health and stable sanity than what his menial existence had permitted him to have. As the prayer's effect ended, the child fell into a light sleep that allowed the floating creation of magicks and Faiths to inspect the Ritual Chamber and, amusingly, it so occurred that, yes, a magically enchanted skull can in fact move enough to form a full frown on its brow. Will wonders never cease? (sarcasm)

{ HP } --- { Meeting Dryskholl and learning the truths } --- { HP }

It was nearing 23:00pm on the last Friday of school when poor little Harry came back to his senses from the accidental but deep and helpful slumber he had experienced.

The six year old yawned widely as he mumbled silently "Man! What a dream... Floating skeletons and ghosts that talk... And spells in Latin... Lucky for me I don't live with the Dursley's full-time anymore or I'd get thrashed right & proper for dreaming that cold shite up."

Opening his eyes, he was surprised to see far more light than normal for his cupboard under the
stairs, or his underground bunker. In fact, this light was whitish-blue instead of what aunt Petunia's cheap bulbs produce or the lively reddish flames of his stove and oil lamp. Sitting up from where he was laid out, the boy quickly realized he was not in simple Little Whining in Surrey, south of London, anymore.

He was resting on a sturdy wooden bed frame piled high with blankets and cushions that had kept him toasty in the rather hot chamber's atmosphere as the three monumental fireplaces we lit, the burning logs of pine, oak and cherry giving off an embalming smell that roused the senses. His position was along the wall where he had entered the dreaded room, earlier in the evening, but the shelves had been removed and the strange bed put in place for his use. All the torture and punishment devices were gone, as were the shelves and all electrical fixtures, but the water plumbing had been kept, if modified slightly. Above all else, the stonework around the chamber had been completely cleaned and the odd luminescent drawings renewed by some artifice Harry had no earthly idea how.

Confirming that his weird dream had not in fact been a dream at all, he could see that the stone doorway to the lower level was still opened, and the floating horror was hovering around the room, occasionally mumbling or praying in tongues that Harry didn't think had been invented for humans to speak or know about. Thankfully, the skeleton had its back towards the boy, so he was able to center his mind and senses before facing THAT thing again.

Then Harry became aware that all the ghosts were still present, but clustered together on one side, along the right-hand wall where the loose shelves used to be, with the undead priest floating indolently in the middle of the room. But Harry could hear some noises that were not what he remembered from either the apparitions or their 'Servant' whom he had awakened. What was going on here?

Suddenly, an excited squeaky voice exclaimed happily "Master Harry Potter is waking! We's finally be able to tell him about magic! The House of Potter can be free again! Bad master Whiskers' plans gonna feed them pigs, now!"

Whatever made that sound for a voice was -very- excited at the prospect of Harry being alive and well, and obviously wanted to help him somehow. The problem was that the boy had seen and lived so much bloody shite recently that he just couldn't believe anything at face value anymore. Plus, those street-life survival manuals had explained at length what desperate people will do to stay fed & warm, and what criminals or perverts were willing to pay or threaten to make those poor unfortunates cooperate. Not to mention the corrupt cops and officials on the take. Harry was clearly outnumbered, outclassed, out-equipped, and now he had to admit he was out-magicked on top of everything else. That wasn't something he had thought to judge about himself today when he left for the last school day before hols.

The Vordak Lord floated aside, giving Harry a clear view of the small being that was sitting on a small wooden chair that was as deeply padded and comfortable as the bed he sat on. The creature was surprisingly shorter than Harry, barely reaching 2 feet and 6 inches of height when it stood from the chair. For one fleeting second, the boy was inordinately gladdened to be bigger than somebody in this room, even though he guessed that it could still harm him easily, given that it seemed to take the flying dead priest's presence like the English accept rain all year long. On closer inspection, the diminutive entity had greenish skin that sported random brown splotches that made Harry's heart heavy. The boy had lived a hard life, and he could guess that those bruises were a sign of some disease the being was too poor or alone to find a cure. After that, the child saw the actual features; large bulbous eyes, long crooked nose, wide bat-like ears, and long agile fingers. The small humanoid was dressed in what were clearly infant sized rags discarded by humans, as they fit on it like Harry's own clothes poorly fit himself.
The raspy voice of the dead priest's ethereal whisper loudly around the chamber as he gestured comically with his left hand, the cast iron funeral urn clutched tightly by the short stem under the sculpted bowl.


As the dead holy man bowed from the waist towards him, Harry almost lost awareness again. Eyes wide in surprise and mouth agog in stupor, the poor child was wondering if being dead had affected the old priest's sanity, or if the fungi in the old dungeon had gotten to the spells that kept it afloat. Then he winced at his own presumptuous imbecility since he knew nothing about any magicks to judge this mess, and knew even less about the beings in the room to judge if they were normal or healthy in any ways.

"Master Harry was never told by poor muggles who he be. The bad master Whiskers had potioned and spelled them to never say it. Besides, they never knew of it. Aunty horse-face and uncle walrus-man never bothered to find out, even before they gots cursey mail from Dumbledore." came angrily from the small green being. "Then again, they already hated magic and were bigoted for a long time before. Bad master Whiskers not chose them without reasons." the small shy creature completed as a quiet afterthought.

Humming in agreement, the hovering unliving priest beckoned Harry with his right hand, the clawed fingers moving dexterously around the haft of the staff that it also still kept a tight hold of. "Come and sit with us, child. You should not be so afraid of our conclave. We shalt not harm thee, not on this august night of your Awakening."

Deciding he had nothing else to do anyways, the weak, tired and despondent boy stood from the bed and walked towards the chair that had obviously been put in place for him, since it was twice larger than where the small foreigner sat. As he approached, Harry could see that all the ghosts were more solid than before, their features almost as defined as if they were flesh, although most women wore veils or hid behind hand-fans prudishly. The small green entity squeaked excitedly as it bounced to its feet to fluff and place his chair's cushions before he sat down, looking at him with an utterly disconcerting expression of beatitude on its pale, skinny face.

With the small green being sitting anew, the hovering skeleton spoke "The presentation I have said earlier is your full name, clanic affiliation, titles, and spiritual Creed. It is true that these may change during the course of a person's life, for some willingly discard family or title to retire in religious abbeys to finish their life far removed from the troubles of society. Others were born in such poverty they had never even the chance of clan or family, such that only a single simplistic name is used. In worse cases, the courts may order that a being or bloodline be struck from the books of their Nation or Congregation, making it magically impossible for any within their borders to speak or write the accursed name again until the sanction is lifted. As for being oathed to the clergy of any Faith, that also has yet to be enacted. What my Shen Power Sight dweomer has revealed of your Soul is not guaranteed, nor is it immuable amongst the Stars. Your life and experiences will determine where you walk, and what acclaims you attain."

Shaking his head slowly in denial, Harry replied with the certitude of the ignorant who had that state of affairs beaten and spelled into them all their life; "I'm not that person. I don't know who you think I am, but I'm nobody important. My parents weren't even important, since they were just
drunkards who died in a car accident they caused. They were drinking again, so dad didn't have the reflexes to avoid the lorry that came out of the fabric's lot, so he rammed into them. The petrol tank exploded and they died, along with the two employees in the truck's cabin. They left nothing behind. No house, no money, no nothing but debts and pain and me. And I'm nothing. That's pretty well known, given how every adult I ever met always told me to my face.

In a strange twist of events that poor Harry was unable to understand, the skeleton's face seemed to lose some of its severity while the small green being at his side began to practically vibrate in outrage, its all-encompassing wrath etched so plainly on its alien features that even the child could interpret what it was, just not what it meant. Harry was too emotionally stunted and repressed to have much social or mental skills, so it was up to the conclave to help him through.

"Master Harry Potter is most certainly NOT nothing! These bees LIES from the wands and bottles of bad master Whiskers! Curses on your head, he put! Made your family hate you! Cut all your bonds to the bloodline and servants! Criminal and traitor, he is! Not you! You is not bad! You is most certainly NOT nothing to people who knows yous!" the small creature bellowed in a spastic fit of distemper that caused it to suddenly bend over to cough out blood.

The ghost of old Lord Ulyrance Van Uttebatten floated forth, casting a spell silently from his bare hand upon the diseased creature. Shaking his head sadly, the alderman explained "It is as we had feared. His former master has poisoned the Bond itself, making his death unavoidable. He has but a few short days left, but he will not live past Friday of next week, at most. I am deeply aggrieved, friend elf, that you would come to such a depraved end. Your noble service deserves better acknowledgment than such turpitude."

Harry asked softly, fearful that he was beginning to understand what was being said around him for the first time in the entire situation; "What is happening? Why is he dying? Could he be saved? Can I do anything to help him?"

Replying with great kindness, a portly noble Lady ghost explained for him. "Nay child, no one can stop the progression of the foul curse that afflicts the house-elf anymore. If we had caught it months ago, when it was enacted, then mayhaps... But not now. As for the problem, that is simple to explain. This being is named 'Dryskholl', and he is a member of the race 'house-elf' which are a part of the larger elven species group. They are, to date and our knowledge, the only artificially created race of elves. In the long distant past, a cruel human saw the fey beauty, grace and magicks of the elvish peoples as a threat to his own magnificence. As is the course of such bigotries, he was too weak and too cowardly to challenge those noble elves directly in combat or even debate, as his mind was not as sharp or agile as theirs. So he fomented a solution as base and crass as his bigotry; he would use alchemy to create an entire race of 'elves' whose sole reason to exist would be to serve his menial needs as maids, valets and workmen on his estate."

Floating forward to pass a gentle hand upon the brow of the suffering elf, the elder noble woman continued; "Given how limited his own actively cast magicks were, and how afraid of combat he truly was, the hedge-wizard designed his 'elves' to not have an internal core to hold or generate magick the way that most naturally living entities do. Instead, he created a perversion of the Blood Law spells that permit to blood-adopt a stranger of any age into the clanhold, thus mixing the magicks of the group and individual to bolster all. This would have the double effect of making the creatures wholly dependent upon wizards giving them magic from their own cores to feed them, but also tether them to the physical estate and spiritual membership of the House, so that the burden of feeding and controlling the entities would not stay upon a single human who could wilt and implode under such stresses. Given that he was truly a weakling, this point was of some particular interest for the felon alchemist. That, plus the fact that slavers rarely want to expend much energy or mind-power on controlling what they see as machines made of flesh whose sole purpose is to
make them rich, comfortable, and powerful without efforts from them."

The Vordak Lord ended the explanation "And so it is that for several millenia, the house-elves have served the greatest, noblest wizarding clans and families of Europa, the Slavic lands and immediately around the Mediterranean Sea's shorelines. Occasionally, when a place has enough natural magick emanating from the Ley Lines or from devout worship of the Living Gods, then house-elves can gather at this locale and live in relative freedom. Although, like the much vaunted wizard school Hogwarts, the owners of such places are usually quick to demand that the elves bond with their organization, be it school, church or guildhall. In all times and places, the magical capacities of house-elves have been quite impressive, and so they are always seen as a symbol of a group's raw magical potential, wealth and social status. And, while few would admit it aloud, they are superb magical combatants who will defend their homes most valiantly, and much more faithfully than the average human hireling, too."

Dryskholl nodded weakly, as he was recovering from his coughing fit very slowly. "Aye, master Harry Potter, sir. We house-elves have been scorned for our appearances, but sought for our Talents and Gifts since our race was given breath. This led to wizards trading or buying us like cattle, or sentient tools. Sometimes wees were exchanged for a good marriage contract, or given as payment of debts or bets. A few cowards even paid for their lives out of Honor Duels by offering their elf as Blood Tithe to close the contest without violence. In a few cases, jealous neighbors would attack and kill a family to steal their elves, then force the Bond of service to form with them. If the elves refused, they lost their magick rapidly until death, but sometimes the murderers would kill them anyways, to be sure. For thousands of years, we house-elves have served with as much honor as we could, oftentimes despite the evils our masters did, or forced us to do in their names."

Thinking hard, Harry asked gently "Is that why you're dying? Because the bad master Whiskers made you do things that were shameful and you refused? Or you did the opposite? You said something about spells and potions in my family... Did somebody poison us to be this way?"

Nodding weakly, poor Dryskholl confirmed the facts aloud. "Yes, master Harry. The bad wizard took you from house, when big bad Dark Lord kill your parents. He put curses and potions inside of you at Hogwarts. Then, he went to your kin to do the same to them. He bound the lot with charmed letters he sent every year to inject his will into the spells to keep them active. Magicks need three things to be; knowledge of what you want, intention and emotion. When a spell or potion is used, you can make it last longer by feeding it intention or emotions over time, otherwise it will lapse shortly. Very few things be eternal in magicks or Nature. Only elemental spells and alchemy make permanent things."

The young boy wondered aloud "So my relatives hate me because they were drugged, and their minds were altered to fit whatever this bad master wanted. That could explain a lot. But how was he able to force you? And what did you do that was so shameful?" he asked suspiciously.

Dryskholl shivered despite the warmth of the stone hall, wrapping one of the thin sheets around his diminutive frame. Taking the time to order his thoughts, the poor elf was well besides himself with emotions that were conflicting badly. First, he got to tell the young master about magic many years before the bad master Whiskers had planned. But it opened the poor elf's eyes to just how bad the child had suffered when the elf thought he was safe at school, away from the Dursley's hatred. Then again, the fact the child had discovered an old Ritual chamber where the hallowed ancestors still dwelt was a minor miracle of Mystra in itself, and could compensate for a lot of things.

In a squeaky voice that betrayed his tiredness, the sickly house-elf explained at great length all that he knew about Albus Dumbledore and his many positions, the 'prophecy' that the old idiot referred to each time he wanted to justify his acts, and the many evils he had perpetrated upon an entire
community for a century, since World War I began in 1914 to be precise. Then Dryskholl explained how he had been born sick, how his first humans had rejected him, and how he had been reduced to seeking shelter in Hogwarts to survive. That was how Dumbledore managed to usurp the Bond with the school to force the very young and sick elfling to do his unholy bidding. For almost six years now, the servant had seen, heard and assisted Albus with his foul schemes, including popping to ill-defended houses to pour poisons into the food of sleeping wizards who wanted to think and live differently than Dumbledore wanted them to do. The man was a terrifyingly clever alchemist who used potions to change behaviors or anchor curses to living entities so that they would follow their unseen master's will.

Prompted by a few slowly spoken questions from Harry, the Vordak or the ghosts, the poor elfling gave them details about Dumbledore's true character, feeble body, and fear of changes or independent opinions. In many ways, the old man was very much the mirror-image of the bad wizard who had created his race, so long ago. He certainly believed that all species other than human were inferior, made to serve humanity or be used as potion components and sacrifices for rituals. Likewise, he publicly preached tolerance and friendship with muggles, the non-magical humans, but in reality he considered them barely fit to use as whores and theater performers, or also for sacrificial rituals. Albus Dumbledore may be afraid of pain and injuries to himself to the point of avoiding all fights, but he certainly never shied away from killing or maiming when it kept him in political power, or magically superior to all he surveyed. He just stole money from somebody to pay another to do the deed for him, unless there was a need for secrecy. Albus had indeed killed, maimed, handicapped, mind-raped and mentally programmed hundreds by his own wand over the decades since he sat his OWL tests, just as World War I was being started. On top of everything else, the wizened crone was incredibly good at bullshitting people, hiding his true nature under that kooky, goodly grand-father persona he affected. All species instinctively fear less those beings they believe to be slightly less stable or sane than the cultural norm of the day, so Albus used that to appear harmless by playing the fool in public assemblies. Until he was challenged face-to-face, in which case he did have a formidable repertoire of occult and esoteric lore to call upon, but no real fighting experience or skills to speak of. If he saw that you were gearing up to defy him, he would either curse you to compliance, or hire an assassin to end you silently before your challenge was spoken aloud. He only attacked from behind, or when the target was asleep, to avoid his ambush turning into an all-out fight that he could perhaps lose.

Harry sat in silence, trying to absorb what he had been told by the many fantastic beings that he had never thought he would one day encounter. The most amazing thing was that unlike the legends, these ghosts and skeleton weren't interested in hurting him or enslaving him in a pit like a stupid pig who could only be fattened for slaughter. And the 'house-elf' explained so much, but also served as such a dire warning of things that were already wrong...

Looking towards the hovering undead priest, Harry asked politely "I apologize for my manners good sir. You have apparently healed me and are trying to help my situation more than any adult ever has before, but I still haven't heard your name. Is 'Vordak' your identity or a title? And could you explain -what- you are, please? I never heard legends about floating skeletons before."

An odd windy chuckle emanated from the undead cleric as his shoulders seemed to shiver minutely under his thick ceremonial vestments. Gazing fondly upon the orphaned boy, he answered in his raspy voice with great detail.

"The word 'vordak' refers to the type of skeletal undead that I am. Unlike zombies, inferi and shamblers which are types of the same thing, but with different powers. A vordak can be lesser, normal or higher strength, and myself have been activated as 'higher vordak' when the rituals were enacted. I am styled 'Vordak Lord' because my mind is fully unfettered from any commands or physical focus point. I can move about, think and do whichever I wish, so long as I respect and
abide the Creed to which I have willingly oathed. This means that my Gods have not abandoned me when I became undead, they simply have different expectations and goals than when I was alive. A skeleton has no flesh, nerves or veins, therefore I do not eat or drink, my body never tires but my mind does, and my core can be depleted so much that I must sleep to recharge. I feel no physical pains, but again mentally and spiritually I still feel things like pride, sense of duty and shame. The capacities of a Vordak are the same regardless of its power type at activation, they are just more energetic. As is evident, we hover, float and fly at will with quite a bit of speed and agility, even in the worse weather. We have the capacity to see life-force, soul, and negative energy as clearly as colors, although it is rather short ranged to a few hundred feet. We can sense the odor of blood as well as a hound, and thus know if a person is diseased or drugged upon contact. We can use certain spells that are reserved for Vordak only, which are programmed into our mind during creation. Other than that, we also have much greater strength, equal to five men, and are immune to illusion spells or effects except for a few specialized dweomers that were invented to fool undead."

Taking a pause as if he were a breathing man needing it, the floating cadaver proclaimed "I am to this day His Excellence, Sir Grahaut Gloutnay, Lord of the minor House Dhennack, cadet branch of Van Uttebatten, Bishop of Mystra, Mother of All Magycks, Abbot of Brutnor Abbey, and father confessor for the Elder and Noble House of Van Uttebatten. I am indeed most honored that you would be the man to rouse me from slumber, Heir Potter. You see, one of your ancestors was present during my transition to undeath, something I remember fondly despite the many centuries. It was a Dasmater Potter, a specialist Darkes enchanter from a distaff branch of your House that granted us his wisdom of things occult and macabre to accomplish the higher necromancies needed to fulfill the wishes of my patron goddess. While not a necromancer or follower of Hades or Necros, he had impressed me as quite adept in his trades and crafts. A good man, with a good wife and two well endowed daughters, as I recall. Alas, I never saw him again in this world, and have nothing further to give you of him. Your family was always much more ennobled than either mine House or that of my patrons, so that only my stature as Bishop and Abbot would have justified our kin congregating at social events or rituals."

Frowning in worry, Harry asked fearfully "Are you saying that my family were snobs or looked down on others because of money? Because that's not what I am or how I act. Oh, and by the way, I am pleased to meet you formally, Father Abbot Gloutnay. I hope our visit leaves you well and satisfied your time and the blessings of your goddess were well spent."

An amused feminine little giggle sounded from the side of the room where the ghosts floated in silent witness, gladly absorbing the simple innocence and light of life that pulsed from the child, despite how damaged his body, mind, magick and soul were. One of the youngest phantoms moved forward, stowing her hand-fan in a purse so she could lift her veil to bestow her appearance upon Harry during conversation.

"My but he learns quickly, for being such little rapscallion! You'll be having your hands full, my Lord Bishop Gloutnay, if you intend what I suspect. Not that I disapprove in the least. Our noble house has fallen to Time and the churlishness of curs, but our sense of duty and oaths have not. If you plan to apprentice the lad, then our Blood shall bless this with pride. One last feat of arms at the foot of the Throne of England, for the Crown and Faiths of our blessed Laands."

{ HP } --- { Speeches of duty and sacrifice } --- { HP }

The Vordak raised the index of his left hand, signaling for silence as he responded to his masters, in this life and the next. "I cannot apprentice yon boy, though it grieves me to abandon him to the eddies of knavery that sweep the Nation. Unfortunately for us all, our friend Dryskholl is not the only one who has been fatally wounded. I have scanned the estate and found that over the last century, all the manatite pillars and wardstones have been removed from the Laand. If the stones
were still inside the Laand, they would still emit their waves of energy towards my crypt and I would have endured properly. Alas, without them fueling my magick, even the Divine powers from my Faith will not suffice to maintain my existence. My station is to serve as Steward and Guardian of the House of Van Uttebatten; if the House is destroyed, then there is no reason to reward the servant who failed to protect them. This was programmed into my magic during my elevation into undeath, and there are no mortal means to change this. If Master Potter had fully awakened his powers and progressed through the Creed of his Faiths, then maybe he could command such necromancies or Miracles of Hades as to grant me reprieve, or bind me to his House instead. But not now, not with what is left of us. All of us, you know this well, are not long for this world anymore."

The old Lord Van Uttebatten nodded sadly, confirming "I had not brought up the subject, for I yet hoped a solution could be found. Alas, with the estate ruined into extinction, none of our tomes or artifacts remain. Not that it would guarantee success, with how perverted the very seat of our Blood had become in a few short decades of absence. If the fools turned our beloved ritual chamber into a butcher's shed to harm children, then I shudder to think of what evil uses our heirlooms and volumes have been tasked."

"Dryskholl can help!" the elf exclaimed, surprising everyone. "I bees dying anyways. I could give magic and life to the Lofty Abbot so that he can float more long. He can educate Master Harry much better than Dryskholl could. That could work easy-peasy!" the elf said, completely at ease with offering himself as a sacrifice for this noble end.

Shaking his head negatively, the Vordak Abbot countered firmly but with great kindness "Nay, my young friend, you shalt not. It is I who shall pass magick and life unto thee, so that you may accompany young Harold further. I have but three fortnights of existence left, but if sacrificed willingly in the correct method, you would live to see him through to the end of his school year, and mayhaps the summer vacations. On the reverse, if you give your life to me, I will gain but one or two weeks of existence but be so weak and powerless that I would be bedridden and unable to use any magic at all, for fear of emptying my core on one casting. The benefits of you being alive are that you will last far longer, and are already acclimated to the culture and mores of the epoch, which I am not and have no time to correct. For young Harold's sake, please accept my offer. I know it goes against the nature of your kind to let others sacrifice themselves when you are designed and created for such events, but in this foul situation, the greatest benefit will be thus."

The small elfling looked deeply into the empty eye sockets of the hallowed undead, gazing into unfathomable depths of magic, wisdom and experiences that no ordinary being could grasp. He nodded his head slowly, thinking about a few things as he formulated a reply. "Dryskholl be of the opinion that nothing wees be doing can change this anymore. Yous all and me be walking to the Great Gate before Master Harry be 7 years old. My heart bees knowing this. Even if the Bond wasn't poisoned by bad master Whiskers, I had been sick from birth. Nothing can heal that. But, yous must be helping Master Harry with his Awakening Rite, and try to break the curses and evil potions on him before we make the Pledge."

The skeleton and ghosts all nodded at the elf's wisdom. His kind had no affinity for the higher spiritual rites needed for an Awakening, and the ghosts could speak guidance but not actually help beyond verbal tutoring. Only the Vordak had both solid body and the types of erudition needed to coach the boy through the ceremony. It was quickly agreed that Harry would undergo the Awakening then, upon rousing from the healing sleep that followed such events, they would purge and cure him from as many of the curses and elixirs as they could safely counter. After that, the child would serve as Binder for the Pledge between Bishop Gloutnay and Dryskholl, to be followed by his accepting the elfling into Bond with House Potter directly. Everything else would be decided after the results of these ritualized events were known.
It was passed one in the morning when the floating skeleton known as Bishop Gloutnay had finished preparing the chamber for the Awakening Rite that would see little Harry Potter touch his magical core for the first time in his life. It was also the time to give the child a cursory class on the many schools of sorcery, alchemy, mentalism, psionics and Divine Faiths that held sway across the many Lands of Earth.

Firstly, Harry was told quite clearly that Albus Dumbledore's grandstanding and hubris about being the Supreme Mugwump of the International Confederation of Warlocks was a heaping load of tosh. Firstly, Hogwarts school and the so-called Ministry of Magic were in fact nothing but a small sectarian grouping who were better known by the appellation 'Welsh Wiccan' due to the fact that the Wizengamot was founded by Welsh witches in late 800 on the humans' current calendar, and Hogwarts was built by that cult near the year 1,000. The group was so damned small that they had only one government building, one hospital, the castle-school and one mediocre, retrograde village that never evolved with the times. In essence, the self-styled Britannic Wizarding World was a religious & racial sect that had denied its feminine Faith roots to concentrate mostly on male-dominated sorcerous guilds and professions. This meant that the much vaunted ICW served only as the gathering of other European wizardry sects who followed a similar Creed, and it was obvious that their cultures and populations were similarly limited. Dumbledore's fiefdom held barely ten thousand souls spread across all of Britannia, Scotland and Ireland, while the ICW reached around 400,000 souls with its laws and cultural norms.

Even then, the British Ministry of Magic was never recognized by the Crown & Throne of the Nation as having any legal authority whatsoever. The fact that they arrested, jailed and even executed people routinely was quite a consternation for the ghostly host. As a religious movement they were supposed to be regarded in the same light as the Anglican, Catholic or Protestant segments of Christianity. They were to be subject to the Laws of the Land in all things, enacting only those exceptions granted by the Crown. This information made Harry well aware that he'd have to be real careful about these dishonest bastards, especially when Dryskholl explained about the Ministry's Trace charm that was placed on all wands bought from a master crafter, and the sensor crystals that dotted the country. It was especially galling to hear that Dumbledore had bribed and potioned workers to steal ward crystals from that semi-government to place a siege line of detectors around his household without having the legal right to do it.

This revelation however caused the deathly priest to laugh hollowly before he detailed why he thought it a great joke upon the man himself. "It is obvious now that this Albus has no experience with wards that need an actual master warder to enact. If he had studied the craft to its full extent, he would know better than to try this idiocy, that even the mundanes would realize was faulty in logic and execution. He set his detection array in a circle around a focal point that was to be the center of all attention, but that was the worse error possible. The Trace existed already, back in my days of flesh life. It was not, however, used to track children doing magic out of school or home, nor 'forbidden' spells. The very nature of the crystals used makes them unsuited for focalized emissions of power; they are passive receptors only. They were made like scrying mirrors but not attuned to a single source, so they could receive a standard pulse of magic that served as a coded distress call so that the community would be warned of impending danger, thus would send help at a useful pace."

Making an illusionary map of the county appear in thin air, the fleshless Bishop continued; "Behold how closely clustered the detectors are! Thinking to insure there were no holes in his grid, the inept buffoon had the devices placed so close that each is capable of sensing its two nearest neighbors on each side of the interception line. That means that the sensing elements are always saturated by the energies emitted from their counter-parts to the point they have no capacity to
perceive anything else, unless it is cast actively at the crystal with deliberate strength of intent and emotions. Plus, the detection grid circle is so wide that it encompasses the entire county, because the knave didn't want to get a 'runaway alert' every time the boy moved to stores, school or hospital as that would waste his time on worthless investigations. The siege line is so wide that the child could lose himself amongst thousands of buildings, water pipes, sewage tunnels or warfare catacombs and the sensors wouldn't see a difference. In fact, young Harry has been living mostly in the streets and in a cement bunker for weeks already, and the cretinous felon has never become aware of it at all! And such is the proof that, by disnaturting the Trace sensor crystals in this manner, that he no-doubt thought quite clever, the old fool actually defeated his own machinations rather spectacularly!"

Several ghosts were in gleeful agreement with the holy man's deduction, going so far as to add that Dumbledore was clearly a man that had little contact with reality outside of his castle, and even less out of his sectarian group. Only sheer ignorance of basic principles of energy, magic, physics and networking artifacts together could explain such a failure of planning and crafting.

Then Bishop Gloutnay began to explain about the many other sects or guilds that tried to declare they were the true Government for Magical Humanity, most specifically for Europeans. As he never studied the lores and societies of Arabia, Africa, the mythical Far East or the -recently-discovered southern portion of The New World, the Americas, he could only give a succinct and focused discourse. While his list was not all-encompassing nor complete, it did give the young boy much matter to think about in the coming weeks.

There was the White Council (of occultism) located in Edinburgh Castle, in Scotland' capital of the same name. They were the oldest, richest, most numerous group in activity, and the most well equipped with several libraries and vaults across the planet. They had started in Alexandria, then moved to Carthage, followed by the Vatican in Rome, then Istanbul (Constantinople) and Madrid, to end up in there current location, in the vast tunnels beneath Edinburgh since 1499. The White Council had a militia of 'Wardens' that were tasked with hunting down and killing anybody who breached their inflexible Roman and Christian inspired 'Laws of Magicks'. This group is actually part sorcery and part Faith as they officially follow the Biblical tenets and have a small group of actual Angels forming a caste above the Senior Council. However, it is well known that Jesus and the majority of his loyal Angels have died nearly 900 years back, leaving only memories and hopes hidden in a few still active artifacts or relics that allow for prayers from the truly faithful to be enacted. It is in fact the White Council that demanded and enforced the 'Statute of Secrecy' passed in the year 1500AD, not the ICW or any other group. Most believe it was a result of the beginning of the Inquisition, but in reality it was because the Council realized that they could police, and even tyrannize, their wide-spread group of practitioners much better without always having to wait for a local sheriff or judge to permit their actions. By having a blanket veil of secrecy, whomever they hunt and victimize cannot appeal to a higher court, and other Faiths or Powers have almost no bearings on their decisions, which is the true goal. To protect those mages and warlocks that reach positions on the Senior Council to rule over their varied kindred of ALL spell-users, not just sorcery or alchemy, unlike the Wizengamots.

There was the Council of Dark Watchers, located under the British Museum in London. This group was intensely private and rejected the authority of anyone but the British Crown, whom they claimed to serve under a Royal Writ. They trained and tasked 'Slayers' to destroy undead, Lycan and Changelings who threaten the peace of the mundane world. Being focused on training muggles to battle magical entities has garnered this group many enemies amongst the other sects, and very few supporters on the mundane side, even from the British nobility or government. Like the White Council, they are hermetical, self-centered, and think they are the penultimate law of wherever they are conducting one of their brutal interventions. With these persons, the best courses of action are either active retreat or a fatal ambush, not wasting time in parley as they would use that delay to
set-up their own attacks.

There was the Librarians of Venerable Antiquity, who had begun in Cairo – Egypt, until they moved their base in Cambridge - UK in the early 1700's, which lasted until WW-II when they were bombed out, so they moved their leadership to the USA in Washington DC. This group was relatively passive and non-violent, focused on hunting devices & artifacts that were dangerous or being misused, but they almost never entered combat against a living being. On the flip side, they were quite ready to sell copies of their books, scrolls and photos of artifacts to those whose Creed aligned with their own. One common opinion shared by governments and churches was that they were in reality a glorified Guild of tomb robbers in the job for thrills and money.

There was the Grimm Paranormal Hunters Guild, begun in Kiev - Ukraine, then moved to Prague – Czechoslovakia, then going to Manchester - UK, then moved to Dublin – Ireland, until they finally settled in Providence, Rhode Island, USA. This group was Founded by the legendary Grimm Clan who had specialized in occultism, paganism, witchcraft, Faith-magic, alchemy and exorcism for nearly a millenia. Tightly associated with the Eastern Orthodox Christian movement, these hunters have slowly lost a great deal of their religious bases to concentrate on the newer mundane weapons, and developing alchemy in a combat-support role. They hunted pretty much anything that was deemed 'supernatural' or 'otherworldly' but under the caveat that the entity or device had to have proven harmful. They were not mercenaries and did not commit contracts to kill or banish beings that harmed no one, regardless of how weird they were.

There were the ancestral Druidic Covens that emerged from the Germanic and Celtic traditions, spread around all of Europa, Slavia and Britannia. These covens specialized in summoning the elementals and spirits that made the Mystical Lands livable and stable. They also were the primary source of naturally magical plants and animals to be used as food or building materials throughout the known world. In fact, Druidism was usually such a benevolent, communal Faith and Creed that few governments had any trouble letting them set-up inside their borders. The problems came from other religious systems, like Christians and Muslims whose Creed commanded the forcible conversion of infidels, or their deaths in Holy War. This proved to be a bad choice since druids are quite adept at riding wild animals much better than armored knights, and they have a large choice of survival and combat prayers that unleash Nature's fury on the fools that trespass their Sacred Glades. Massive storms, floods, forest fires, earthquakes, plant-life that animates & rock formations that become alive to fight the invaders were all basic tactics of the Druids to defend their communities. In the last three centuries since the discovery of America by the Spaniards, many Druidic covens have relocated to the immense wilderness of that continent, especially the north of Canada and the central mid-west of the USA. Amusingly, the druids and witches moved on the boats and convoys of christian pilgrims, leaving them once they had arrived at their way-point where they would meet others of their sect for the final road.

There was the Sororitam Naturam Pieta Ordum matriarchal coven of witches, one of the biggest and richest female-led organizations that either mundanes or magicals had ever seen come to pass. This ancient society was created at an epoch whence even Clanholds were not fully developed as a means of controlling territory and population. These women were a mix of mundanes, squibs, semi-spell-users and full casters that worked, prayed, and lived for the good of their families and farming villages. They were the first attempt at civilization and social order that transcended the barriers of Blood, politics, wealth, magic and Faith Creed to increase the chances of survival against the harsh weather, animals and roving bandits. But their socialistic, egalitarian mindset rapidly rubbed churches and monarchs the wrong way, leading to most of the early nation-states banning the existence of the Order. In fact, many scholars believe that the paranoid mania of the Christian Inquisition against witches was only a political war to destroy the Green Sisterhood rather than really find Devil worshipers or others who had strayed from their Biblical Creed. In any case, the collapse of the Sororitam in the late 1500's under the ceaseless waves of assault is well known
in the magical population, and that was the reason that hedge-craft became so undervalued, especially by male wizards and clerics. However, it is also well known that a group of surviving Sisters fled to the New World where they merged with Druids who had the same idea, thus founding joint communities of Paganism, Witchery, Druidism and hedge-crafting that should now be thriving peacefully.

There was the Freemason Faithful Guild, which was never derived from nor associated with the ill-fated Templar Knights, whom never bothered with witches and wizards, unless it was to hunt them on a warrant from the Inquisition. The Freemasons were in fact the first truly organized and powerful union (or syndicate) of professional tradesman & craftsmen to be acknowledged by the national governments and churches of Europe and the Slavic lands. They were initially founded by carpenters who specialized in the building of boats and bridges, but there were so many people who worked wood in each town & village that it almost ended in a flop. Then, the master carpenters had the idea to ally with the much rarer and costlier quarrymen, stone carvers, sculptors, and masons who laid the finished blocks with mortar. Since the word 'mason' evoked the soaring, hallowed prestige of christian cathedrals made of clean stonework, the syndicate leaders decided to call their assembly 'masons' but added the prefix 'free' to the name to express that they were not subaltern to any crown or church, but to their paying customers. Another detail lost to history was that the original name was a Teutonic word spoken "Freimaurer" that translates directly from Germanic into the English "Freemason" since the organization was first tried in the upper reaches of Poland. Because education in the intellectual professions was so costly, only those who studied in a religious monastery could actually have access to the books and tutors to reach proficiency in architecture or engineering, while the more traditional crafts were usually taught in apprenticeships. This explains why the Masons are so intrinsically mixed with Christian Faith and Creed, and why they often engrave prayers and Biblical Siglae in their works to magically reinforce them. After all, channeling celestial energy through religious spells has always been the easiest way to learn magical prowess, no matter what vitriol the magus spew about "begging for spells" or "letting the god do all the work". In reality, the Freemasons are primarily mundane, squib or semi-spell-users, who specialize in a trade or craft, who then learn to enhance and bonify their products with effects granted by their Faith's Celestials or Angels.

There was the Flamel Alchemical Trades & Crafts Guild, who were essentially the snobby, high-browed version of the Freemasons, but accepting only professional alchemists, transmuters, pure spell-users, sorcerers, warlocks or arch-mages in their ranks. Given the very demanding nature of the rituals and reactions studied, having a naturally very large magical core was a necessity to avoid accidents during the work sessions. Also, while the Flamel Guild liked to declare they were real wizards and scientists who didn't borrow Power from unearthly sources like the priests, the facts were that many did in fact use channeling or other Powers gifted them by a patron Saint or Celestial when they were desperate for a positive outcome to their projects. As the saying goes, "Pride goeth before the Fall", and since many members of the guild were not well seen by mainstream mundane society because of their weird Creed and hypotheses, then they had to learn to speak and act like the other upper, erudite classes or else face public rebuke, and even denunciation to the Inquisition as being in league with daemons and witches. It was the major reason why the Flamel Guild existed for a time, but disappeared from public awareness in the late 1600's, in the paroxysm of the Catholic and Spanish Inquisitions. The Guild did not die, nor did it implode or succumb to betrayal, it simply did like the Illuminati, White Council and other groups, it went underground physically and magically to repel detection.

There was the Occultum Mundi Illuminati, a philosophical 'secret society' whose membership, Creed and goals were always nebulous, despite that the name means "to reveal the shadow world into the light". Few details were known about them, except they were supposedly based in Italy, either Rome or Venice, since nearly a thousand years back. A credible rumor has it that they are an
offshoot from the Librarians of Venerable Antiquity that went utterly rogue, deciding to use the various artifacts they were recovering to further their goals and personal profit rather than seek to stabilize the planet for everybody. In fact, because it is such a deep secret, one suspicion is that Illuminati members are encouraged and supported in their efforts to join other, more visible groupings to gather internal data and have a public cover to hide their activities beneath.

The Miskatonic University in Massachusetts, USA, was an inter-disciplinary collegiate that served as guild, school, army barracks and residential citadel on the shores of one of the most mystically active rivers on the planet, rivaling the Amazon, the Dnieper or the Yellow rivers. The fortress was fist settled some 70,000 years back, before homo erectus became the dominant species of the world, by beings that came from another planet located in a different dimension. Many residents of Miskatonic only looked humanoid as they had adapted a shape that the weak minds of their neighbors or colleagues could accept without breaking. The school and military institutions were quite mercantile, mercenary even, since they never commanded individuals to reject contracts outside their walls, but only scrutinized and regulated those jobs done inside the citadel to keep social peace, and forbid stealing the research or samples of another member. While not in any ways an actual British Colony, nor a bastion of white European males, the Miskatonic river basin had been far too intrinsic to the development of -EVERY- magical society on the planet for any Nation, culture, religion, college, sect or guild to ignore them. However, one visited the place at the risk of one's sanity, as the usual rules of metaphysics were wonky on the best of days, which were few. Even more important was that the flora and fauna along the watershed of the river had been so polluted by isotopes, radiations and organic dejections or offal during those seventy thousand years that all things were mutated into being grotesque, horrifying depravities who only sought to rend your flesh whilst profaning your mind before they consumed your shattered soul. Nobody went to the Miskatonic area without martial training and weapons of warfare, lest they be wanting a quick, messy end without sepulture to house their remains.

And finally, from the biggest human groups, there were the nearly 7,000 Christian or Biblical inspired denominations who kept on going, despite that their God and his Angels had mostly killed each other off in a Heavenly War some 900 years back. It was important to note that the majority were not European, nor even white-skinned devotees, as the world had changed much in the last 2,000 years. Unfortunately for them all, the Hallowed Halls of Heaven were torn asunder during the War of the Fallen, the Pearly Gates hanging askew as plants, animals, horrors and looters took over the once glorious temples, houses and parks. The few mortal human priests who could still cast true Faith miracles were either surviving Angels hiding amongst the mortals, or humans who owned a functional relic crafted before The Ending. In any ways, the hundreds of thousands of priests that toiled for Christianity today, those not frauds or crooks, did it out of pure hope far more than for getting magical prayers granted.

The Vordak admitted honestly that his studies of culture and politics were well out of date, and that he had read almost only about European, mostly white and christian, sects, guilds and groupings. That was the way of things in his epoch, and even the advent of Apparition and Gate spells didn't make transferring knowledge from one country to another any simpler, or cheaper. One constant throughout history was that "knowledge is power", as proven by Dryskholl's chosen strategy to help the child without being discovered. That meant that in a primitive era, you could learn only what you had the money to buy, but those titled noblemen, guild-men or priests in place would try their best to limit what was available to hands not their own. Bishop Gloutnay had a myopic view of the world seen through the British Kingdom because that was his reality when he lived, and it still was to this day because he could not stay awake for long periods unless the House Van Uttebatten tasked him with a prolonged chore.

That honest limitation of mind & means having been sorted out of the way, the ghosts took over to explain a few superficial details about the many intelligent societies and cultures that were present
on Earth, back in their days. Maybe they still lived? Magical tourism was a great way to prepare a child for apprenticeship or formal schooling.

There was a race of winged humans called 'Buteos' that had the capacity to fly at up to 50,000 feet in the air. They had spells that could densify the clouds enough to be able to build plots of land for farming and residences. These were often mistaken for angels by religious followers even though they were just ordinary mortals.

Likewise, there were multiple races and sub-races amongst the elvish species, and they had their own winged kindred called 'Averiel', just as they had amphibious types and elementally inclined sorts for living in ice or underground.

There were the fabled dwarves, gnomes and halflings that many authors had popularized, but it surprised no one here as these writers were all citizens of one of the magical sects or enclaves who had used their basic knowledge to amuse the mundane masses harmlessly.

The reputations as primitive, bestial monsters made to the goblinoid, orcod, ogrish and trollish races were quite a shameful thing, since these peoples had their own styles of magic and Faith which produced uniquely charming results to behold. Yes, they were in fact warrior cultures, but they did value honor and a certain sense of fair-play in single combat. If you tried a large-mass war against one of their cities, then you would experience something similar to what the human authors have been describing for the last three centuries or so.

The Fae and Fairies were a subject of very spirited debate, with many contentious declarations on all sides, but one single agreement; the Sidhe (Fae nobility) Courts were not to be trifled with. Human magic had precious little effect against a fully trained Fae, meaning only a skilled Slayer or specifically trained Grimm Hunter could take one on and hope to win while still healthy enough for the victory to mean anything. The four main Fae species and their natural home planes were:

Seelie (light) living in the connective demi-plane 'Never-Never' or 'Neverland'

Unseelie (Dark) living in the 'Border Ethereal' connective plane

nug-Seelie / Wyldfae (Neutral) living in the 'Mirrorscape'

akr-Seelie / Nexfae (Stygyan) living in the 'Styx River' connective demi-plane.

Each major species then split into hundreds of races and sub-races, which nobody had ever done a full survey of. Several races also lived in the 'Spirit World', the 'Dreamscape', the 'Astral Plane' and several of the elemental planes. Fae could travel rather easily to all the other para-elemental, higher, lower and external planes or dimensions, due to the large repertoire of portal and gate spells their cultures have accumulated over aeons. It is almost unheard of to find a Fae living in the void of space, but since that admission comes from a few Fae testimonies, most humans are weary of trusting that information. Because they rarely lived full-time in this dimension or plane, and their natural habitats are usually harmful to unshielded humans, it was rather rare for encounters between the two species to be long or meaningful. Skirmishes and criminal behavior however, abounded plentifully, since both sides believed that living in a different plane of existence made them immune from pursuit and retribution by their victims' relatives.

The phantasmic group then engaged in a general, superficial discourse on the Divines, Celestials, Angels, Demons, Spirits, Elementals, and Pure Souls who were also called Ascended or Exalted according to where they stood on their initiatic path towards becoming Celestial. Then a very general overlook of the common types of undead or unquiet souls and animated aberrations of flesh or offal was done. Those last parts of the discussion had poor Harry holding his head in pain at the
overwhelming torrent of raw information he had just absorbed about the world he lived in without seeing any of it before. He knew his eyes were bad, but had he been blind?

{ HP } --- { The Awakening of an Archmage } --- { HP }

Suddenly, Bishop Gloutnay declared that the ritual arrays and components were ready, and it was time for the Awakening Rite to be accomplished. Seeing the boy's interrogative mien, the old Lord Van Uttebatten decided to explain in greater detail what was about to happen.

"You will drink a potion that will trigger small, controlled reactions inside your body, mind, magic and soul to test the 'connectivity' between yourself and the multiple Realms of Power that exist. This testing will then leave an active linkage that can be trained into Gifts or Spells later on in life, if you have the resources or the will to elevate the potential into usable trades or crafts. The drawings all around serve to stabilize the person undergoing the rite so that they do not become sick, injured or die from accidentally over-charging their magical channels before they are ready for such a surge of raw Power flowing through. Because the testing is so exhausting for the short duration it lasts, the celebrant always winds up in a healing slumber, so the potion you will imbibe has curative herbs in it to feed you during your recovery."

Nodding at the instructions given, the child removed all his clothing and donned the thin white linen shirt that was provided by the floating cleric for this single usage. Since he would sweat a lot and exude vapors from the diverse Powers and toxins being scanned, it was normal that the shirt be destroyed when he awoke from the rite's sleep, as it could never be used again. Handing the poor, well shaken boy, who no longer knew which world he lived in, a golden chalice filled with the holy elixir, the noble Vordak priest gestured for him to drink it all in one go.

Half-way through the draught, Harry dropped the metal cup, soon following it to the stone floor as his meager body began to react very strongly with the potion. Bishop Gloutnay watched on with the placid indolence of those whom walked hand-in-hand with Death, no longer in a hurry nor afraid of anything the Multiverse could send his way. Besides his hovering form floated the ghostly host, peering intently on the child's contorting body and mind as they fought with themselves to behold, accept and adapt to the newfound wellsprings of Powers inside him.

Inside his own Soul, Harry had no choice but to let the Rite enact a basic mindscape for him because his hadn't activated when it should have. In order to accept the incoming data he needed an organized, self-regulated mindscape so he could slow it down enough to perceive, analyze and sort everything the Rite would perceive and do for him. This was actually one of the fundamental functions of the Awakening; to instill a working foundation of mind magic upon which the child would then build his Identity, Dreamscape and Inner-World so he could try to repel attempts at mind-rape, curses & potions that enslave, memory wipes, and possession. If the child's Blood-Law and Blood-Compact had been blocked or damaged, the ritual could, to some small degree, force the partial activation of whatever Legacy his Chartered Bloodline had granted him at birth, if he were part of such noble Tradition. To be fully capable of psychomancy and self-regulation would take many years, and only if he had an affinity for that art, otherwise it may waste decades of studies for little avail. Once the initial Inner-World was in place, the results from testing each nerve, vein, gland, bone, muscle and organ started pouring in to inform the boy on his physical standing. This was followed by the flow of data from his brain about his mental acuity, bandwidth, frequencies, and processing power if he wanted to study advanced mental dweomers or the much more demanding Psionic Arts. Then the rite tested all the Basal Realms, from Electricity through Channeling, Essence, Mentalism and Primal Essaence, going up to Mythal, Shadow, Wild, Psionics, Mana, Soul and finally Energon.

The data stream then changed drastically as the test began to actively scan deeply into his personal
DNA and the ectoplasm matrix of his soul to look for Talents & Gifts, before widening to pulse through the Blood Law of each House he was linked to by Blood, Oath, Debt or Conquest, inscribing the long list of concepts and Family names in his cellular memory. While this was not a fully established Heritage Ritual nor a genuine Legacy Spell, it did give the child an idea whether it would be time and effort well spent to seek those two spells to ascertain his clanic and biological background further. Not to mention that any potential new family links were always good for those who were orphaned or exiled from home, whatever the reason for such drastic events.

Once the Awakening Rite had finished pulsing inside the child, it pushed outwards, forcing his aura and soul magic to exteriorize for the first time in his life. A gaseous nimbus composed of many layers in tones of bluish, golden, silvery and pale white coalesced into an ethereal sphere around the prone child, with hundreds of small scintillating glyphs, icons and runes floating around each layer. These occult symbols were the format of basic mind magic, mentalism, psionics and soul magic. When a person was able to willingly manifest their aura, they could read the formulae written to understand the state of their body, mind, magic and soul, thus being able to detect foreign intrusions, contaminations, injuries and unwanted modifications. This aura also allowed the user to effect voluntary changes like a control panel, although what was displayed should never be altered as it was a TRUE representation of the person. Any alteration to the ectoplasmic scriptures would immediately inflict the described situation unto the person, from their soul or DNA up, to suffuse every part of their being. There were however limits; you couldn't cure cursed conditions like bestial lycanthropy or bitten-vampirism, and most undead were actually devoid of souls that were intact enough for the aura to become visible to be of any use. Furthermore, free-willed or greater undead often wanted their status to remain as they had power and benefits mortals could not dream of, in a way similar to the Exalted and Ascended.

The ghostly host, house-elf and hovering Vordak Lord peered intensely at the glowing scriptures that were swimming in the various orbits of the gaseous nimbus. Bishop Gloutnay straightened with a satisfied noise, having beheld what he wanted to know. Young elfling Dryskholl had much experience with mind & soul magicks as his bad masters before Hoggy-Wartsy had been specialists of these Dark Arts. He could see where Harry's health needed immediate shoring-up, and what he could do with his meager means. Other, deeper problems would have to wait until the proper components could be harvested or bought from the many magical marketplaces around Europa, Slavia, Britannia and America. The poor elfling had no idea of what was where in the other continents unless he read a merchant's road-map, just like anybody else. The elderly Lord Van Utebatten was well pleased with the accomplishments that this last Awakening had produced in his family's ritual chamber. As a last hurrah for his clan's memory, it was quite a success to their dead name.

With his aura returning into his body and soul, young Harold Potter slowly lowered himself to the lukewarm stone floor, falling into a deep healing sleep that would last for several hours until he awoke far fresher and in better health than ever in his six years of life. At that point, he would hear the plans that were discussed during his absence and be asked for his decisions concerning his lucky and prosperous future schooling.

{ HP } --- { The Arch-Lord of Gaia is risen! } --- { HP }

Harry yawned ans stretched himself awake near seven o'clock in the morning, on the first Saturday of his first Christmas break during his elementary schooling. The worse part of it all, he reminded himself was not that he would have to endure the Dursley's more for three weeks, it was that he would have to return to the septic tank of a school when it was done. Honestly, the adults should just openly call it a kids' prison and be done with it!

Yawning anew, the boy suddenly seized in fear-induced paralysis. Or should it be terror? As his
tired mind rebooted from the exhaustion and lack of food, the poor maligned child had a catastrophic memory of what his teacher had tried to do with him, just on the eve of the vacation. The boy rolled into a fetal ball on his left side, facing towards the stone wall, not yet able to see the chamber around him nor acknowledge that he was not alone. It took several minutes for the shakes and shivers of the post-trauma adrenaline drop to subside, and a few more for the first more dramatic results of the Awakening to be felt inside his mind.

He had spells!

He now had four things floating inside his memories that were called "spell lists", which were as the name indicated clearly; lists of spells classified by subject or logical association, then ordered by the level of experience, difficulty and Powers required to cast them safely. This was a neat system! It was like having an encyclopedia in his mind, that he could flip the pages and scroll around to find what he needed at the speed of thought.

The four spell lists made him cry silently when he saw their names, and what they did. They were part of what was called 'Blood-Compact', a process that his parents had to willingly prepare by ritual when they reached the end of adolescence. The 'Compact' was a genetically and spiritually encoded copy of their knowledge, lives, and the general history, culture and mystical practices of the families each hailed from. Even though his mother was a muggle-born, she had managed to integrate images, sounds, odors and touch from her parents and grand-parents, much to the bewilderment of his father who had never known this could be done with ancestors who had no magic inside them. Given the complexity of the 'Compact' ritual, the information was supposed to download itself into his active memory at a steady rate, but split by segments across several years of his life. He should have gotten the 'Blood-Borne Identity' at age 2 and 'Familial Culture' at age 4 but the damned potions and blocks by Dumbledore had, well, blocked them.

All four spell lists were part of what is referred to as "The Childish Lists" by those who study profound magical theory, with divination, Blood & Soul Magicks. They were the 'Child of the Darkes' that set the 'Blood-Compact' in place, the 'Childish Lifeways' that granted survival and basic life skills, the 'Childish Defenses' to help keep the kid alive with a few combat skills and limited-harmful effects, and finally the 'Childish Trickeries' that were never spoken of among polite society. That last one was mostly to help stay alive if the child was abandoned or cast to the streets as it had many skills and effects to turn an infant into a competent hoodlum who could steal, break-in, or sabotage much more easily than any mundane would.

Presently, there were a few things that were slowly coming to the fore of his memory and mind to be acknowledged and used immediately. Directly from having destroyed or lessened several blocks on his body, mind, core and soul, several events scheduled in the 'Child of the Darkes' list were coming to fruition all together in rapid succession. The memories left by his two lineages began to install themselves, then he saw in his Inner-Eye a strange glyph that he just knew was his own personal representation before Mother Magyck and the Divines, for now at least since he also knew that it would change as he experienced life. Then he was biologically and psychologically weaned off the need for a wet-nurse, even though he'd never had such a privileged arrangement since living with the Dursley's. This was followed by a quick, dirty and on-the-fly setup of his Identity parameters, basic Dreamscape and -again- the basic Mindscape which then led to the surprising redoing of the Awakening as an automatic process from within himself, but without needing the potion or outside help. Apparently, like one of the primitive computers they had in the Surrey Public Library, the brain & soul had to reboot whenever a series of drastic changes were made for those modifications to be absorbed functionally.

Coming awake far faster and less groggy following the second Awakening was a good thing as he now also remembered where he was, and who was present with him. Instinctively he used a small
spell called 'Consolidate Conscience' to boost his morale and spiritual fortitude in the moment, to avoid another bout of panic or losing himself to a stress-induced slumber. Dropping into a coma whenever things were rough, abnormal or fuck-all-weird just didn't seem like a good tactical choice anymore, not now that he had a vague idea of what was strolling around the multiple layers of Reality unseen.

Standing up from the ground, Harry turned to look at the beings that had just given him the three best, most durable, gifts they could have ever handed him; the knowledge of his family, his connection to his living magic, and a few handful of easy, quick spells to help pull him through tough situations without any flashy-bangy effects that would attract nefarious attention. All three were now permanently and solidly installed within himself, and it would take something like brain damage, squibbing oil or an uncontrolled 'Obliviate' to rip that out of him.

Bowing from the neck in gratitude to the Conclave, he announced aloud "I am Harold Jamieson Evans Potter, Heir of Potter, Heir of Evans, Heir of Peverell, Heir Presumptive of Black, and future Earl of Claymoors, and Peer of the Realms Britannic." Straightening his back, he folded his hands pensively over his abdomen in a polite fashion, ending with "I am well met to all of you, and truly grateful for the services that you have rendered unto me and my houses, by hauling us from the trash-heap of History. May you be lauded in Life and in Death, so says Potter, so mote it be."

"So mote it be!" replied the ghostly host, Vordak and house-elf with gusto, as they were now in a celebratory mood. Bishop Gloutnay still had one question though; "And yar Creeds, lad? Have you beheld the Divines and figured out which would give your life and magic meaning? It can wait if you haven't, but if ye did, then you must speak them aloud for it to be Truth unto the worlds of the living, the dead and the Fae."

Nodding serenely, Harry explained "I have seen the great green glory of Gaia, the Mother Earth, the Vessel of Life, and found myself comforted, at home in her solid bones, incandescent blood, and gentle green fingers. But from her I would draw sustenance and endurance, and Powers to match my storming rage at all the injustices that were committed against my Families. She cannot give me peace, nor contentment. Those feelings I can only receive from Death, from the act of ending those that have betrayed, raped, injured and exploited my families in the name of foul causes that are as false as their public façades and social standings. In Hades do I find solace, and final, true Justice for those torts and grievances we have suffered from knaves. Furthermore, I now understand that both Dumbledore and the defective monster that attacked our home would never be stopped by ordinary magicks or artifacts. Only those blessed by Hades could impose a final, true Death unto the cowardly despots, sending them before the Throne of Judgment to face the one divinity they both fear above even Belzebuth in Hell Everburning."

Nodding wisely, the old Lord Ulyrance Van Uttebatten gave a polite little hand clap to show his approval for those revelations the boy had underwent so traumatically. For a complete novice, he was pulling out of it with grace, aplomb and fortitude that few possessed so young, or much older to be honest. Many a soldier he had served alongside of would not, at 30 or 40 years of age, had the courage or sheer bullheadedness to forge on as Harry did.

The elfling Dryskholl tutted as he shook a finger at his human. "You's can be finding the Faiths in the Celestials later! These be long studies and hard tests to prove faith and worth, not something done over dinner like reading the papers. You get showered and dressed, mees be making food and hot tea for us. Dryskholl be hungry, after almost an entire day of fasting while the rituals happened. Master Harry ate even less yesterday, so he bees needing food now!"

Nodding in approval, the child and unliving agreed with the servant's logic. Since Harry was indeed peckish and a bit weak, he sped his way through his washing and changing, the wonderful
smell of the hot tea kettle dragging him by the nose as if it were an actual spell. Then again, he was a growing boy and he never truly ate to his hunger's needs over the last five years, so that could be the simple explanation too. The bestial growl from his stomach certainly said so.

During his wash, Harry enjoyed the incredible feel of his magic flowing through his mind and limbs as he used the few, low-powered spells the Childish Lists had revealed to him for sanitation and self-maintenance in case he had no home or lived in a deficient dwelling. Those few menial dweomers would mean the difference between death and survival in the streets or any orphanage ended in, after poor Dryskholl died and he was finally alone again.

Deciding to banish those dreary thoughts for the moment, Harry concentrated on enjoying the conjured chair charmed for comfort and warmth, and the real food that the elf had taken from the school's kitchen above. Ha may be small and sickly, but that elf could cook like nobody Harry had ever met! He absolutely had to learn those recipes and tricks before the poor little guy died.

Squirming happily from the praise the human child gave him so openly, Dryskholl could feel a small trickle of magic entering him, originating from the boy's subconscious desire to accept him and not see him hurt or sick. It had been more than five years since the poor elfling had felt the emotions and support of Family and Blood-Law filling his core and mind; the feeling was almost inebriating with how raw, natural and pure the child's Power was.

After taking an hour to eat and speak of easy subjects like how the meal had been prepared and how kitchen work in a magical household was different from mundanes, the Bishop Gloutnay whispered his ethereal words unto the group. Hold his funerary urn aloft, the skeletal pontiff spoke in no uncertain terms. "It is time for the Pledge. My life in this Prime Material Plane has been fruitful and filled with acts of honor, feats of magicks unparalleled, and the presence of noble entities unto the last hour that I could whelm dweomers in the hallowed names of my Gods. I shalt walk unto this path willingly, happily, marching towards the Light that calls all beings to It when the End comes to pass. For the Grand Gate of Reality am I bound, and so before Mystra, Mother of All Magycks, Spouse of Archas Theos, Patron of all Occult Sciences, Mother of Azuth, Guardian of all Runes, do I finally depose the Charge of my Task amongst yon mortal beings. As I was commanded, I hath brought thee the inscrutable mysteries of the Multiverse, and the teachings of the Traditions of the Old Ways. May my passage into the Beyond be celebrated as the Wheel of Days turning anew, as a festival of Seasons and Souls."

The ghostly alderman Van Uttebatten floated forth, right hand over his heart as he intoned in a ceremonial tone "We here assembled for the last time in this world and the next, the Ancient and Noble House of Van Uttebatten hereby grant our faithful servant Grahaut Gloutnay, the Bishop of Mystra, Abbot of Brutnor Abbey, Father confessor of our Bloodline, the leave to march unto the Path of Light, that he may reach the Grand Gate of Reality. May Hades judge you fairly and render your soul unto thine goddess, to serve her thence as ye did here. So mote it be."

"By Van Uttebatten blood oath, so mote it be." chorused the ghostly host.

Gesturing with his heavy abbatial staff, the flying priest invited the house-elf to join him in the middle of the room, inside the ritual circle that began to glow a lambent blue when the undead entered its perimeter scripts. Nodding solemnly, the sickly elf slowly walked to stand in the circle, opposite the being whose holiness had been such that it transcended the barriers of life, death and society to keep on giving to his houses and community.

The undead's whispery voice rose anew; "I have no blood to initiate the Pledge, but this can be bypassed through the application of Soul Magick. I trust you know how to extrude your nimbus to
demonstrate your true self unto the Divine? Then we shall both do so, and I shall connect the glyphs to enact the tithes and transference. When the rite is complete, my body shall lower to the floor and the bones will turn to dust, magically being sucked into my urn so that it can be interred at my crypt, at the abbey. The mitre will no longer be magical, and no longer be able to hold any enchantments due to the strength of all it endured for my creation. My crosier however, could still be used as a weapon or even re-enchanted for a different purpose, though the shape befits the cult of Mystra. You could also melt the gold to have some few riches to stabilize your life before entering formal schooling at Hogwarts or elsewhere you choose."

Signaling towards the open tunnel that led down to the holding cell where he slept between calls, the Vordak Lord told Harry "I have no family that remain. I knew this when I accepted the task of becoming the Servant for my patron house. As such, I leave you in heritage the meager items that you will find below. While old and worn, most will be of usage for your basic education, until you can craft or purchase versions more fitted to your own Faiths, trades and occult arts."

Having nothing else to say in the sad, mournful occasion, the boy simply nodded gratefully his head because if he tried to speak he would probably end up bawling out loud.

Both servant beings intoned the prayer they favored to expose their soul magick, showing four-tiered nimbuses of glyphs and lines that told of their lives, Faiths, Creeds, magicks and deeds. The Vordak swiftly established thin threads of gaseous ectoplasm between his nimbus and that of the elf, then chanted a long-worded, slow paced spell. After five minutes, when he quieted, it was Dryskholl who chanted an equally long-worded, slow paced and deeply involved response.

The actual transfer of life-force and magick took barely a minute to accomplish, given just how drained the skeletal guardian had been. They all knew the rite was complete when the glowing lines of ectoplasm linking the participants darkened from lack of power, then dissipated back to the ether. Mere seconds later, the unliving priest slowly dropped to the floor in a heap, his bones becoming a small maelstrom of dust particles that swirled around the piled clothing until it was siphoned into the cast iron urn. Whence it was once a shiny black as if just oiled and polished, the urn was now tarnished with age and wear, no longer spreading magic around it. The clothes were discolored and threadbare, with holes appearing where the self-mending charms no longer held the tissue together. Only the hardy wooden staff and gold ornament had survived unscathed.

Without a word, Dryskholl moved a hand over the urn, making it disappear as he sent it to the Brutnor Abbey catacombs, where Father Gloutnay had a crypt waiting for his remains since he had held the title of Abbot in his flesh life. With that last part done, the young elf snapped his fingers loudly, making all the contents of the lower cellar pack itself and teleport to the small workmen's shelter that served as Harry's true home for the moment. Given the highly emotional ritual that had just happened, the elf understood the lad would not be in any condition to wade through the personal belongings of the only adult who had given him any protection or solace in this life to date.

Sitting forlornly on his conjured chair, Harry asked quietly "Dryskholl? Why did he have to die before you bonded to my House? I think he would have liked to see that happen, don't you?"

Nodding kindly, the elfling moved to stand before the boy, patting his arm gently to avoid scaring him as he had never been touched without violence for so long. "Master Bishop knew it was his time, so he left. But, he also knew that Dryskholl could not bind to Potter family correctly because I hads too little magick left inside. All my powers were goings into living to see the next day. To see you better and safer. I needed the new energy to create a good, solid bond with yous to help yous as an elf should care for his master."
Understanding the need, but not liking the reality of it, Harry didn't blame either of them. It was what it was, because of this bastard Dumbledore, and because that was the life that servants usually had imposed on them. The few history lessons he had received in the school above them were pretty clear about it; mundane or magical, servants were rarely seen as better than livestock to be bartered, sold, used and abused, and sacrificed so that the House at large could endure. It was a deplorable mindset, but it also seemed to be ingrained in magick itself, as if it truly was the Natural Order of Things. Harry wasn't sure he accepted this, but he didn't know enough to argue the point, so he'd set it aside and read about it. Maybe meet a few magical beings who could have a discussion with him to grasp what was eluding him at present.

{ HP } --- { The first Bond of the new House Potter } --- { HP }

Squeaking in sympathy, Dryskholl asked meekly "If young Master Harry Potter is ready, wees can be doing the bonding ritual now. Mees be wanting a family for so long, and yous be needing an elf that can protect yous from bad muggles and magees. Dryskholl will do that for yous."

Nodding in admission of the truth, Harry stood to join the diminutive being in the ritual circle, waiting for the entity to show him how it was done. Dryskholl began by chanting a prayer in Latin, then made the response text appear in glowing green letters that floated in the air before Harry's impressed eyes. Harry instinctively used one of the childish spells to understand the Latin prayer and have the ability to speak it aloud. The spell lasted only a few minutes per casting, but it would be sufficient for this. After finishing the prayer, Harry felt an impulse that came from deep within, and then saw a memory of his grand-father Charlus Potter as he bound a new elf to the entirety of the House. Following the same gestures and intent he perceived from the ancestral memory, the child used another of the childish spells to cause a small cut to appear painlessly on his right index so he could finger-paint the simplified version of the Potter Crest that served for such purposes. He then sung a different prayer, to welcome Dryskholl into service for ALL of the houses and organizations that he led, represented, or defended, while still keeping preeminent leadership over the elf's activities and well-being so that nobody could hijack the poor creature to act against Harry or the Potters again.

The surge of magick was so intense that it made the elfling glow with an eldritch green aura for several minutes, and when the light abated, it revealed an elfling that was far healthier than before. He was less lean, less discolored, and fewer illness blotches visible, and stood as tall as his naturally short height permitted because his spine was no longer hurting him all the time. In truth, it looked from outside as if a miracle had happened, but the elf told them otherwise.

"It is as the Lofty Bishop told us before the Awakening Rite. I have been given more weeks to serve the houses of Master Harry, but not more than that. I will not see his 8th birthday. My body was healed enough to serve without suffering or being limited in what I can be doing, but nothing more. I accepting the magicks of the Houses, I also accepted that Time would demand to be paid for the deeds done. I accepted the price. That be Wisdom of the Ages, Master Harry, that ALL magicks and Psionics have price to pay for their uses, and the greatest feats command the steepest costs. None can escape this, ever, and any who tell you they can, or that Gods can, is a deluded, dangerous fool trying to build a cult, or a simple con-man trying to sell you a bottle of fake miracles that will addict you until your life wastes away in consumption."

Agreeing with the facts since arguing or raging would do no good, Harry nodded as there really was nothing else to do. As for magick demanding payment, he had figured out something similar on his own at the beginning of last evening, when the ghosts presented themselves to explain where he was, and what had been hidden from him. He had known all his life that any durable goods had to be made by somebody who toiled and strained for it; the Dursley's prided themselves on their clean house and lush garden, but neither could have happened without a servant to do it as
they were too lazy or self-absorbed to do the hard labor. Since they had not the money to pay a mad service, the unwanted child dropped on their doorstep had done it for them, free of charge to them, but full of pain, shame and misery for him. Yes Harry was well acquainted with the concept of -paying- for services, goods and benefits, and how the costs were greater when you wanted something bigger, better or more prestigious than the neighbors.

{ HP }  ---  { Passing into the mists of Time }  ---  { HP }

Frowning, the boy asked softly, "What now? What do we do?"

The ghost of old mister Van Uttebatten came forth to lay his cold ectoplasmic hand on the child's thin, bony shoulder as he spoke for the final farewell. "Now, you and your new bondsman walk out into the wide world of Gaia. Our old, dead House can no longer assist you. The scriptural circles that serve as our foci have given all they had left. Soon, our manifestations in this realm will cease. When that happens, the magicks that have protected this last bastion of our Bloodline will expire, and so will the structural integrity of this 1,200 year old chamber. The stonework will become as worn and decrepit as the vordak's old priestly robes, the mortar brittle and frayed to such extent that the room could collapse."

Taking an affected breath for pause as he didn't really need one, the alderman explained "As one last favor to the world of the living, and to make certain you have at least that much stability in your life, the last great work of our magic will be to convert this dank hall. It will be transmuted to an equivalent of what the other basement portions of the building around it have for materials and design. The Bishop was kind enough to cast a 'Comprehend Estate' divination when he first awoke from his sleep, so he programmed the renovation sequence into the array, during one of your sleep cycles due to the stresses and rituals. One good result of this will be that the room will be unrecognizable, and all the devices for pain or coercion will be destroyed, their materials used to feed the transmutation. Finally, as we pass into the Great Beyond for real, our Bloodline will offer this establishment that bears our name one last boon. We shall enact a Faith blessing upon the land plot to anchor a ward against criminal behavior and deviant desires. Unfortunately, without an initiated congregation to chant mass every week or a manatite, the ward will last only for a few months, probably enough to last until your summer vacations, and maybe until the end of them. No further, though.

"July, then," Harry murmured softly, "That's when it all falls apart again. Well, Dryskholl and I will just have to work hard to prepare for that. And if your good behavior ward cleans up the school as advertised, then maybe that kindness will last a few years past its expiration. The teachers and custodians didn't all turn into monsters over night, it took decades of neglect and ignorance from the district managers to make it happen. Not to mention the hordes of parents that know about the school's climate or have strong doubts but close their eyes because, in reality, they want to have their kids broken to make them docile and easier to manage at home."

"You see the shame of our ancestors exposed before you, child" old Ulyrance said desolately as he gazed towards the ceiling of the antiquated stone room. "Our land was never meant to house a schooling edifice, and I don't recall there being one when I was alive, yet this structure purports to be older than my lifetime. I understand not how this is possible, lest Fae or Spirits were involved in making a 'Temporal Inclusion' to change an established event to suit some need that over-arched every other priority in the English Kingdom at that period. That is one mystery more that you will have to solve, as you settle your affairs in order for your life to be free."

Harry chewed on his lower lip as he looked at the room's fading array of circles and scripts, and the ghosts that were becoming translucent before his eyes. Tearing up at the sight of his first true friends disappearing into the Endless Night, the boy bowed his head and closed his eyes to avoid
the sight of being abandoned again, even if it wasn't their will to leave him. When he opened his
eyes again, the room was dark save for a small white candle that Dryskholl had set on the empty
cement floor to let him move around safely. During his silent mourning, the Van Uttebatten magic
had done its job flawlessly. The ancient stonework had been converted integrally to concrete and
steel beams, with even the plumbing, vents and electrical sockets where the modern architects
would have set them. The soulless industrial light fixtures with fluorescent tubes hung from the
ceiling, waiting for their switch to be flipped. The three fireplaces and chimneys were gone, as
were the washing alcove and the stairs down to the vordak's cell. Now, all that remained was a
totally empty second basement without anything to occupy or fill it.

A blank canvas for what came next.

Harry frowned angrily at the empty cavern of drab gray preformed cement as an idea took hold in
his mind. If he were going to be wasting his time inside this damned children's prison, then he
might as well make himself at home and live his body, mind, magic and soul as if they mattered to
himself at least, if to nobody else. But first, he had some things to get in hand to set up for the rest
of the day, like a clock that was mechanical so that magic bursts didn't affect the circuits.

Calling to the elf, Harry began to explain his plan in short, direct words. Soon, the elf was nodding
his head as he could see that it was a good plan. It even had a few escape routes built into it, for the
dark day that would eventually come, when the Magical Ministry of Wizarding Britain would call
on him to attend Hogwarts, even if he didn't want to. They had an army, however small and badly
trained, whereas he had nobody to help him resist. So he would have to fake being happy at going,
and be prepared to defend himself at each turn of the road.

Harry's first education via house-elf

(Harry Potter - theme)

1986
Dursley neighborhood
Little Whining, Surrey, England

Harry Potter may have been only 6 years old when all the shite went down the pipe, but he had
already lived five straight years of misery that had wound up with him living almost completely in
the streets before even entering primary school. His no-good relatives should have been reported to
CPS or the police, but nobody did. He had learned, on that fatidic day of his Awakening that it was
the fault of an evil wizard named Dumbledore who manipulated, mind-raped or killed anybody
who stood in the way of his 'Greater Good of Wizarding Britain' as only he could define or justify.

But, now that he had indeed passed his Awakening Rite, young Heir Potter was a much different,
and much better prepared, child than the mindless drug-zombie pawn Dumbledore had been
grooming from afar, well out of reach of any discovery or retaliations. Harry's magic and psionics
were partially unbound while his mind, manual skills and willpower had been totally freed from
the limiters and dumb-down unctions that had been poisoning him for years. With his mental
faculties, survival instincts and street-life acumen unfettered, the boy could now plan ahead
competently in a manner that would see him live through this lonely Hell, and eventually prosper
out of street-life.

Being well aware that his new companion -slash- servant Dryskholl the house-elf was sick and not
due to live long, Harry planned everything for being alone again, right from the start. It had no use for his survival to just live with the elf in blind beatitude when it was a foregone conclusion that by the end of July the little green entity would be dead and buried. So, Harry took advantage of the two great boons that the House of Van Uttebatten had left him when they imploded at last, following his Awakening. A school that was now warded against evil intents, and a brand new, large but empty concrete bunker that was far more modern and livable than the small underground alcove he had converted, beneath the train tracks of Little Whining.

Yes, that was his first bright idea; move his permanent living space from the tunnel to the school's newly rebuilt and cleaned second basement, near the access hatches to the city's service grid tunnels. He would do like the house-elves prided themselves of accomplishing by moving unseen, unheard and without trace, from one end of town to the other, to run his business as he pleased without risking the bloody bobbies or bossy adults trying to command his life.

In fact, the accursed elfling was invited to make himself a bed nook just like Harry so they could spend as much time together without the elf spending magic on traveling all that much. The house-elf agreed quite gratefully, so he went to his island retreat to pack all of his cluttered belongings to transfer them to Van Uttebatten academy, to live out his last days in peace besides his new family.

With elfin aid, it would be easy for him to learn how to prepare candles, lamp oil or how to cast a blue-bell flame to house in a glass jar that would serve as his marching lantern and camp stove whenever he decided to venture into the county’s dank, dark bowels. That was a practical charm, those blue-bell flames, because they also burned like regular fire but were fed just as much by the inherent magic found in all items, and also in all lifeforms. That meant that Harry could eventually use a jar of flames to burn his trash with little odors resulting, or cast the charm at an enemy who would slowly but surely become wreathed in the blue fire until the entirety of its body was consumed and degraded to sterile ash. However, the flames were VERY slow to progress on anything deemed a living thing, including plants that had just been uprooted or cut, and many magical plants, animals and higher sentients had an innate resistance to magic cast at them, regardless of whether it was helpful or harmful.

But the important part was still that Harry had managed at age 6 to learn a spell that was usually taught to 11 year old's in the charms class of Hogwarts as a replacement to wood, coal or oil for household usage. It averred that he was quite good at learning direct-application spells, but Dryskholl warned him to take it easy, lest he drain his core in one spell and put himself in bed for a week as he recovered. If he overtaxed himself while the elf was himself sick or no longer present, Harry might have to call for outside help, and the price to pay for such may not be limited to coinage from his Gringotts vault.

But, the little elfling was nonetheless ecstatic to see his young master have such an easy grasp of the lower Power Realms, and of hedgecraft too. It warmed his heart to see that the Old Ways still had a future, and it tickled him to a greener shade to see it was a bloody titled noble Arch-Lord that would be bringing back all the Little Magicks into mainstream society. The fact that Dumbledore's paragon of Wizarding Light was shaping up to be more of a religious Hero of the Faithful Darkest was also a great amusement for the dying elfling. Anything that made that old Manipulator eat his own beard was good in his grimoire.

With both learning to say openly and clearly what they were thinking or needing because neither had reason to fear their roommate, the pair rapidly developed a good working relationship. The child wanted most, but not all, of his belongings in the tunnel shelter to be relocated in the school basement so he could live here full-time. He would still keep a small reserve as a precaution in case he was being hunted, injured, or the school was being watched by hostiles. There would be much better space to practice not only magic, but also the few combat gestures that he could read in self-
defense guides, homeless living booklets or insurgency manuals that Dryskholl had selected for him before all of this came to a head.

When they began spending full days together, Harry Potter had been tickled pink to see that his house-elf had developed a taste for soap operas like his aunt Petunia had, as the small entity liked to watch the telly from 3 to 4 in the afternoon while he sipped his tea and nibbled some treat or candy to tide himself over till dinner. The elf had found an old television set that was crafted in the old style of having a large wooden cabinet all around, with hinged doors to close when the tube wasn't used. It was a color model made in 1980, and even had the fold-down 'rabbit ears' metal wire antennae to catch the free public channels from Britain and France If they could find and elongate the TV cable from the school, the set had the plug for it too, so they see more variety like sports. The human child laughed heartily for the first time in years but happily joined the elf in watching his soaps when he didn't have a class to attend, which was often as the three first years of primary usually sat courses from 9:00am till 3:00pm unless they had a public assembly or a PTA conference that day. He could avoid being in the hall for student assemblies because they tapped into the Public Address System wires to have their own speakers in their shared room. The Parent – Teacher meetings were never gonna happen anyways, since Petunia & Vernon had already had a 'chat' with the principal about how to handle Harry's problematic behaviors without bothering them for it. The rat-bastards had essentially put him in a den of perverts and told them "Free buffet; enjoy!" like his life, health and safety had no value to anybody. Well, two could play that game, but he'd win it in the end.

Well, if they got a change of attitude from the man because of the Van Uttebatten ward, or the county changed out the principal, then Dryskholl could simply put an elf-charm on him, which was a version of a compulsion that was usually employed on very young wizard children to keep them from harming themselves, but could work on muggle adults just as well. Speaking of charms, the pair worked to quickly set up house-elf scriptures all around the door frames, the new hearths and chimneys that Dryskholl wanted rebuilt and Harry agreed, and the perimeter of the room, along the floor and at the joint with the ceiling. These scriptures would cause a set of spells to shroud the main room, bathroom, storage closet, staircase access and tunnel access from outsiders, be they mundane or magicals. The effects were 'unplottable', 'unseen', 'unheard', 'unsmelled', 'repel mundane', 'repel evil' and 'redirect interest to home'. Since the scripts were not engraved in the cement, they could easily be erased for updates or add-ons later, if needed.

By Sunday evening of that fateful weekend, Harry and Dryskholl had managed to bring all of their mutual belongings together into the new space they would share. Harry had himself a good laugh when he saw the collection of knives, axes, swords, firearms and munitions the small elfling had accumulated over the few months he had been free from Dumbledore's corrupted Bonds through Hogwarts. The child was actually happy about it, because it meant the elf could teach him correctly how to operate safely the weapons that would fit his small hands and light weight. Trying to shoot a two-barrel shotgun like Vernon kept in the ground-floor living room above the cheap gas fireplace would only end up with Harry on his ass with broken fingers.

The elf was quite proud to show Harry the full selection of books, manuals and guides he had chosen to give the boy as he grew older and more capable. He was made very happy when his young master thanked him profusely for his kindness and the excellently useful titles he had picked up. Even the texts about armed insurrection or thriving amongst the criminal elements of the street thugs and mafia would be put to good use, given that he was practically living that sort of life already, anyways. What he was obliged to do by now certainly wasn't the CPS version of healthy, safe and happy childhood with a supportive, law-abiding family.
As they were thinking of organizing the shelves and cubbies to store or display their stuff, the elfling snapped his fingers to call back the small pile of items that had been left by the vordak at his death. Depositing the legacies in the middle of the small wooden table where they were sorting things out, the house-elf made Harry look up from his inspection of one of the more complicated England, Scotland & Ireland harsh climate survival books that had caught his eye.

Sighing in deep sadness at the sight of the pile, the boy nonetheless pushed aside the fun things to get on with the 'formal affairs' as he had begun to call anything that dealt with death or passing on of heirlooms to family and friends. The pile contained a few books that were quite old but well preserved by charms and being rubbed with Oil of Eternity. There was a small cast iron brazier on a tripod whose usage eluded Harry for now. Next to that was a silver mirror mounted to a wooden rectangle frame, like a miniature version of a tailor's mirror but scaled to be put on a table or bench. A foot-wide shallow bowl cast from copper with four clawed feet and silver runes inlaid around the top rim and inside bottom was too simplistic to reveal its use immediately. Then there was the old traveling trunk, barely the size of a modern briefcase for all that it was very much crafted in the middle ages, given the carvings on all sides and the flat top that had a line of golden scriptworkes running around the edge. The small iron lock was amusing for Harry as it was the type he occasionally saw in cartoons where the ornate key had a single large tooth.

Taking his courage with both hands, the child began to take the books to see the titles and open the covers for a brief abstract, if the authors had put one in.

The first book was actually a strong surprise for both friends; it was the grimoire of minor House Dhennack, from the forefathers of Bishop Gloutnay. That book demanded respect for it contained the memories and works of multiple generations of priests, sorcerers and alchemists. It was a handwritten jewel that any museum or collector would be proud to own and display.

The second book was a wood-plate printed compendium of medicinal herbs and animal parts from the Kingdom of Bohemia in the late 1400's. The tome was important because it was the standard text for the army apothecaries of the kingdom in that period, meaning that the lords had considered its remedies to be functional and reliable enough to pay for the troops to be healed so.

The third book was a manuscript journal from an expert diviner who had lived near Paris in the 1300's, called Panaris du Sasseux in relation to the hamlet he had been born in before moving next to the French capital to ply his trade to rich folks wanting answers about the mysteries of the universe. While the man was too low-powered to cast spells or rituals above a street-side fortune teller, he had collected quite the folio of true dweomers and ceremonials that a fully empowered caster like Harry could easily put to good uses. It was always nice to see what the enemies were plotting without risking life or limb to get the information.

The fourth book was actually a large leather binder tied with oiled thread. It contained nearly three hundred loose pages of parchment with many scripts and drawings, usually in tones of black, blue, purple or white inks. These were the personal works of Bishop Gloutnay on Death and its meanings, effects and ways, from after he became vordak. To this date, nobody in human society had ever laid eyes on such a priceless piece of theoretical and practical necromantic workmanship.

The last book was a slim folio from the early 1400's, the manuscript pages bound in fraying silk and carton, with the title 'Brutnor Abbey' and a outline profile of buildings as cover art. It was revealed to be the Abbot's guide to the buildings, functions and management of the abbey, as well as the diverse secret passages, tunnels and warehouses in case of war or social unrest, as was common back in those days of the Middle Ages. Harry decided that he would find out of the buildings still stood so that he could visit, and maybe see where the holy vordak's urn now rested at peace.
Harry needed Dryskholl's help to figure out what the brazier, mirror and copper bowl were used for. They were tools mostly for the spells of divination, scrying, contacting and summoning, but could also be put to more regular jobs like heating or preparing candle wax, mixing incense paste, reducing lamp oil to proper consistency, etc... These were simply the basic tools that you could expect to find in the library or laboratory of any serious spell-user or psionicist who had developed a beginner's application of magical sensings and communications.

The sculpted wooden box was a different thing; it was a traveling altar. This kind of thing was normally reserved for those priests who had their own money revenue, came from a titled family who wanted to see them regularly, or held a job with a lot of prestige, like abbot. In this case, the decorated cassette had been commissioned by the parents of Bishop Gloutnay when he completed his seminary and received his accreditation's as a full cleric of Mystra. They may have come from a minor house, they still had standing and some revenues, so they invested in a thing that could bring back more profits and prestige for the entire family. A traveling altar is much more than just items; it is a fully consecrated, embedded and enchanted group of artifacts that are designed to collaborate for a combined result. It can turn the prayers and spells of a mediocre priest into powerful effects, and even more if the man's power was lacking but he compensated by many readings on his Faith and theoretical studies on magic itself.

The box was made to carry the basic necessities for a mass or rite inside the use the flat top as the actual altar during the active phase of the spells. The kit held small travel format Tome of Mystra and Tome of Archas Theos; a Missel from Brutnor Abbey; a runed table cloth and two runed tea towels; five squat copper candle holders each bearing a glyph for one of the primal elements; a copper chalice with ivory inlays; a plain silver goblet; several herbology utensils made of wood, silver, copper and iron; and finally a small folding scale composed of the vertical pole, the balance beam and the two plates on chains, all in bronze. The entire thing was made to carry out generic masses, rituals of Faith, or help to produce Blessed Unctions and minor potions to heal the sick or repel darkness from a home. Quite a bounty, and also a priceless collectible.

Harry was overtaken by emotions for a good long while as he sat there, trying to see through his tears as he thought of the macabre appearance of the floating Vordak Lord when compared to the entity's golden heart and kind soul. Just like the house-elves, it seemed that humanity's obsession with beauty had more to do with primping one's own image than fairly evaluating others, especially different species and races. Well, Harry wouldn't let all these gifts go to waste. Not only were they magical, they were also part of what he considered his extended family, so he would use them and remember the kind people they came from each time he invoked a Celestial or cast a spell. Also, once he managed to reach Gringotts, he would see if he couldn't spiritually adopt the lesser houses into either Potter or Peverell to give them an extension on their lives and recognition amongst the living. For all they had done, these good souls deserved no less, and they were certainly more kin to him than the Dursley's or the purebloods of wizarding Britain.

The two weeks after that were spent with both Harry and Dryskholl trying to learn of each other during their brief time left, and preparing for the inevitable arrival of the police and CPS who would at some point be warned that yet another bastard had been found in Van Uttebatten's academy, as had happened so many times before. Except this time the man would be dead since long enough to stink-up the place, and that would lead to interesting questions. Maybe they really would have a new principal sometime after the Christmas break. A child could hope.

{ HP } --- { Posthumous motherly gift } --- { HP }

It was a good thing that Dryskholl had been able to use his unstable magic to travel to Gringotts to take contact with and encounter Harry's account manager with an introduction letter to be delivered in person. The goblin was pleased by the human boy's initiatives and stubbornness, both traits
favored by Goblinoid culture. Therefore he quickly instructed Harry to buy a secured Gringotts mailbox to process all his normal payments or withdrawals without needing to visit Diagon Alley just to get some spare change. The box would teleport from itself to one of those other boxes set into the dial on the cover; fill the box, pivot the dial and press the button. Simple, efficient and safe at all times since nobody had ever found a way to intercept the signal. It would also make staying in contact easier, once the elf's imminent death occurred, which the manager could feel happening when the servant visited his office.

With the enchanted mailbox now safely ensconced in their shared room's work table, Harry received a bank services' list, an instruction booklet for vault users, and a few forms to sign for getting the appropriate Noble House services reestablished under his name. One such important service was that he got to have an enchanted portable mirror, with a tabletop stand aside, that served as video-conference screen for talking to the goblin manager in real-time. The communications having gotten much more personal, Harry was able to understand the persons and culture of Gringotts easier, therefore get things done much faster than whatever the old Manipulator expected.

Despite being only 15 years old when she set several huge events in motion, Lily had already lived through bullying and cruelty inside Hogwarts which was supposed to be the safest place in the UK and Commonwealth, but she saw the lies for what it was. The Slytherin's were not the only ones indulging in systemic bullying or casual bigotry against the new-blood wizards that had just learned of magic at age 11, just like she did. If there was a truism, it was that "In war there are no civilized men, only savage beasts bent on surviving that have managed to do so".

It was why Harry had a good pile of money in magical currency that had been set up under a different name than Harry Potter by his mother, who had severe doubts about 'The Light of Wizarding Britain' and his much vaunted 'Greater Good' that nobody knew anything about. Lily Evans had set up an anonymous low-security Pureblood Retiree's vault, but without tax exemptions so that herself or Harry could access it at any age or period without raising questions. It showed in the Gringotts and Ministry records as an old yeoman painter of magical portraits stashing money away from his contract-bride and layabout kids, so that nobody paid attention.

In reality, Lily had put in that anonymous vault's safety all the originals from her own records; birth certificate, parents' marriage certificate, muggle diplomas, British passport, Hogwarts OWL and NEWT diplomas and mastery acceptance letters. Then there were the magical marriage license for her & James, Harry's birth certificate, and both godparents' blood-oath letters, notarized by Gringotts and wizarding CPS. As an interesting note were the Heritage Ritual and Legacy Spell results she had received at age 11 upon entering the Wizarding World. They were eye-opening in terms of skills, Talents and Gifts, but unfortunately the Evans was no lineage to speak of, not even squibs, as far back as the tests could go with 13 drops of blood. Besides these intensely emotional papers were an Evans photo album, a photocopy of her driver's license and Cokeworth public library membership. Then she had neatly stacked the more banal school notes, homework, term projects and test papers, as well as several spell-books or antique scrolls of lores that the Ministry in general, and Dumbledore in particular, frowned on when it wasn't them who held the texts.

The capital thing she had stashed was the sub-dimensional 10 compartment trunk she had been preparing since she took her OWL's because she was already on the short list for Mastery classes in potions, alchemy and healing. Lily Evans had been choosing and commissioning this trunk from a master craftsman in Diagon when the First Blood War of Britain was in the preliminary phase, so she put a lot of defensive planning and forethought in the design. She had been personally targeted by the Death-Eater postulants since third year, and had been approached by none other than Lucius Malfoy himself in seventh year, to see if she wouldn't change sides. Voldemort himself had decreed that she would be granted a generous patronage from the noble Pureblood House of her choosing in
their group of allies, and have his Lordly protection too. In the memories of anybody at the time, only a handful of persons had ever seen Voldemort extend such a magnanimous offer

Lily's customized trunk held the following rooms;

A full laboratory for brewing potions, alchemy, enchanting or Ember-smithing.

A hybrid surgery for muggle medicine & magical healing, with floo registered under another fake name. There was also a portkey reception plate and a decontamination cistern to fight the corruption of dark magicks resulting from combat or failed experiments.

A vivarium for lab-test animals & familiars, with five cattle stalls and 24 large dog cages. As a necessity, this area also had a butchering room with walk-in meat locker, a feed silo and trash mulcher to recycle the animals' wastes into compost for the greenhouse. Two of the cages had a copper nameplate that read 'Padfoot' and 'Moony' while one stall had 'Prongs' engraved on a tin cowbell hanging from a leather collar. On a worktable a much smaller cage with an exercise wheel had 'Wormtail' written in sloppy manuscript on the plastic cover. Several wooden perches for mail birds were hung on the wall near the entry, and one beautifully engraved bar had the name 'Untamed Shrew' on it.

A large segmented greenhouse for plants from every geography, and a few extra-planar zones. The segments were set up like small walkable gardens with stone benches & tables, fountains, water troughs, small cut-stone hearths to give light and heat where needed, or glowing blue rocks that generate chill otherwise. In the darkness areas for nocturnal or subterranean plants, the paths were lit by small glowing moonstones set into the sides of the flagstones. These chambers were used as much for potions components, food crops or spices, and meditative area to walk in peace to clear one's mind. Two small areas dedicated to cutting, processing and packing the vegetals had been placed out of the way and hidden behind decorative walls of living plants.

A large, airy workshop for multiple crafts; forge & kiln combo, grinding stone wheel, pottery wheel, small lumber mill, and many muggle power tools that had been rebuilt with an integrated adapter for using Primal Essaence drawn from an Arinyark capacitor though crystal cables.

A large study separated between the desks, tables & lecterns, the shelf-stacks and curio cabinets, the conference table for 12 seats, and the owner's portable walk-in vault, crafted and installed by Gringotts goblins for a steep fee. The vault held a secured mailbox, a charmed coin bag chained to the wall, and a large communication mirror mounted to a fixed frame on the fold-down desk. It was in this vault that Harry found notarized copies of the testaments of his parents, grand-parents, and great-grand-parents, plus the family tree each had submitted for their betrothal rite. While most of the Last Wills had been executed, those for Lily & James had clearly been blocked. Plus, the genealogy and Letter Patent for each godparent was here as well, on top of the other copies Harry had found in the Retiree's vault at Gringotts proper.

A furnished apartment that had four bedrooms with en-suite, each large enough for two bunk beds or a large Queen-size, a full kitchen with 6-seat brunch counter on the island, a huge walk-in pantry with four large fridges and four shelf-stacks, a dining room & living room that can seat 24 large adults in each zone, and finally two public powder rooms.

A generic ritual room designed and built to archmage - class levels and needs, but without any specialties as Lily had not needed them yet. Those job-specific accouterments would have been selected and installed later, once she had passed her mastery exams at the Ministry, but was still in the waiting to get certified by the guilds. Also, if she were offered an apprenticeship, her master would have to help in the design and crafting of the ritual chamber so it fit what he would teach her. However, the chamber already held Lily's familial shrine, a cleansing cistern, a tabernacle &
altar combo for religious ceremonies, five braziers, several man-sized wall mirrors for Gateway spells, and many hooks & chains dangling from the ceiling to hold scrolls, books or anything else during the castings.

The last feature of the trunk was two small climatized warehouses that each had a communal bathroom so they could be converted into emergency dorms with eight bunk beds (3 high = 24 cots) per room to house mass casualties from the war, when things got bad.

The biggest emotional shock for Harry was when he found that his mother had taken the time, effort and expenses to commission linked copies of the magical portraits of herself, James, his parents Charlus and Dorea, and his grand-parents Fleamont and Euphemia. The new frames were crafted blank and put in each room of the trunk whence they were hooked up. This allowed the occupants to have a familiar presence in the entire trunk if they were devoid of living companionship, like during long study sessions for the NEWT's or mastery exams & guild certifications. It also served to stave off depression or self-neglectful behavior if the persons staid inside the trunk too long, as there were no windows or contacts with the exterior other than the entry flap and the magical transports; floo, portkey and mirror gate.

On top of the loose money that had accumulated in Lily's vault from her unused wife's allowance and motherhood stipend as per Pureblood Custom, Harry thought that getting all those documents and trunk full of usable tools made all the trouble of contacting Gringotts worth every moment. It had also made learning practical magic much faster since the trunk was fully warded against the Ministry's Trace and 'Darkness' Monitoring grid, unplottable, undetectable, and had an Evans blood-ward that was specifically programmed to repel any unknown entities, including house-elves, phoenixes and summoned creatures. Transit spells like Apparition, Portal and elf-blinking were warded against, and redirected the being towards the White Council in Edinburgh to let the venerable castle's warding handle the rest of the disposal.

Yes, Lily had a nasty temper; Harry came by it honestly, it seemed.

Likewise, Lily had accidentally found out about Dumbledore poisoning people all around, including her and her toddler son, so she had devised a ward programmed to either repel foreigners who had such potions in them, or if they were in the 'Pass' list, jolt their biology to help them shake-off the drugs and compulsions. If Harry hadn't undergone the Awakening, the ward would have done about a quarter of the job, and as it was it did still give him a boost every time he went inside or left.

The trunk had immediately become Harry and Dryskholl's permanent dwelling and work space, letting them sleep peacefully much better than just the Blessed room left by the Van Uttebatten. It would take Harry several weeks to do a complete tour and inventory of the trunk, even with the help of the amazing house-elf at his side. However, there was always a new item or subject to study, and never enough time for it all. Lily had left a self-updating journal in the study, and she had written about trying to find a time-turner or temporal dilation anchor to create a 'more time' bubble for at least the study, but she had never managed to find one, let alone for sale.

Harry's continuing education via house-elf

(Harry Potter - theme)

1986
Dursley neighborhood
Little Whining, Surrey, England
Dryskholl was parsimonious with his magic by necessity to stay alive, but not avaricious; he spent it wisely on things that would have a long-term impact for the child, even once he was gone, like remodeling the concrete hall with a pair of hearths, and making a better access to the underground tunnels than just the hatch and shaft it had been. He had also spelled a quick and dirty tunnel between the diverse parts of the school campus so that Harry and himself could walk around under everybody's feet without fear of discovery.

As they worked on the scriptural anchors for the wards around their new shared abode, Harry showed genuine interest in those arts and crafts that Dryskholl used to set things in place. Since the child asked the right questions with a polite manner but the wide-eyed gaze that spoke of true appreciation, the elfling immediately began to break the racial Taboo. It had been programmed into the minds of the house-elves that their magic was inferior and undesirable to that of humans, and to always affirm this aloud, especially if infants or children asked for explanations. Instead of blithely repeating the Taboo as instructed, Dryskholl fought against the ghost of the old Originator's bigotry just like he did against Dumbledore. After a few hours of mental effort, the sick elf was able to reclaim his autonomy to such degree that he started to teach everything he could say about his species and abilities to his young human friend.

He started teaching Harry the few limited powers that the other elves had shown him, a poor selection since all his instruction had already been shoddy from birth when his parents had seen how sick and fragile his body was. Yet, those few powers that Harry learned were a great, permanent benefit to him because neither required any components to activate, all were silent, wandless, and no human ward or sensor was ever programmed to feel them. In fact, only the wizard hospital St-Mungo's and the diverse magical bank buildings had ever bothered to install such monitoring wards. That meant that even the Magical Ministry of Wizards and the much vaunted White Council of Magic could easily be penetrated by lowly house-elf magic without triggering any alarms or getting attention.

The so-called 'limited' list of 10 skills and Talents that Dryskholl could teach Harry were:

House-elven Scriptures; a mix of skills & runes, this was similar to the same scriptural magicks used by other species but based upon the artificial tongue that the Originator had conceived for his slaves. By his Mandate, this tongue was specifically created as a shorthand, not a completely elaborated language because he didn't want his minions to have an education equal to the real elves, and must never be superior to humans. Still, this reduced set of characters, numbers and icons quickly proved to be just as powerful as all the other runic tongues known. Being able to use this language would allow Harry to have a secret code to cast his spells or program passwords into his wards that nobody would breach unless they were house-elves. Because of the bigotry of most species, none had ever thought of integrating this secret language into translation spells or items that were commonly available for moderate sums of money, so it was still secret.

House-elven Wards; a mix of skills & spells that create very quick but short-lived wards for purely defensive or utilitarian purposes. Basically absorption, deflection, repulsion, alarm, detection, identification, and suppression of one event or item like fire or fuel. Potent because while the range covered is only 15' x 15' x 15', the effect happens as soon as the caster wills it, thus almost always surprising the enemy/event being repelled. However, unless the ward scheme is anchored to scriptures or a Blood Tithe device, the energy field will collapse inside of an hour.

Shaping-Fingers; a Talent that can be taught but needs skills to be used properly. It allows the caster to create small bursts of pure energy around his fingertips to either manipulate parts into moving correctly or shaping raw materials into the device pieces desired. Because this demands
both a lot of knowledge about mechanics and engineering for some things, and artistry for other things, the level of capacity varies according to the training and effort the user puts into developing the actual Talent and all the necessary skills that it imitates or complements. Any elf trained in gardening or herbology will use this ability to heal or splice the plants, as well as when they are preparing the components for mixing or brewing potions. Likewise, any elf trained for veterinary or humanoid medicine will use this ability to replace several scalpels, retractors, needles, and sutures as they move, open or seal, and sometimes shape, the damaged tissues or bones of the patient.

Sense Needs; One of the most basic Talents of the species, it allows the elf to know instinctively the needs of all the beings present in a determined area which is the estate of his master, plus a floating area of 500 feet around themselves. For Harry, he will only ever have a floating zone limited to 100 feet around himself. However, like with the elves, he will have it active even when asleep, which is capital. For the elves, this Talent not only allows them to be the best butlers, valets, maids or farmhands possible, it also allows them to KNOW what the entities around them want, even when they are spelled, drugged, mentally ill or physically brain-damaged. This means that house-elves always know when people are evil, violent, dishonest, thieves, want to sell bad merchandise or kidnap their masters or kin. Likewise, elves can feel a being's basal needs like hunger or satiety, fear & panic, curiosity, safety or satisfaction for the results of a task. This is the species first line of defense in figuring out whether a master has gone insane, wants to harm them or sell them, and if it is time to run for their lives by breaking the Bond from their side of things, which YES it can be done, for a drastic, hurtful price.

Auto-Inventory of Estate; a Talent that depends on the elf's ability to interface with and read the wards around an estate or public domain. This in turn depends on whether the elf was ever tagged or keyed into said ward schema. The good thing is that most human wards have gaping holes in them that were designed specifically to let both the owner's elves and those of high rank visitors easily access and manipulate the data flow, but not the active functions. If Harry can find a way to tag & read a ward scheme, he could probably cover an entire building the size of a medium house, or up to 150' x 150' x 150' in total zone. The Talent allows to KNOW of every bit of inert and living 'property' or 'tradable goods' in the area, and write that inventory with locations, owners' identities and supposed value into the caster's mnemonics module.

Call/Send Property; this Talent allows the elf to make appear near himself or send to their proper storage place any 'property' that was tagged by the Auto-Inventory Talent. Harry will have the same limit as with the other, meaning a maximum range of 75 feet from himself, and a limit of up to 3’ x 3’ x 3’ of materials, or entities for livestock.

Heirloom Vault Access; a Talent that was initially made solely for the Originator to use his elves to manage and clean his numerous secret caches of artifacts, monies and laboratories where the more inhumane experiments were conducted. When he began gifting or trading the elves, one mage wanted a slave that could access his secret harem hidden inside a mystical gem, while the Popesh of the local sect wanted a guard that could go fetch holy relics without physically opening the Faith seals and priest locks on the armored doors. The Originator then decided to add to his creations a capacity for open-ended attunement where the builders of wards and vaults would create a specific Power frequency that would allow the elves to log-in their name and access rights to be allowed passage in a way that even the human employees would never be. This means that as of nearly 5,000 years back, all magical banks, churches or temples, schools, hospitals and public governance edifices have been built with this in mind, even Gringotts. This of course creates a massive gaping weakness in the ward scheme of any institution or home as the access registers are rarely audited, and when they are the owners never look at which elf did what or why unless they are specifically told that a house-elf was the suspect to investigate.
Discretion Vs Anything; an automatic Gift that requires neither skills nor learning as it is an aura of magick that radiates up to 3 feet around the caster. The aura makes the being invisible, odorless, soundless, and reduces all traces of his passage in an area by 25%, thus making it very hard to detect the being's movements even when actively searching. However, the aura has two very clear weaknesses: it does not block thermal scans and does not hide the elf's soul, thus allowing for True Sight, Shen Power Sight, the Presence-type of spells and most psionic skills to pass right through. Likewise, mundane mechanical pressure sensors in the structure of a building will register the general position and movements of a house-elf. For Harry, the Talent can be leaned at full strength without differences.

Kinetic Bulwark; a basal spell cast at 'interrupt' speed that creates a simplistic quarter-dome shield of pure wild Primal Essaence which can deflect both physical and energetic attacks. The shield is roughly twice the caster's height in dimensions and bluish. It is emitted by the hands and the caster is pretty much crippled while he casts this spell as the shield will collapse the moment that he does not have both hands concentrated on maintaining it. This renders the learning of wandless / gesture-less sorceries, prayers, mind magic and psionics a must for using this safely.

Grand Sweeps; a basal spell, the effect consists of a wide wave of Primal Essaence forcefully 'pushing' against all materials & beings in the zone. It is usually employed to clean away a large area from crude and worthless detritus like garden scraps or farm wastes, but it can also be used to do a drastic clean-up after a fire or flood if all you want is a bare-bones structure. The caster must be careful about the building's finishing (decorative) layer as the spell can and will strip down everything to the cement, stones or wooden boards if kept on long enough. One other most useful tactic for this spell is to repel enemies that try to attack or crowd-in the caster as they will be moved backwards quite rudely and dramatically. The area covered by one casting is usually a cone of 25 feet length by 12 feet width maximum.

Most of the Talents or Gifts that Dryskholl could not teach depended on the house-elves' specific sort of magicks, or were programmed directly into their genome, thus making them akin to an extra organ or limb. Likewise, these effects could not be easily replicated by simple skills or tools due to the source of energy used, or the Power frequencies concerned. Because the Originator had consorted with Fae of various kinds as well as daemons and elementals to try and find solutions to some of his more esoteric questions about alchemy, the man had needed to learn about the multiple planes and dimensions. As a way to both boost his servants while also making it impossible for any to replicate his creations, he had encoded certain Talents or Gifts into the genetics and cellular memory of the species that needed to employ the energy of the connective demi-planes or elemental dimensions. That also gave him the perfect tool to control his minions as blocking access to these other Realms was relatively easy with fixed wardstones or mobile 'Forbiddences' engraved into small Ember crystals. While Harry may never be able to wield these magical effects himself, Dryskholl taught him their lore so he could know the full strength and limits of any house-elf he encountered after his death.

The 8 Powers that Dryskholl could NEVER be able to teach Harry were the following;

House-elf Gestalt; a mind magic & psionic interlink between all house-elves alive that creates a passive hive-mind that transfers information only during the elves' sleep cycle. It depends on a set of glands and ganglia in the brains of the elves to function, and is entirely automated. The goal of this was to allow for the smooth transition of tasks and inventories from one work shift to the other without needing the master's involvement, or the installment of an elf to the job of foreman. This happened anyways when the estate had more than 7 elves in residence as it was in their nature to split into work teams of 6 maneuvers and one leader.

House-elf Ward-Tap; a Gift that was and is still quite illegal if any government or church were
ever to be told of it. In fact, it might be the one reason why any large organization of magicals could want to genocide the servile species that many depended upon. A house-elf has a biologically anchored capacity to automatically detect, caress, and adapt to the frequency of any wards that are less reactive than Siege Wards, or less violent than Warfare Wards. That means that most household and commercial wards in existence have no built-in way to keep a house-elf from tagging and adapting to them to pass through as if they were using the front door with the proper key and alarm code. This capacity is used instinctively in junction with Heirloom Vault Access and the flaw that most humanoids have integrated to their schemes without realizing the tactical gravity of the defect they were normalizing.

House-elven Power Metabolization; the genetic and psionic capacity of the elves to receive and absorb ANY energies into their bodies while automatically passing the currents through glands that will change the Realm, Polarity and Frequency to a set that is proper to feed their core. The second half of this Gift is that the elf can reverse the process to transfer his own magic to any magical entity or device when the need arises. And yes, the Originator had wanted his minions to be usable as living batteries and charging stations for his various alchemic tools and wards when he traveled away from the safety of his domain. While most of the sentient species would look askance upon accepting a Power transfer from a house-elf for various reasons of bigotry, ethics or the refusal to endorse the creation of slaves, the elves have always seen this function as just another job their bodies do from birth, thus associate little emotion to it, like eating & excreting.

Phase Shifting; a genetically encoded Talent that allows the elf to render himself immaterial or just modulate his physical density by removing himself from the Material Plane in increments. It can be used to become even more present thus heavier and denser to resist weather or attacks. This Talent is considered a crime in most sentient societies since it means that the elves can basically walk through walls at will without a care for insulation or defenses as they are literally moving in the reality parallel to the referent world. This means that 99% of known wards will not stop them unless the scheme has a specific part to deal with incorporeal or trans-dimensional travels & beings.

Blinking; a genetically encoded Gift that allows for short-ranged teleportation at instant speed and doesn't need line of sight, only foreknowledge of the target area. A healthy house-elf can move himself and up to 500 pounds of materials per blink (or 'pop' after the noise) and do this a few dozen times per day. For most elves, this is the favored method of travel as it is quick, easy, requires low energy and not much attention to details when moving.

Dimensional Shifting; a genetically encoded Gift that allows the elves to magically -move- from one dimension or plane to the other at the speed they walk or blink while bringing up to 1,000 pounds of materials or two full grown adult humans with their camping kits. This power would, like the ward-tap and phase-shifting, mean the death of the elves if it were widely known. But the Originator wanted an easy and cheap way for himself to move to his research camps in the outer planes, then return without having to employ lengthy, cumbersome rituals that take days to power-up at megalithic sites. It wasn't all druids that let you use their cromlech to open gates into the ethers of the multiverse; most in fact were adverse to the idea and reacted violently. So the alchemist built the spell into his creations mostly for his own uses. Nobody amongst the sentient species has ever really used it since he died as he had ordered his creations to never speak of it, even if asked directly, for at least 1,000 years after his death. By then, nobody took the elves as very serious magical creatures, so nobody asked, but Harry Potter did. He asked exhaustively, and learned in proportion the secrets that hundreds of species were too stupid to learn.

Dissipate Offal; this Talent might look like the wizards' basic 'vanishing dweomer' but it is in fact a far more dangerous and powerful effect. The dissipation is actually a banishment to the Border Ethereal connective plane. Yep, when an elf gets rid of something, it goes VERY far away and
can't be brought back, unless you want to waste a 'Wish' or other karmic alterator to do it. Or you could open a Gate to the Border Ethereal and go fetch it manually, if you have a very good magical compass to guide you to your banished items. Of course, that means that since this effect is as quick as the elf's thoughts, requiring neither focus nor words, but merely a wiggle of fingers at the targeted zone, the elf could easily banish a wizard to the Border Ethereal, which would usually mean the death of said mage in a few hours unless he had experience at Plane-Walking. Because of how dangerous in combat the capacity is, and the elves know what the reactions of the human governments would be if they knew of it, the small folk have never told anybody about how it works, even when asked. Dryskholl trusts Harry, and honestly thinks it's time for his species to start fighting for their freedom and dignity at long last, something his human friend agrees with and promised to help make happen.

Disrupt All Powers; this Talent his a secondary function of the Power Metabolization explained above. The difference here is that the elf can voluntarily focus the sapping of energy to a short range around himself, thus causing a disruption in all stable energy matrices and modulated energy beams. This means that the elf can blockade magical transports, run interference in long range communications or saturate an area with 'white-noise' against divination tools like scrying mirrors and crystal balls. In a bad case, the elf could also brute-force a tunnel through a ward scheme that was trying to imprison him or keep him from rescuing his master, or property. The Originator genetically encoded this Talent into his servants because alchemy is costly and he sometimes got short on coin, so he needed his little minions to be able to penetrate an enemy's palace, laboratory or vault to steal tradable objects or livestock without being captured or seen. After the felon's death, only a handful of people have ever bothered to learn that house-elves had this capacity, or to use it for anything.

\{ HP \} --- \{ Learning what an Arch-Lord is \} --- \{ HP \}

After teaching the young Harry as much of house-elf magicks, history and cultural norms as he could, Dryskholl switched over to explaining more about the various 'classes' or training patterns that humans, higher elves, dwarves, gnomes, halflings, Fae and others preferred to follow. Like the mundanes with their apprenticeships, trade schools, technical colleges or universities, it was all about giving the students an established, proven route towards a fruitful career that would give them a revenue to feed their family.

Of prime importance for Harry to understand was the interpretation what Bishop Gloutnay had called him when he had first seen him; Arch-Lord of Gaia and Anti-Champion of Hades.

Dryskholl explained that both were considered war-faring classes, that is professional trained magical combatants who were much above the average wizard or priest, although it did take many decades of studies and work to reach such summits of Power and skill.

The Arch-Lord was essentially an archmage variant specialized in heavy warfare and sieges, but specifically the defense of a determined geographical area. He used mostly sorcery, mentalism and alchemy, but will often refer to Gods and Celestials in prayers to obtain favors or informations. The Arch-Lord bases most of his decisions and fighting style on sciences and solid facts to elaborate wide-ranging effects. This type of spell-user is most at ease working from behind fortifications or with a conclave of trained subordinates, usually his apprentices. The primary jobs of Arch-Lords are the mapping and real-time surveillance of a domain, the building & maintenance of fortresses and ward-lines, and insuring that extra-planar incursions are repelled. Occasionally, some Arch-Lords will manage to develop psionics when the person has the capacity to learn them. You need specific glands in your brain and spine to be able to use psionics, so the condition is purely biological, although a few people are simply not mentally agile enough to learn how to manifest the energies. The good news was that because Harry had managed to learn the house-elf skills and
Talents inside of two weeks, it proved he had the system of glands in place and healthy so he could learn the wider range of psionic skills and rituals, if he wanted to put in the efforts.

The progression ladder of Powers when one compares the different classes subaltern to the Arch-Lord is (from lowest capacity to highest);

(semi-spell-user of 1 Realm) Siege engineer, Warrior mage

(semi-spell-user of multiple Realms) Dweomer crafter, Mechanomage, Overlord

(pure user of 1 Realm) Alchemist, Cleric, Magician (Hogwarts – OWL’s), Mentalist, Royal Alchemist, Wizard (Hogwarts - NEWT’s), War Priest, War Wizard

(Hybrid user of 2 Realms) Adept, Necromancer, Runemaster, Sorcerer, Warlock

(Pure user of multiple Realms) Archmage, Arch-priest, Crystal Mage, Engineer-Magus, Satrap, Transmutor/generic

(classes equal to Arch-Lord) Lord High Inquisitor, Thanatologue, Transmuter/mechanologist

The Anti-Champion was another professionally trained magical combatant, but centering mostly on Faith and physical strength for one-to-one fights against monsters and high-powered Unique enemies rather than sorceries or sciences. The regular 'Champion' of a Faith will usually refer to a member of a Good-aligned Faith or Creed who fights only the overtly declared enemies of the Cause in noble combat, it the style of knights and courtiers. A 'Champion' does not normally lower himself to police work, investigations or interrogations, and especially not torture or executions as those imply that their counterpart would be bound and defenseless, thus making it dishonorable butchery. However, most 'Champions' face adversaries of such Power and Almighty that are backed by nefarious Sects that they will rarely frown on using ranged weapons and prayers, firearms, poisons or summoned assistance.

In the reverse, the 'Anti-Champion' has a job mentality more in tune with the Asian Ronin, in that he fights ALL the enemies of his Faith & Creed, be they animals, monsters, menial knaves or titled nobility with a crown on their brow. This type of combatant is a dirty fighter who understands the truly ignoble nature of the warfare needed to defend a Cause from outside assaults or internal betrayals. They are at ease equally in formal tournaments, honor duels, bar brawls, street gang skirmishes, clanic vendettas, assassinations, ambushes, sabotage, bunker-busting, dungeon-crawling and open wide-area warfare between churches or countries. An 'Anti-Champion' puts much more emphasis on keeping his Faith, Creed and Cause-allies alive than on maintaining a façade of politeness or honor during his fights, or even in social events. Being what is deemed an 'irregular fighter' by most governing regimes, the 'Anti-Champions' rarely fare well in tightly regulated groups like sects or monarchies, preferring small farming villages or truly huge cities where they can disappear anonymously in the thronging hordes of sentient.

Because of their off-the-books and honor-be-damned approach to warfare and insuring the safety of their allies, these men are usually looked down upon by those who claim that the only worthy victory comes from tightly regulated and orchestrated fights, like Knights, Paladins and Inquisitors. A truly experienced 'Anti-Champion' will detect an enemy or traitor, investigate, interrogate & torture until he gets information that is proven reliable, then devise a plan that maximizes damages while reducing the exposure of allies. Since these men prefer secrecy, loyalty and hard results over
the 'flash-bang - did-you-see-me?' type of magic or fights, they will often resort to bribing the
enemy's men to make them betray each other, deploy false informations about the enemy's Creed
and Cause to turn the people against them, use long-ranged curses to make them sick or insane,
poison the wells & aqueducts, set fire to farmsteads and granaries, attack hospitals and sanitariums
to cause terror, etc... In other words, whereas the regular 'Champion' is he shiny example of the
anointed & titled knight that stands tall amongst the normal knights, paladins and banner-men of
the king or pope, the 'Anti-Champion' prefers to stand with common soldiers, rangers, spies,
anarchists, assassins and curse-masters to make certain the job is done once and the results are
permanent. It's no wonder the cult of Hades has so many amongst its organized priesthood or just
gravitating in its wider orbit, like Harry will do.

The progression ladder of Powers when one compares the different classes surrounding the Anti-
Champion is (from lowest capacity to highest);

(Non-spell-user) Anarchist, Armsman, Burglar, Explorer, Fighter (generic), Inquisitor, Ninja,
Rogue, Warlord

(semi-spell-user of 1 Realm) Beastmaster, Knight, Knight of the Elements, Nightblade, Noble
Warrior, Paladin/anti-Hero, Ranger, Siege Engineer, Witch Hunter

(semi-spell-user of multiple Realms) Chaos Lord, Guild Geek, Overlord

(pure user of 1 Realm) Champion/anti-Champion, Interloper, Lord Inquisitor, War Priest

(Hybrid user of 2 Realms) Necromancer, Sorcerer, Warlock

(Pure user of multiple Realms) Lord High Inquisitor, Thanatologue,

Champions and Anti-Champions are rather low on the spell-usage ladder because they spend so
much time in physical training as well as having to upkeep their skills at riding animals, driving
carts or modern motorized vehicles, and practice firing recently developed weaponry that did not
exist when the class patterns were designed. The concepts behind these fighters were forged in the
Primordial Era, whence religious Powers and Magicks were the only standard by which the
population could think. As sorcery, alchemy, mentalism and transmutation were developed and
slowly normalized into societies, the class definitions of the (anti-)Champions were updated to
include them – or not – according to the base Faith, Creed and Cause of each. The advent of
Psionics and the control of these capacities through rituals, drugs, implants and surgeries to the
brain that eventually led to DNA sequencing and editing at the hands of biomancers,
transmuter/organologists or modern medical personnel, completed the frame of reference for how
and why certain classes were at certain steps of the ladder.

Since Anti-Champions were fanatical devotees of a Cause that do not feel themselves to be bound
to a Higher Power besides the living God that gives them their magick, they very easily slip away
from all churches, monarchs and governments as they please, like Rangers. Living alone and
unfettered is almost a must in their profession, given how many enemies they can see in the
environment, and how many are left to kill to call the job finished. Since those enemies still alive
will no doubt come for the person's allies, friends, family and livestock to wipe-out every last trace
of their existence, these career guerilla fighters have no qualms about living meagerly, in a very
mobile fashion like caravans, boats, trucks, or eventually in airplanes and shuttlecraft. Being
experts at causing terror, shame and pain invisibly from a distance just as much as in-your-face
contact, these soldiers are NEVER predictable, and always the cause of traitors and opposing sects'
falling to ruination.
After having finished explaining the many concepts about classes, spell-capacity and styles of combat to Harry, the house-elf told a bit more about the Gods Gaia and Hades so that the child could see the global picture of what Bishop Gloutnay had perceived upon meeting him. From what Dryskholl could tell, it looked like Harry would follow both the paths of the Arch-Lord and the Anti-Champion for a bit in each, it simply wasn't clear which would be first. And being devoted to Hades didn't mean he had to become undead or die to receive the initiation into the Faith and church of the deity. Although, given the job description of the Anti-Champion, being already dead and beyond physical exertion, pain or needs would help to finish the job faster.

Harry for his part had an inkling that the vordak and elf had seen things in reverse. His life presently was composed solely of the ancestral informations from his family's Blood Compact, plus the legacies of Van Uttebatten and Dhennack, all of them dead. The only true teachers he had to date in this life were a skeleton, the ghosts, the imprints of his kin, and a dying house-elf whom he would need to bury without help from anybody despite still being only 6 years old.

No; Harry thought the adults had the order wrong. He would begin his life by being in the Faith of Hades so he could learn to fight dirty against Dumbledore's army of drug-zombies and cursed minions, aiming to not only kill the guilty willing supporters, but also to eradicate the entire defective culture that spawned the miserable cunt-dropping without ever realizing what happened. He would sweep the country clean of this purulence, then burn and salt the Earth.

After that, when the war was over and all enemies given to Hades for judgment, only then could he allow himself to cry, to grieve for his lost childhood and traumatized mind, and to mayhaps find a way to heal his damaged soul so he could have a life at last. In that period of his existence, when things were safe and stable, that would be when he turned to Gaia to become Arch-Lord, to learn how to protect his lands, livestock, family and allies that shared is territory. "Yes," the forlorn child thought as he caressed the top of the closed travel altar he had been gifted, "That is the schedule of how things will progress, from now on. War first, then living well."

As in all things in Life or Death, Time would tell, but do so only in due Time.

Harry's elementary mis-education, take II

(Harry Potter - theme)

1987
Dursley neighborhood
Little Whining, Surrey, England

Managing to come out of the elementary schooling's first year with his limbs attached and most organs untouched was nothing short of a bloody miracle that almost managed to make Harry give Jesus and his Bible a new look, if he weren't provably dead already. There had been several occult, violent and strange events happening around him during the last six months of that fateful first year. That, and he had already found a True God months ago, when he accepted Hades in his soul as his patron, just as he had foreseen, so looking for another divinity wouldn't happen till he was ready for Gaia, much later.

Everything had begun by his Awakening Rite, which opened his eyes to a great any things that he had never seen or understood before. Then the small, sickly house-elf Dryskholl had entered his own menial, dismal life, upturning everything so bad that the contents of the mixing bowl of a
blender looked orderly and linear. Not that he would ever blame the poor late elfling who had given him so much while he lived, but Harry couldn't help but think that even when things went well for him, it was catastrophic and exaggerated like nobody else.

After setting up their new shared abode under the elementary school and learning the basics of house-elf powers that humans could use, Dryskholl had begun teaching Harry most of the lores, legends, stories and general culture he should have received. Yes, the 'Blood Compact' his parents had implanted inside him held a lot, but it was knowledge centered on the House of Potter, which was definitely 'Light' oriented and almost never interacted with people outside of the Welsh Wiccan Wizards of Britannia, their small, isolationist sect based in Hogwarts. That meant the ancestral memories Harry inherited had been severely edited to demonstrate only those things that were important to the status, finances and Family Magicks of the house, excluding any other stuff. In fact, anything to do with the Elder Darkes, the Dark/Darkness in general, the Living Gods, the Old Ways and the Forest Dwellers, and most of the lore from the families the Potters had intermarried or held alliances with had been kept out.

The hypothesis Dryskholl had about the situation was that Harry's parents, grandparents, and possibly great-grand-parents, had been cursed or drugged by Albus Dumbledore to ignore or actively delete such things that didn't support his Creed and Cause, even from their own Blood Gifts. That actually fit since many of the memories Harry could access when he concentrated showed an obvious positive spin on everything the bearded bastard did or said, even when it was crass, inept, immoral or utterly senseless. Plus, Dumbledore was a known Legilimencer, an adept of reading and modifying the minds of people, and not just humans. When his mind magicks failed, he resorted easily to the Imperius curse, or to alchemic unctions to anchor the program he wanted followed. It was a well documented fact among many magical cultures and sects that if a child was born when both genitors were under obedience or loyalty potions, then the 'benefactor' of the fake-loyalty could curse the child for twice longer than its parents on each casting. That meant that hidden tyrants like Dumbledore had a proven technical benefit at using alchemy or implanted foci to anchor their mind control over large groups of people, if they wanted to be able to unload the mental strain yet retain authority and obedience.

As such, Dryskholl was obliged to give little Harry a prolonged course of magical cultures, histories, geographies, Faiths, Creeds, organizations and basic laws that were currently practiced across most of the United Kingdom and its colonies plus the British Commonwealth. By extension, the elf also taught Harry a superficial basis of what was being done on the continent, in Europa, Slavia and around the Mediterranean Sea since the Latinate and Roman cultural basin had been so fundamental to how Britons developed magical & mundane societies. This was then supplemented with conversation courses in the Latin and Greek tongues which were the main languages used in England for modern magicks. Older spells and Rituals often needed Welsh, German, Russian or other tongues. Harry's parents had left him a good base of linguistics for use in every day spells, schooling and business relations, but not at a level that Dryskholl thought would be necessary for the human boy to function properly as a noble Scion.

As the elf taught the generic materials that magical children of the same age normally knew, he also used extended concepts or ideas to make the boy practice the diverse languages he had floating around his memories. The major concepts he needed to learn were about the Prime Material Plane where they lived, the connective planes or demi-planes, the elemental dimensions and the outer planes where most of the Divines had their main temples. Among the most fundamental concepts Harry needed to learn quickly were those relating to his own Talents and Gifts which were known since his parents had paid Gringotts to have his blood tested when he reached his First Life-Day. Harry had multiple capacities or Powers that had been blocked by Dumbledore who was clearly afraid that the boy would break his fetters before he even began elementary school, let alone the hormonal rush of puberty that would boost his mind and magic.
The Awakening had broken the binds on the following:

Potter Family 'Blood Compact'*; a prison-grade block that is both mental and biological that keeps the lawful successor of the bloodline from accessing the magical and spiritual inheritance accorded by Family Magicks, and can even distort 'Heritage Rituals' or 'Legacy Spells'. In this case, because Harry is the Lawful Heir and only living Potter, the Living Gods of Magyck have intervened to break the unlawful bindings so he could inherit normally at last.

Anti-Faith Channel-Blocker*; a fully mental block that programs Harry to never have Faith in any divinities, no matter what proofs of their Life or Powers he may witness or feel. This is normally used in prisons to keep the inmates from invoking help from their patrons to generate effects stronger than the ward scheme or the guard forces. In some cases, when a priest of an evil church has important skills like alchemy or healing, the community may decide to bind his Faith so he can still serve the 'Greater Good' of the group in some limited capacity. Inside the Welsh Wiccan sect for the last 80 years, since Dumbledore began to teach at Hogwarts, it has been the tradition of several 'Light' families to bind the Faith of newborn babes to keep them in the path of Pureblood wizardry and magicks. Since Albus had neither court order nor legal guardianship over the child as he is essentially a Line-Thief and Betrayer, then Mother Mystra has arbitrated that the boy may choose his own path in life, and broke the immoral binding.

Archmage-Class Restriction to Sorcery; a fully mental block that programs Harry to ignore or distrust all manifestations of Channeling and Mentalism so he would study only classic Roman inspired wizardry. This also had the side-effect of making him psychologically ill-suited towards the subjects that don't use a wand or other handheld focus like scriptworkes or potions. He would also have denigrated or fought against most forms of occultism and esoterism as his mind was wholly geared towards material and elemental effects. Paradoxically, this concentration of tangible and quantifiable magicks would have boosted his capacity to learn the transmutation sciences and combative arts.

Affinity for Parselmagick; this is a mental block that affects the Welsh Wiccan specific category that is a subjunct of 'Ophidiomancy' at large. Basically, Parselmagic was invented by Salazar Slytherin about two decades before the founding of Hogwarts in the Scottish Highlands as the heart of their sectarian movement. While the greater mancy looks over all snakes, drakes and reptiles or close relatives, Parselmagic is the -limited- study, devotion and exploitation of magical serpents, alive or dead. As such, Parselmagic is on a par with sauriomancy (crocodiles) or draconomancy (dragons). The language Parseltongue which is integral to this mancy is nothing more than a severely abstracted edition of Reptilian Common, and still much lesser than the Drakonic Dialect. Harry has an innate affinity for this type of magic because what he truly has is actually an affinity for Ophidiomancy at large, which will of course translate towards the smaller, more specific studies. While the greater mancy is still partially bound, this sectorial domain of studies has been opened for use, probably because an ancestor had it in the past.

Sense Enemies; A purely mental block that dampens Harry's capacity to instinctively perceive that an entity (or inert object too) will cause him harm if allowed to continue or approach. Dumbledore of course wants everybody to obey him, which they would resist if they could feel his evil and manipulative nature on a basal level like this. Since the block was installed only with a legitimancy compulsion, the Awakening was enough to break it completely.

Hardened Soul; a purely mental binding that was supposed to make Harry incapable of feeling normal human emotions unless he received permission from any being that Dumbledore would clearly state was an 'Authority' over the child's life. The simplistic legitimancy compulsion was
broken entirely by a variety of factors, including time, harsh living conditions, exposure to the media and school classes that taught what a normal person was supposed to do or feel, etc... The Awakening was simply the clean-up after everything else.

Combat Casting; the Talent to use specialized combat or warfare spells at quick speeds without burning out his nerves or mind. This would make the child a predetermined candidate for auror, hit wizard or (field) Unspeakable. Albus wanted none of that as the Child of Prophecy was to be weak, meek, pliable and predisposed towards suicide or self-sacrifice as his preferred method of solving grave issues of their society. Any combativeness had to be stamped out quickly. Therefore, a triple-bind composed of legilimancy, mind magicks and a potion was used to depolarize the boy's magical channels to deny the inbred specialization. However, as it was the type of magick that had been favored by many of the House Potter's highest lords and ladies over the centuries, the 'Blood Compact' and Awakening together had broken through completely.

Affinity to All Weaponry; a second Talent geared towards combat and warfare. this one allows the being to use any mundane or magical device during combat without seeing his spells weaken or be deviated or mis-aimed because he doesn't restrict himself to employing only a specific type of artifacts during his fights. This also means that Harry could inscribe runes or icons on any weapon or device then use it to channel his magicks through without penalties or limitations due to the bellicose or non-sorcerous nature of the item. Pushed to its end-logic, the Talent allows the person to create hybrid devices like a bow-caster or a gun-staff that serves as both firearm and wizard's staff simultaneously. The classic use is the runic shield & sword like Gryffindor had.

The Awakening had loosened the binds on the following:

Pain Tolerance Denial*; a prison-grade block that is both mental and biological that keeps the victim's pain threshold at a low level so that low-powered or idiotic guards can dominate the person more easily without casting pain curses near the strength of Unforgivables. Harry's innate pain reception and sensitivity was set back to half of its normal levels, and the rest will normalize with time and training.

Innate Inner-World Denial*; a prison-grade block that is both mental and biological that stops the victim from using or developing their Mindscape, Dreamscape and Identity layers to protect from the wards and coercion methods employed by carceral institutions. Likewise, it is a way to block a mentalist or natural telepath from using their powers nefariously so that they can be released into the community to do penal work or just have a job without the society paying for their upkeep. That is the usual method put in place if the suspect is an alchemist or healer as those are rare and valuable to whichever village they are located. In this case, Harry's mindscape layers were forbidden from installing or developing until the Awakening put in place the 'Blood Compact' which also forced the simultaneous installation and configuration of the basics. Now though, he will have to work on making it better organized and defended as the system will not evolve past basics on its own.

Semi-Psionic Capacity Denial*; a prison-grade block that is both mental and biological that was designed to keep a victim's innate Gift for psionics dormant, possibly for life. This block is composed of an Imperius curse anchored to an alchemic obedience draught coded for loyalty to Dumbledore's view of the Welsh Wiccan society. It makes the victim think that all mind magicks and psionics are bad, dark and possibly evil, or will lead to serial mind-raping in untrained hands, which basically means anybody not Dumbledore himself or one of his declared lackeys. Harry was
born with a natural Gift established at 'semi-psionic' that means roughly half of what a True Psionicist could learn and command. While he would never delve into the greater mysteries of the mind and soul, or go into mind-healing, he could still use several of the body-boosting skills and combat or warfare capacities. The bind is still partial though, thus cutting off about two thirds of what he could reach if he trained seriously and methodically, but at least he can now invest in a few skills and have a usable product at the end of the training period.

Battle Trance; this Talent is a well known trait of the House Potter's higher echelons, as they tend towards jobs like auror and hit wizard. It is the capacity to perceive the flow of Reality and battle at a slow, methodical pace while moving extremely fast, oftentimes faster than those around the user. This Talent also temporarily boosts the person's innate resistance to drugs, poisons and mind control efforts as long as they are in the throes of fighting actively. This capacity was a problem for Dumbledore like all those oriented towards violence and survival, plus the supplemental resistance against compulsions or loyalty oaths. Harry will now have the augmented speed and perceptions during battle, but the biological & mental defenses against mental intrusions have been eroded down to nothing. He will have to rebuild them as he mounts his mindscape and consume rare, expensive potions to remake the natural resistances of his body.

Affinity for Elder Darkes; this Gift means that Harry had a natural inclination towards understanding and using all of the Elder Darkes similar to the Childish Lists, Ancient Rituals, Family Magicks and the Traditions of the Old Ways. In many situations, this would also facilitate or boost the Faith based actions or effects like prayers to insure a healthy descendancy or divinations to survey the state of the Living Blood and estate. For very obvious reasons, Albus could never allow this to exist as it would unleash and bolster the Potter Blood Compact which could in turn process an automated Awakening even if the boy was beaten down to the point of brain damage, which it did do. While the binding was partially cracked, there are still many parts that are operative, and Harry will find it hard to study the more abstract or esoteric forms of the various Family Magicks he has inherited or connected with. Likewise, he will be able to cast Dark spells or effects at an alarming speed and efficiency, but suffer through long and fastidious periods of learning before being able to use those spells. The binding is melded as part of the apprenticeship limiter and others, thus can only be broken fully when Harry starts an official training program then, after reaching several success milestones, abandons it for another career.

Affinity for Ophidiomancy; as stated during Parselmagick, this is the greater mancy for all reptiles and serpent-kind but it is still partially blocked by a purely psychological curse. Albus was afraid that Harry could one day understand Dragons better than his own alchemic research into the uses of their blood, so he severely bound the greater mancy while letting the smaller one loose as a way to accuse the boy of being Dark and maybe Evil like Slytherin if needed. The bind is an Imperius curse that was cast directly into the boy's mind via legilimancy attack, and can be eventually broken when he develops his full innate resistance to enslavement and mind-rape.

Affinity for Necromancy; this Talent is a watered-down version of what those born directly into the House of Peverell received as an inborn Gift. As children of the House of Death and Holders of the Rituals of the Great Gate, the Peverell always had a very -loose- relationship with life, death, undeath, unlife, and The Beyond. This was in full demonstration by their command of Necromancy: the sciences, devotionals and magicks of the Life – Death cycle and the manipulation of mortal remains or artifacts. Because necromancer-class practitioners are hybrid spell-users of Faith and Sorcery together, and so are those lesser amateur mancers, Dumbledore absolutely could not let Harry develop this type of Talent as it could lead to a spiritual boost big enough to loosen or even fully break many of the bindings that were only psychological. Furthermore, Albus feared that if the child managed to get his hands on genuinely powerful tomes of necromancy, it could awaken the Peverell or Black 'Blood Compact' within him, despite that Albus had blocked them individually. Due to the sensitive nature of this Talent, it was blocked by an Imperius cast into the
child's mind via legilimancy attack with a password set in ancient German language. While partially released, this binding will not let go until Harry gets rid of the Apprenticeship, Darkes and Faith limiters.

Black Family 'Blood Compact*; a prison-grade block that is both mental and biological that keeps the lawful successor of the bloodline from accessing the magical and spiritual inheritance accorded by Family Magicks, and can even distort 'Heritage Rituals' or 'Legacy Spells'. In this case, because Sirius Orion Black III never broke his godfather blood-oath and he was never properly cast out of the family line and magicks, the House Black magic has managed to partially destroy the block, treating it as attempted Line-Theft against the Heir Presumptive. To release the rest, Harry would have to undergo the simple 'Confirmation Rite' at Gringotts during a visit to process the Heritage Ritual and Legacy Spell to settle all his outstanding affairs.

{ HP } --- { Freedoms denied } --- { HP }

The Awakening had not affected the binds or curses on the following:

Apprenticeship Power-Type limiter*; a prison-grade block that is both mental and biological that will keep Harry's first learned profession or career stunted at a low level of magical Power and prowess no matter how much he works to improve. Usually, the bind is placed with a ritual that needs three casters to enforce, a priest, a sorcerer and a mentalist or psychic. In this case, Albus Dumbledore did everything himself by emulating the effects of the three casters with alchemic tinctures and separate manatite pillars. This block is so deeply embedded in the genetics and mind of Harry that even killing Dumbledore will not release it. Only switching profession or training class when he reaches the allowed maximum level will bypass the block.

Peverell Family 'Blood Compact*; a prison-grade block that is both mental and biological that keeps the lawful successor of the bloodline from accessing the magical and spiritual inheritance accorded by Family Magicks, and can even distort 'Heritage Rituals' or 'Legacy Spells'. In this case, Dumbledore used the Elder Wand which is in fact the Lord Peverell's Halberd in its idle format, when it is used by unworthy hands but was somehow conquered by that person. Due to using an heirloom that links directly to the Peverell Throne, Albus was able to bypass the wards that keep someone outside of the house hierarchy from committing just that crime. Harry would probably be able to break this binding if he unites all three Peverell Relics, but only after the Apprenticeship and Darkes Limiters have also been ridden of, otherwise he would lack power against Dumbledore's combined potion & curse stratagem.

Maternal Lineage Denial*; a prison-grade block that is both mental and biological that keeps the lawful successor of the bloodline from accessing the magical and spiritual inheritance accorded by Family Magicks. In reality, this is an old Roman curse that served for old rich men to have a harem of breeding stock from diverse ethnic groups while making certain the children produced all looked and acted exclusively according to their own family tradition. The best and most economical manner to achieve this was to biologically and psychically amputate the mother's contribution out of the child, like a 'Blood Disowning Ritual' but simpler, faster, and could also be reversed if the man discovered the child's mam had good magical ancestors or a fortune sleeping in a vault that only the heirs could access. In Harry's case, the Evans had no known magical ancestry for at least 21 generations, so no magical territorial or financial legacy was lost to him. However, the most pressing issue was that while the block was in effect, all of his mother's kin and kindred would consider him as a Line-Thief and hostile invader in their lives, even if they don't know about magic or ignore his identity, like after an 'Obliviate'. This is the basis of what Dumbledore did to make certain Harry was abused and violated by the Dursley's; he bound the boy then set a
'Bloodline Ward' on the house where he would live to anchor the cursed binding while boosting the aversive effects upon the entire household.

Enforced Bigotry*; a prison-grade block developed specifically in the Welsh Wiccan sect that is both mental and biological that makes the prisoners incapable of feeling sympathy or just working with other entities that fit the descriptions programmed into the list of exclusions. The base rite was too generic and too easy to remove, despite being a beast to cast, so the Purebloods paid for the Unspeakables to produce a modernized version. The unstated goal was for the Lords of Pureblood Houses to be able to mentally program their children to hate and dominate anything not a human pureblood wizard for the rest of their lives. This version of the binding is inflicted via a ritual circle that holds samples of the species genotypes or wizarding Bloodlines to repel while an Imperius anchored to a generic alchemic enchantment sustentation oil is used to codify the list of beings the prisoner is to exclude from his few social or professional interactions when working in the prison's workshops or kitchens. This binding is normally applied to long-term convicts to keep them from fomenting escape plots or bribing the guards for such. In this case, Albus used it as the basis for how he would control Harry's relationships towards teachers, students and the wizarding world at large by making almost everybody 'out of bounds' for the boy, unless he told him to his face or during a media conference that a certain person was a desirable ally of his.

Enforced Self-Isolation*; a primitive prison-grade block that is both mental and biological that was actually the longer, more permanent version of the 'Enforced Bigotry'. It was designed for a judge to have the option of sentencing useful people like alchemists and healers to community work or prolonged probation at home so they could still work while being certain they wouldn't fall back into the criminal elements of the nation. Basically, it was a combination of enchanting oil put in the bloodstream via injection with a mental compulsion that would leach the magic of the oil to keep itself in place. The ritual part was to make the oil bio-compatible to the species put under penance, and then delve into the convict's mindscape to program the exclusion list directly into his Identity layer so it couldn't just be dispelled or broken by quick solutions. In the case of Dumbledore, he really wanted his Boy-Who-Lived to be a total recluse and troglodyte so he used this ancient version as the method by which he programmed the parameters on the previous binding, to add complexity and durability to the child's social withdrawal and imposed ineptitude. The problem of this binding is that the more a person knows their Inner-World, the higher the chance of them finding the program and destroying it from inside, without any visible symptoms on the outside. Harry will need the help of a mind-healer or several strong prayers of mental health to destroy this abomination and what it sustains above it.

Enforced Explosive Temper*; a prison-grade block that is both mental and biological that serves to make the prisoner unable to concentrate for prolonged periods on complex, demanding subjects like scriptworkes, enchanting, building foci or breaking ward schemes. It also has the benefit of making he victim short-tempered and prone to fits of rage, so planning escapes with a group or trying to bribe a suspicious guard become nigh on impossible. Dumbledore wanted this in Harry to make certain that the child's attention span was reduced to almost zero, thus scuttling his entire schooling and capacity to learn anything else than basal manual chores for his most immediate survival, like washing, cooking and crude repairs to his shelter. This binding is very easy to install and difficult for the person to remove or break, but it does have the weakness that it must be replenished every year as the increased adrenaline and endorphin in the body make the sustention oil metabolize far quicker, a situation that will weaken and endanger all the other bindings by rebound too. Albus was using Dryskholl to give the child the enchantment oil or new doses of alchemic unctions until he decided (arbitrarily) that the boy's body, brain and mind must be corroded enough by now that further dosing was no longer needed. This means that the binding is not sustained, but it can't break on its own anymore. Now that the psychological trigger is set in Harry's mind, he will need professional mind-healing or Divine miracles to set things back to
normal as standard healing potions won't be sufficient to even help.

Harry's elementary schooling – for real this time

(Harry Potter - theme)

1986-87
Dursley neighborhood
Little Whining, Surrey, England

The two accomplices had grossly misjudged the ineptitude of both the school employees and the local constabulary forces. It took all the way to the first day of school after that fateful Christmas break for anybody to find something amiss about the depraved pervert who had attacked Harry.

In fact, it was only passed noon meal when the principal was asked about the missing teacher due to the fact that all of his morning classes had been missed without any custodian being assigned to sit watch over the kids' study time. The principal saw the man's car in the parking lot, covered in snow as if it hadn't moved in weeks, which it hadn't. It was when he went to the dead man's office that he found the decomposed body whose odor hadn't moved around since the windows were closed and the door was so thick that it sealed completely when closed.

The policemen were called in, took one look and decided to write in the report that it was most likely a drug overdose, especially when they found the bottles of narcotics and drugged candies in his desk drawer. Or at least, that was the story made public for the kids' families and papers.

Barely a week after that and the county superintendent of schools was being made to retire after nearly sixty years on the job, soon followed by the principal of Van Uttebatten academy who was his favorite cousin, younger by three years. Without his elder relative to protect him from the consequences of his dereliction and complicity in crimes against the children by his staff, the old man preferred to leave quietly lest he be investigated. This gave way to a slew of transfers or retirements in the weeks after as the depraved or slovenly saw the tides changing around them.

Influenced by the Blessing put on the school campus, the county named far better teachers who also happened to be much more morally-minded than those they replaced. Children who were caned were no longer beaten so harshly they had bruised welts for weeks despite being hit over clothing as had been the previous norm. Rumors about the underground dungeon subconsciously adjusted to say that the outgoing director had scrubbed the entire academy clean of any traces of such barbaric practices before handing in his letter of resignation to make certain none of the things perpetrated therein would follow him through his retirement.

An added bonus for the kids was the revision of all nutritional plans and provisions for the meals fed to the students by their cafeteria. Yes, the admin building still had a few better items, but the disparity was more one of appearances than true quality or nutrition anymore. Also, the old students' library was cleaned, stocked up to date and finally reopened in for Easter of '87.

All in all, Harry Potter was getting to be happy in his regular neighborhood school, where people knew his name instead of calling him "Freak" and "Boy" all day. He was fed, exercised, taught things that mattered to British society just like all the other kids, and was marked fairly for his efforts since Dudley went to a private primary school elsewhere. Without the pressure from the Dursley adults to make him under-perform or threats from his jealous cousin, Harry was finally
Harry learns about magical practices

(Harry Potter - theme)

1987
Dursley neighborhood
Little Whining, Surrey, England

Among the first magical concepts that Dryskholl was able to teach Harry before he became too weak and senile were the diverse techniques for channeling Faith or casting spells outside of the person. These were the most commonly taught in schools or publicly available books in stores that weren't specific to professionals or mancers. The elf warned Harry that a focus could be anything that was crafted and prepared for the task, but most societies or sects had formalized a few specific devices to make teaching and using magic faster, and more reliable on each casting.

{ HP } --- { Wands and other foci } --- { HP }

The most basic and widely used focus for spell-users regardless of their Power or ability is the humble WAND, but it has its cousins; the rod, the scepter, the staff, the polearm and the siege-staff. In the same family but less respected were the wooden spoon of witches and the switch of hedge-wizards or beastmasters. All of these are basically a length of material for containment with a combination of magical reagents to serve as core where the actual conduction and regulation of magical energy happens. By their nature, the 'Bastonnis' foci are rather generic and suitable for pretty much any usage, although sometimes the core composition will give a slight boost or resistance to certain types of energies that pass through. It is possible to craft specialized wands, but rare due to difficulty and the fact that it cuts-off more than it gives. Among the few specialty wands that it is profitable to create are the alchemist and healer wands that are longer and thinner with a rune engraved precious jewel at the tip for smooth, micro management of fine reactions inside elixirs or living tissues.

The reason why wooden spoons and switches are not respected as true 'Bastonnis' is that they have no internal core, instead they are superficially engraved with scriptworkes and given a Blood Tithe from the person who will be the primary user. The benefit is a truly cheap yet functional, generic wand not penalized against any type of practice. The downside is that such wands are usually not able to cast dweomers above Power Type V and rarely channel any psionics at all. In the large and organized magical societies that claim to have modernized, these crude druid-era foci are reserved for teaching young children, equipping squibs or used as drop-wand by criminals who will use the blood of a magical animal to prime the focus for usage instead of their own fluids.

Before the batons came into generalized usage under Roman imposition, the Pagans and Druids preferred to use a Ritual Cauldron to activate or center spell effects. While the vessel can be made of metal, pottery, stone or crystal, it is really the fluid bubbling inside that decides what happens. The principle is just like a wand, except that the core is opened to the user and gets modified along the casting of the spell or ceremony, thus refining control over the result and allowing also for a greater power charge to push the effect farther away. Another direct benefit of using a cauldron is that many people can use the same cauldron together, thus making group castings, rituals and
conclave spells much easier to harmonize, which explains the incredible power that witch covens of the distant past had wielded. Another advantage of cauldrons is that they are fully versatile unlike wands. Because the core is exposed, the user can empty the pot, wash it and prepare a new mixture specifically to fit the spell he's going to cast. Also unlike a wand, the vessel can be amplified by scriptworkes or by burning special fuels in the fire beneath to add extra magical Power to that generated by the spell. While the batons have replaced almost all other foci since the height of Rome, cauldrons will always be the chosen focus of witches, druids and hedge-wizards, and the icon used to represent potion brewers & alchemists.

The runestones were a normal method of using magic back when the religious classes like shaman, witch, druid and animist were still preeminent in the magical societies, and that mixing with squibs and mundanes was not frowned upon by the diverse sectarian governments that sprung up over the last 1,000 years due to the Christian Inquisition. A runestone is simply a piece of rock or crystal that has been ritually purified of foreign energies before having one or several runes or icons engraved into the sides to for a scriptworkes program. These small devices are usually looked upon as the domain of hedge-wizards or low-powered apprentices who are unsure of their grasp of the teachings they are practicing. Usually, a runestone will generate or anchor a single short-term effect because the engraver will not want to incur the burden of the monetary expenses to buy a precious stone capable of holding at most three spells or wards. Finding small but serviceable pieces of regular stone is as easy as walking through a forest or riverbed, neither of which costs anything but the time and effort of the craftsman.

This however means that a poor person who learns languages easily and has an affinity for scriptural magicks can in fact have a cheap and easy supply of tools and weapons right in their garden, if they make the effort. The uses of runestones are almost as varied as wands, if only that a maximum of 3 spells can be put on a stone small enough to fit in a belt purse or pocket. One easy way to create a runestone that can be triggered multiple times is to anoint it with blood or seep it in enchanting oil; both processes should make a stone that can trigger three times before disintegrating. Thus you can respell the item if you use it only twice, making for a good investment of time and skills.

Now, if you don't mind having a few tons of boulder sitting in your garden or your castle bailey, you can always hire a druid to engrave a menhir, dolmen or cromlech with a few dozen to a few hundred spell-effects. The techniques to inscribe menhirs are ancient, secret and normally known only to those who have taken the vows inside a druidic or witch coven. Certain churches of Living Gods have adapted these antiquated methods to produce manatite pillars that charge faster and sustain stronger wards or effects, but not always to better results or energy management.

Cards, or decks of cards, come in two varieties; those with only passive powers like the Tarot used in divinations, or those that store active spells in a manner that is the basis of how modern spell-scrolls are written to fill the armories of churches and monarchs. Cards were invented in an epoch when over 95% of the population was so illiterate that even pictographs and icons were too complicated for them to read, and this included the spell-users of the day. The solution was to create a series of standardized images on small pieces of tree bark that formed the first hand-held cards, then moving to leather strips, then treated parchment and finally paper. Initially, cards were one-trick devices that served to store attack dweomers to quick-cast multiple strikes at an opponent without tiring the caster. As a secondary concern, a mage or cleric could produce cards at his own level of Power then confide them to his apprentices for them to use in defense of their shared domain. This was a cheap and efficient way for an abbot or lord to mount a credible battle team when there weren't that many men available to bear arms, let alone learn magic. Eventually though, magic-users suffer from passing fashions like all other activities of sentient species, so cards were changed. Instead of storing attack spells, they began to carry summonings, banishment's, portals, gates and contact dweomers. Having become specific to certain types of magic, cards soon became...
seen as too rigid, too pre-set to be useful in a high-speed mess like war, so they were replaced.

Scrolls came about from the needs for more flexibility and on-the-fly customizing of resulting effects than what runestones or cards could produce. Wizards researched the problem until they had managed to convert the best versions of cards from a static image to a scriptural sequence that could be read aloud to activate. This was the first spell-scroll, but it was lacking. The solution was to create the text with blank spaces for 'variables' that the caster could decide on the spot according to what he needed to cover. These scrolls were the norm for a long period of time, then were slowly set aside too as the populations having several thousand mages or priests began to believe that only apprentices need to carry stored magic. The perception of the people changed to believe that only children should use scrolls, and only until they were adult enough to be able to cast actively through their focus. Scrolls became to be viewed as homework from teachers or a crutch for ailing casters whose magical core was unstable, and were eventually completely abandoned by most communities. By the time that Albus Dumbledore's parents were born such spell-scrolls were already a thing of the past, even though the technique is widely known by those who work in stationary shops or book editing & binding artisans.

Scriptworkes is the generic name that covers all forms of magicks that need a text, number or image to be anchored or trigger to activity. The many forms of this multivariated technique also depend quite heavily upon the erudition, linguistics and artistic skills or Talents of the caster. The most commonly seen form of this method is spell-books or grimoires, followed by the runes used to mark everything from potion bottles to money coins to calendars. The second most used version is employed by wardmasters to anchor the layers of energies around an object or estate. The third variant of scriptworkes is integral to alchemy's highest levels of performance, the Transmutation Circle and Transmogrification Figures. These drawings group truly complex arithmantic equations with textual phrases, astrological symbols and occult effigies to combine into a powerful effect that will permanently alter reality. When an expert of written magicks wants to truly excel, he can learn to write upon liquids, gasses, in empty air, in live flames or other medium to anchor his spells. Some spells, like mobile combat wards, will occasionally show in their energy field or on the object they affect the scriptures of their construction. These pure energy writings are called 'Mandala' and it takes a good occult erudition to be able to interpret the glyphs and calculations under fire so as to exploit the knowledge.

Lenses are a varied group that encompass all objects made of crafted glass. This technique was invented by poor wizards as a replacement for natural crystals and precious stones that were far out of reach due to rarity and pricing. Normally, the spell-user will commission a piece of glass for the specific use he has in mind, and will need one such item or device per 'category' of spell or ritual he uses. The three best known types of spell-lenses are in fact the mirror (scrying), the crystal orb (divinations) and optical prisms (eye-glasses & scopes). As an aside to these are the cheap colored glass beads that can hold low-powered spells for a few weeks before failing and are often sold as protection amulets for the poor. Good transparent glass panes can be engraved or acid-etched with scriptworkes to hold low-power but long-term wards for the average household or small boutique, making it a very cost-effective solution and cheap to replace when it brakes during a storm. The best glasswares are produced by crystallurgists or alchemists who will dweomercraft the base materials before melting them into glass, then shape the item with spells and runic tools. The piece is then engraved and etched, with a layer of enchanting oil used as polish to seal everything correctly. Such pieces are considered masterpieces and rarely come on the market for sale unless the owner is dead and the estate being liquidated. One practical way to bolster the magic in a glass device is to fill it with a magical reagent or potion, but again that means having a sealed artifact with a specialty potion in it for each 'category' of occultism used.

Living People, Animals and Plants can be used as foci for casting spells too, although the techniques for doing so are normally very old, and very secret. These techniques go beyond the
spells or prayers of druids, witches, animists and rangers. They are the province of those who art in crafting flesh like biomancers or necromancers, and those who use sacrificial magicks to power their spells. Several divinations use a drop of blood to remotely link with the donor who then temporarily acts like a wand to emanate the perception spells from within, allowing the caster to experience the world from their senses or aura. Other fouler magicks allow a caster to pass through the mind or soul of a being to cast spells at enemies through their eyes or mouth, and sometimes move the body like a puppet in a way no simplistic Imperius curse would. Most of the lores, spells and rituals concerned are kept by specialist mancers, occultists and scholars of the esoteric who will never publicly admit to hoarding such forbidden crafts. In most countries that have been influenced by Rome and Christianity, possessing any physical text or device that permit to learn, teach or practice these foul things will get you inhumanly executed.

Harry's opening unto magical ecology

(Harry Potter - theme)

1987
Dursley neighborhood
Little Whining, Surrey, England

During the later weeks of his life besides Harry, the young elfling Dryskholl explained to the human child about the important quirks and resources of Mother Nature that were not always hidden or out of reach from mundanes. A great deal of the impetus from the White Council and other groups to establish the Statute of Magical Secrecy in the late 1400's was mostly based on the desire to control access & usage of these precious materials or places by muggles and even squibs or muggle-born members of their communities. Of great concern was the appropriation of these inherently magical materials, arts and crafts by the muggle Monarchs who heavily taxed the work of spell-users and tried to regulate the sales of devices made with these resources. This led to a direct conflict of interests and dominance, which the wanded casters did not actually win as their response was to flee and hide until the mundane governments forgot about them.

Most of these natural resources are pretty easy to find and access, but large-scale exploitation will normally result in a guild, church or government sitting on top of the material to charge fees for obtaining any quantity of raw or processed resource. In some cases, the easy availability of some minerals, oils or gases has caused great concerns for everybody as they are toxic or mutate the lifeforms that are in proximity. The more radiant or poisonous, the more efforts the magical groups have made to secure exclusive usage of the mines or pools.

It was a great chagrin for Dryskholl that he couldn't teach Harry about plants and animals that are found in the magical world due to a lack of knowledge. He did tell him about those creatures that were found in every household like owls, cats, dogs and crows, but he knew very little of anything else, even just about farm animals or livestock. He had been born to a noble family who used their elves for valet and maid duties inside the manor but had no farm or greenhouses of their own, preferring to buy fresh as needed from reputable sources. His original owners had been Dark wizards who practiced the most esoteric of occultism, specifically the divinatory arts by way of animal or human sacrifices. Their rituals were deeply guarded secrets but they always produced accurate and usable answers for their rich clientele who wanted the information in a prompt and discrete manner to upstage their enemies. Because of this, the elfling had a clear deficit of knowledge when it came to lifeforms that weren't higher sentients capable of holding a Gringotts
The magically, culturally and financially important resources of the magical worlds are:

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A Ley line is basically a naturally occurring current of raw energy that circulates in the crust of the Earth on a fixed path. The current can vary in density from fully immaterial to gaseous to liquid according to a plethora of factors, including the presence of other magical resources along its course. Having an active Ley line near the surface makes for much faster and easier charging of menhirs, manatite pillars and wardstones. It also makes the magical cores of living entities replenish faster and sometimes bigger than average if the young are exposed from an early age.

Hogwarts is deemed one of the premiere schools of magicks in the world despite what the Pureblood movement and Albus Dumbledore have inflicted bigotry, mismanagement and cut entire segments of knowledge for the last three hundred years, because it sits on the crossing point of 3 Ley lines. This means that despite all the crapulence and stupidity, the school normally turns out young adults whose magical cores are between 10% and 15% bigger and around 8% faster at replenishment versus the population educated elsewhere. An added side-effect noted is that people who studied at Hogwarts then took a job in the castle for a few years could see their life expectancy augment by 10% easily. It is widely suspected that if he hadn't lived the last 80 years on top of the Ley line junction, Dumbledore would be dead as a rock, or at least not as powerful as he seems to still be.

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A Mana source is what you get when one or several Ley lines break through the Earth's crust to interact with the open atmosphere; natural raw magick that can present as gas or liquid. Usually, a community will protect its active Mana sources with public buildings and severe laws to make certain that magic stays available for the whole county around the source. In a few cases, a mage or priest will manage to find and keep secret a Mana source until he has finished building his house on top of it to bolster his own occult practices and home defenses. While most villages would be loath to engage such a person in open battle for their source, they will most certainly tax them to very high levels in retaliation for what is seen as a 'theft' of public domain.

An active Mana source is a very generic descriptive that can refer to a stream or pool of Primal Essaence, Mythal, Mana or Energon, in order of strength. Each of the Power Realms have their own atomic and energetic properties, as well as different magical capacities when used for alchemy or enchantment. The most common uses for a Mana source are to infuse the liquid magicks into an elixir to bolster its effects, or burn it as fuel under a crucible for a variety of magical crafting techniques. A few farming communities have also created ingenious devices that infuse the liquid magick with the water from the aqueduct to fertilize their crops and livestock for better yield and to maintain their magical properties.

ALL magical arts, crafts and practices are increased positively when done within one kilometer or an active, freely flowing Mana source. However, it can also lead to Power burn, Essaence toxicity, Manaesh acidity, and with Energon in any forms, violent explosions of flames, radiation and pressure waves that devastate a wide area. Some villages had no choice but to cap and neuter their source to stay alive because the element being released was too volatile or poisonous.

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Similar to Mana sources but on a different order of thought. The Spirit Well is a sunken pit that reaches deep into the crust of the Earth where it encounters a naturally occurring Nepenthean Rift,
a tear in the fabric of space, dimensions and realities, that leads directly to Hallowed Nepenthe, the City of Bones, Seat of the Grand Gate of Reality. In other words, the Realm of the Dead, capital of Hades, patron god of said dead.

A Spirit Well does for the Elder Darkes, Blood-law, necromancy, spiritism and psionics what the Mana source will do for all aspects of magick. The well gently radiates a mixture of negative energy and gaseous raw soul-stuff, called 'ectoplasm' when it condenses enough to become liquid or crystalline. The Spirit Well is usually employed by communities as the center of a graveyard or a place of pilgrimage to the ancestors, and multiple temples will be built nearby to facilitate communion with the Divines in their home planes. Some Spirit Wells have been dweomercrafted by ingenious beings into becoming Gates to access the planes and dimensions on a regular basis, although it usually limits the travel options to Hadenshire, the Border Ethereal, the Deep Ethereal, the Styx River, the Dreamscape, the Mirrorscape (King's Roads) and Neverland.

One of the manners in which an enterprising community can monetize its Spirit Well is by letting priests and alchemists condense the emanations into highly magical and spiritual fluid that then gets crafted into diverse healing potions or ink for medicinal scrolls. If the village has specific animals like thestrals they could benefit greatly from eating plants or meat that was raised on water that had a dilution of Spirit-stuff in it. Likewise, if higher sentients eat crops or livestock that had such fortified water in their diet, they in turn will have more stable tempers and better skills at mind magicks or psionics. Like the Mana source, the Spirit Well affects everything for one kilometer around it's opening, but it can also be capped by a warded building to staunch the flow and dike-up the effects.

{ HP } --- { Floating Earth } --- { HP }

Pretty much self-descriptive, it's a variant of dull brown rock that is naturally buoyant in the planetary environment, and perhaps in space as well. This material is low-powered, non-toxic and does not emit radiation that can harm or mutate anything. It just floats with a predetermined height and weight allowance. If you want to go higher you need a motor or balloon, and if you want to make the rock carry more weight then you need to get a bigger rock.

This very rigid, mathematically chart-able property has led to people making standard tables to calculate the size and number or rocks needed to make fly certain types of vehicles like ox carts or fishing boats. In some villages, they built low-lying bridges over their streams or rivers without setting pylons because they embedded floating earth into the wooden or metallic frame of the road deck to keep it at constant height, regardless of weather. Cunning artisans have put small amounts of this material into smelted alloys to render knight's armor lighter and easier to wield in battle, while a few rare criminals tried to use a floating stone arrowhead to snipe their target at much longer range than normal, with wildly varying results.

Being a very 'closed' type of resource, floating earth does not make a good wand core or tip, and has no use as part of runic crafting tools. Putting the earth in potions of flight or levitation will produce a ruined sludge that is not toxic but certainly useless. Honestly, the only way to use this material is to tie a raw boulder to something you want to make fly, or pulverize the stuff to mix it into a metal alloy or ceramic blend to nullify the weight of both container and contents.

Back before the founding of Hogwarts, in the years before the Romans came to Britain, the Potter family had a small workshop that made specialty earthenware from cut stone or dust mixed to clay for kiln baking. The clients usually wanted large stew pots or banquet platters that could be maneuvered without risk of spilling the extra-large load. This means that Harry's parents have put into their 'Blood Compact' some ancestral spells and techniques that nobody in their family has used in more than seven centuries, since wanded magick became so prevalent.
A close cousin of Floating Earth, the raw ore Cloudia is a glowing blue metallic isotope that has a neutral buoyancy in Earth gravity. Will Cloudia can be found in natural deposits here and there on the planet, it is actually an accidental product from another Dimension. The metal is normally a dull transparency similar to the lowest quality of Quartz crystal until it is exposed to radiation from the Neverland, the Spirit World or the Astral Plane, for a sufficient period. Because of this intimate relation with the home-worlds of the most populous Fae species, human alchemists have taken to naming the isotope "Pixie Dust" when it is refined because it has a magical signature similar to that of living pixies.

In raw form Cloudia has about the same uses and abilities as Floating Earth, but when it is processed alchemically it becomes a potent reagent for Gnomish levitation engines, Orc flying barges or dye for making Elvish flying carpets. Processed Cloudia is also bio-reactive in a safe way, therefore can be drunk/eaten as a short term flight elixir, although the effect will last barely a half hour for a tea spoon of dust. Given the price of raw Cloudia and what it sells for when processed, only those without an alternative would do this since it would be more profitable to sell the isotope then buy a cheap Flight Draught that can last three hours.

As for the inter-relation between Fae and Cloudia, it is suspected that several hundred millenia ago, in their home dimensions, the first Fae lived in an environment saturated by the isotope to such extent that it was present in plants, animals and themselves. This ecological happenstance is most likely why the majority of Higher Fae (Sidhe) of all species developed both physical wings and a natural Gift for levitation & flying unassisted. For trained explorers, the presence of glowing blue metal veins on an object signifies either Fae crafting or the recent presence of a living Fae as its innate energy would stimulate the isotope to glow if it were dormant.

One of the most sensitive subjects that Dryskholl saw fit to teach Harry was the existence and nature of Ember crystals, a form of magical precious jewels that was far different from Beljuril or other classic minerals. These naturally occurring crystals have diverse colors that show their inherent Power and capacities. The problem that societies like the Welsh Wiccan see with Ember was that absolutely ANYBODY could wield a fragment of Ember and benefit from its effects without needing any magical or occult training of any sort. Basically, Ember is a natural emitter that captures the ambient energy then mutates it through its isotopes to create elemental or force waves around itself.

The aura of natural Ember is TOXIC to the unshielded organics that are in the vicinity, thus meaning that extensive dweomercrafting is needed to make it safe for usage by the public. Untreated Ember radiation poisoning will cause severe mutations in all forms of life, no exceptions known, turning them to monsters with incredible magical capacities. Therefore the safe way to use Ember is to crush it to dust and mix it with stabilizing agents, then pressing the paste into a shape according to what is needed. The large-scale crafting and trading in Ember jewels between Dwarves and Gnomes caused for several societies to establish the Ember Guilds Treaty some 4,000 years ago to regulate the production of standardized Ember Plugs and artifact Sockets to clip them on. This means that a craftsman could build an item that was purely mundane but had one or several metal sockets set into the frame of the device to receive crafted Ember. This would allow the safe and regulated diffusion of the crystal's powers through the item without unleashing radiation or poison into the atmosphere.
However, this superb technique of mechanomagicks made the use by squibs, or even muggles, of powerful mystical weapons even more prevalent, and thusly dangerous for the positions those wizards or priests at the top of magical societies. In an act of collective madness, several sects and guilds of wanded casters banded with the White Council and Welsh Wiccan in the year 900 of the Christian calendar to attack the Ember Guilds, shutter the mines and expurgate anything but the most basal historical knowledge from public libraries.

The Founding of Hogwarts was a great source of controversy because Godric Gryffindor was an accomplished Ember-smith and Rowena Ravenclaw had written a treatise on the alchemic preparation of Ember Plugs & Sockets for those students that would study dweomer-crafting, enchantment and warding. It took the intervention of the British Crown to stop a war against the newly built castle, which resulted in the Royal Edict of Ember Guilds, Trades, Crafts and Lores of 1002ad. The Crown made the public mining, trading, crafting or school-teaching of this science illegal and punishable, but only under the caveat that the Royal College of Magicks was exempted from this and so were the traditional master-apprentice teachings. Only the PUBLIC uses or works of Ember were now illegal, not the PRIVATE ones, and only in the UK and Commonwealth. To this date, even Dumbledore has never managed to convince the ICW members to vote for legal restrictions of Ember similar to Britain. In fact, every time a nation threatens to leave the ICW Assembly, it usually starts with a dispute over allowing Ember crafts to prosper and be taught in their public colleges or military academy.

It was still feasible to find an occasional Ember augmented device in England, as the masters and researchers continued to develop their crafts in secret, just like most alchemists tend to do anyways. The two most common techniques to make a truly capable item were to engrave scriptworkes inlaid with refined Ember that would capt and amplify the Ember Plug's effects beyond the usual aura or contact discharge. The second method was to use crafted Ember but shaped in forms different than the standard Plugs to fit at the tip of specialty wands or tools, to bolster and refine the caster's fine control over the elemental forces at use. This was a great way to improve runic tools for crafting guilds, or make basal devices like ever-cold cauldrons or ever-burning stoves. Still, due to the purges from a millenia ago, most people will avoid being seen in public in English jurisdictions with any type of Ember, and nobody will reveal a mine willingly.

{ HP } --- { Tyberyum crystals } --- { HP }

This mineral is a solid crystal that has the particularity that it grows at rapid speed on top of soil or rocks that are irrigated by the bleed from a Ley line after it traversed certain metal isotopes or highly magical crystals. The problem with Tyberyum is that it's a hot toxic mess. It doesn't matter what color or shape the Tyberyum is when you find it, it only serves a single purpose in existence: it combusts, and usually does so with great explosive displays.

The crystal in part of the magical world's important resources because an ingenious merchant discovered after many trials that pulverized Tyberyum dust can easily be mixed with oils or coal to produce a remarkably hot and long-lived flame. This enabled the smelting of magical alloys like adamantite or mithril by lowly human crafters, instead of limiting the possibility to elves, gnomes and dwarves whose innate magicks are more attuned to minerals than other species. The problem comes from the fact that ANY uses of Tyberyum as fuel in a burner will cause a lot of gaseous pollution and radiation waves that can damage the cellular structure of living entities. While it is possible to shield the oven or burner and direct the dejections outside the workshop to keep the crew safe, those dejections will eventually wound up somewhere and make the place into a hot, radiant, toxic dump.

One of the most damaging and illegal uses of this mineral is to create cheap knock-off Plugs to use on devices that are supposed to socket crafted Ember. The Tyberyum will perform poorly and
unsteadily for a short time before the energies inside the device make it crack open and explode violently as is its basic function. There are NO known methods of stabilizing Tyberyum inside an alloy of either metals, crystals or ceramics that will not react badly to radiation or high energy frequencies.

Second problem the magicals faced with this mineral; the mundanes can use it for fuel in classic piston engines or as replacement isotope in their atomic reactors. Thusly, to prevent the spread of poisonous gas and tsunamis of radiation, the mining, refining and crafting of Tyberyum has been banned and added to the Statute of Magical Secrecy in 1507ad with the provision that any muggles who discover the substance must be oblivated or killed to prevent a planetary disaster.

Third and worse problem of Tyberyum that concerns the entire planet; the damned things grow and then grow back when they are harvested. In fact, a Tyberyum crystal that was removed from its vein can accidentally grow some more if it is exposed to several radiation frequencies or some select chemicals. Many a careless alchemist has seen his laboratory overgrown with crystals, or even explode violently, because they didn't treat the unstable, capricious mineral with due care.

Another one-hit wonder from Mother Nature; this is a variant of normal petroleum found in the Earth's crust, but at lower depths in the Underworld segment called "Upper Dark". It is more dense than crude oil and very slightly radioactive but not in a manner that is significant for the health of anything exposed to or using the fluid.

Promethium is dangerous because it self-ignites at regular temperatures, so from 15°C above, when it is in contact with oxygen or water. It is a fossil fuel, can be pumped and refined like one, can be kept liquid or gasified like petrol, methane or butane, and has all the drawbacks and problems of petroleum oils. Promethium is used primarily in the confection of magical lamp oils, church incense, and fuel for certain burners in smelting crucibles or pottery kilns. If mundanes had access to this oil, they could easily refine it in petrochemical factories for use in regular piston engines, generators or home heating.

The Gnomes have normalized it as one of those things they employ in their maddening workshops, going so far as to devise a method of solidifying the oil into stable dry blocks of various sizes to use as safe portable fuel during exploration.

The Orcoid populations use Promethium as Holy Oil for their ritual fires, for the lamps at sentry posts, and on flaming arrows during war, because burning Promethium will disrupt or dispel magick within a radial distance proportional of the flame size.

Amongst the Faithful of the Living Gods, refined Promethium oil is blessed for use in burning undead or cursed objects due to the stated capacity to disrupt or dispel magick during combustion.

Raw Promethium oil is the principal liquid component in the confection of Squibbing Oil, a dangerous, volatile, anti-magick poison used to kill, maim or neutralize users of active magicks. The mixing recipe is so simple that even barely trained muggle cooks can brew it correctly. It is due to this great danger that muggles were forbidden from having access to this oil when the Statute of Magical Secrecy was signed by the nations and alliances in the late 1400's.

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concentrated in the ground layer that it becomes liquid and stays that way when removed from the geological pocket where it formed. Because of its natural inclusion of Primal Essaence that gives it magical properties, muggles have been banned from knowing of the product at the same time as Promethium.

Inert and radioactive; this is the basic and most common form of Vespene to occur. It can usually be cleansed of its natural radiation then refined into combustible gas or liquid fuel. This is also the lowest quality and proper only for non-magical operations like home heating or cooking, and the manufacture of glues, paints or resin plastics. Muggles could use it in cars or factories to power the motors and electric generators just like petrol or propane if they were allowed to know of its existence.

Living and radioactive; this is the second most prevalent Vespene form. It is composed of biomass, countless bacterium and single-cell micro-organisms that grant it special properties when used for crop fertilizer, watering livestock, basis for healing potions or even just muggle medications. In either case, the product needs to be cleansed of its radiation to be usable, then the alchemist must decide if he keeps the biomass alive or boils it to death and sterility for the more conventional applications. Given the possibilities for food and drugs, burning it in factories or motors is a waste of potential that can be justified only in the absence of other fuel options.

Living and clean; the highest grade available of Vespene, and the only one that is usually found already liquid. Devoid of radiation or toxins common to fossil fuels, this fluid can be put directly into fertilizer or farming water, or transformed food like fruit juice, alcohol, mixed with milk for cheese, butter and cooking cream, and more. Master potioneer's will use this directly as the base for the highest curatives and restoratives, be they elixirs, balms or pills. In more modern epochs, the potion brewers and alchemist will use it as a base for living antibiotics or vaccines, rather than the chicken eggs normally employed in this task.

Even if the Vespene is boiled and sterilized, the resulting fluid is such high quality that it can still be used for a plethora of nutrients and medicines, including Dwarven Cram, their legendary Road Bread. Boiling until evaporation will leave a green powder that is highly nutritious and a good dry component to keep in an apothecary's travel kit or survival box to craft quick & dirty healing potions, or boost food that has low quality or not enough matter to fill the person eating. Nobody in their right mind ever uses this quality of Vespene for engines or manufacturing unless they have absolutely no other sources of fossil fuels in their sphere of control. Even then, it would be more profitable to learn how to boil down trees and farm wastes for synthetic petroleum than to waste this product on non-medicinal uses.

End of the first primary school year
(Harry Potter - theme)

July 1987
Dursley neighborhood
Little Whining, Surrey, England

Little Harry Potter had been out of school – officially – only since yesterday evening, but already the summer vacations were lining up to be messy and painful, if not dangerous.

Firstly, his poor maligned companion Dryskholl had died last week, after a quick descent into
senility, loss of magic and a three day coma. The only comfort being that he died in his sleep without ever waking again, so he didn't suffer or realize how much he degenerated. Harry also had the pitiful satisfaction that he was present when the young house-elf had his last moment of lucidity, giving him a friend to hold onto as his diseased mind gave out at last.

Dryskholl had been buried in the cemetery at Godric's Hollow, in the House Potter sector, near other honored elves and human employees that had served his family in the small village over the centuries. The child had been able to attend the funeral because he had used one of the most basic and fundamental prayers of the Cult of Hades; the summoning of Tenebrous Pioneers.

They are quite an odd bunch, these short beings. Standing two feet tall and draped in black abbatial vestments so opaque they actually absorb light around them, the Tenebrous Pioneers were also called "Little Death" or "Spark of Darkness" by the diverse Faiths. The Pioneers are, as their name says, the basic and innumerable workmen of the Cult of Hades, responsible for landscaping and gardening of all church locations, tilling batches of fresh Nightsoil for rituals, ceremoniously ferrying and burying the honored dead in the plots, crypts and mausoleums around Hadenshire, as well as the general maintenance and repairs of Nepenthe, the City of Bones. In a few cases they will also help to design and build new churches and abbeys in the mortal worlds if they were summoned properly for this task by a spell-user who knows the Old Rite for it.

While cute in a droll, cartoony way, Tenebrous Pioneers are actually the most respected and feared beings amongst all the Living Gods because they are classed as 'Minor God' for the weakest of the group, up to 'Major God' for the strongest. But, besides raw magic Power, that respect is given because these entities have lived and died, and gone back between, in such a fashion that they can take in the worst War Wards or Siege Spells invented by humans without flinching, and can usually deflect or dispel anything the Exalted and Celestials of any Faith can dish out. Being small autonomous incarnations of Death-made-material means that it is virtually impossible to destroy, kill, or render comatose a Pioneer. Plus, their large Cleaving Scythe and Lugubrious Lantern are powerful god-crafted relics that allow them to channel some of Hades' more primal powers right onto the fool who attacks or offends them.

However, in a comical twist of the multiverse, it has always been the immuable law of Yggdrasil that any being who can contact the church of Hades can negotiate to rent the services of the Tenebrous Pioneers. The price is fixed at no less, yet never more, than one platinum coin per year of the Hadean calendar, which is 17 months of 50 days at 36 hours per day, or converted to Earth time, some three and a half years. So, being recently anointed amongst the ranks of the Hadean Ecclesiastes as a novice, little Harry Potter made his first inter-dimensional contact with the Faith's home-base. He quickly rented himself a Tenebrous Pioneer to help carry and bury his late lamented friend with honor, despite being the only mortal present at the ceremony which he had to preside himself as well. The goblin account manager almost choked to death on his laughter when he heard why Harry wanted to convert ICW golden galleons over to the Galactic Standard of platinum coinage which were worth a lot each. When the banker realized that Harry, the Heir Presumptive of Houses Potter, Black and Peverell had successfully been anointed in the ranks of the Church of the Dead, he had a lucid dream of Dumbledore's head atop a mausoleum's ornately spiked roof line. Just for that, he gave the boy a permanent 1% discount when converting his Earth monies, magical or mundane, into platinum coins.

Harry held a small wake for a few hours in Lily's trunk, in the luxurious apartment he had shared with the elfling, the cold body laid near the small ecumenical shrine they had crafted to worship the many deities that had helped them. Using the travel altar he had been left by Bishop Gloutnay, Harry held a short grave-side service to consecrate the grave and bless the casket that had been crafted by him and Dryskholl months ago, when he was still sane and capable. The Pioneer had opened a Hadean Gate between the trunk and cemetery then floated the coffin at pompously slow
pace, which was incidentally the only speed it could whelm. As the Faith declares "Death is never late nor early, it never waits, is never impatient, and will always be ready to receive you with open arms when you arrive to your appointed Time". That meant that Tenebrous Pioneers could never hurry for any activity or reason, but in the same way Time itself seemed to bend around them, flowing differently or not at all where they were involved.

So, the short darksome being respectfully floated the sculpted wooden casket in its natural, pompous pace while Harry tried to find where the sounds of the reed pipes and voices chanting the ancient funeral dirge were coming from. Realizing it was a magical projection and not actual ghosts or phantom musical instruments, the child let it go to concentrate on his walking through the mystic gateway, his first experience in using such transport without his former parents holding him as he moved. The grave-side prayers were mournful and lonely, but thankfully the Pioneer’s presence helped stave off the onset of loneliness. At the end of service, it presented its Lugubrious Lantern over the grave, granting the deceased elfling a sure path into The Light and Judgment so he could be awarded his fair afterlife promptly.

After the pitifully stark ceremony was over, the diminutive deity used its long, curved scythe to move the dirt over the coffin, completing the burial correctly. Then it waved the scythe at the head of the plot, making a granite stele rise from the earth, the divine magick sculpting images and texts on all the surfaces as it emerged to stand guard over the honored dead. Finally done with the landscaping, Harry was able to place a small reef of hand-picked greenery and flowers at the foot of the headstone, and light a small blessed wax candle he had fashioned himself.

That was the end of his first year of living away from the Dursley's full time, and he had no idea what the coming year had in store for him.

Preview of chapter 2;

Harry's entire elementary schooling is glossed over quickly as most of it is unimportant.

The first year of Hogwarts is also glossed over, covering only the bare events of highlights, followed by the summer vacations back in Surrey.

It is at this point that Dobby makes his appearance, and things get dicey for everybody, especially those who don't know what the child and elf are planning.
The author wishes to express thanks to anyone who may read this story and encourages them to leave reviews, comments or even flame it hard. As with any who try their hand at publicly expressing an idea or story concept, all feedback is important and welcome. 

Disclaimer: I do not own Harry Potter, the Torchlight games, nor any other sci-fi or fantasy series, movies, comics, cartoons or news items used in this fiction as they belong to the creators, broadcasters or publishers who put them out for consumption by the public.

THE RUINED PEOPLES

second chapter: childhood of pains

Summer vacations 1987

(Harry Potter - theme)

July & August 1987
Surrey county
The British Isles & Realms

Little 7 year old Harry Potter's summer vacations had begun with the sad events that concluded in the burial of his most precious friend and ally, the young house-elf Dryskholl. He was now alone in this life, devoid of true friends or social contacts to sustain him through the depressive period of grief and loss. As such, he lacked both emotional uplift and moral boundaries required to guide his way through the process of accepting and surpassing the loss in a healthy manner.

Poor Harry alternated between hiding away inside Lily's dimensional trunk or haunting the empty streets around Surrey, self-medicating his depression with cigarettes of cheap tobacco, hemp or hashish and equally cheap booze, anything the local back-alley pusher had to sell.

The sight of the very small, prepubescent boy being slightly buzzed so that he was swaying unsteadily on his legs had attracted the bad sort of attention. Several times Harry had to resort to small knives hidden in his sleeves or pockets to fight off perverts, leaving most with scars on their hands, arms and faces. On two occasions he had to pull out from a holster spelled invisible with elf wards the cal.38 Saturday Night Special revolver he always carried, even inside school. The summer of 1987 saw the unresolved deaths of three men of high economic standing, all found in the area of Surrey, south of London, shot in the crotch and left to bleed to death in dank, filthy alleys.

The police never allowed any information to circulate on what the media had dubbed "The Pedo Eunuchefier of Surrey" no matter what pressures the community tried. Among the underground networks of pedophiles, perverts and pimps, the news was going around fast that the county was turning against their trade, and the people in the business needed to be more careful. Pimps became less flashy, less visible, and hired bodyguards. Brothels reinforced their buildings and hired more
guards, also forcing clients to leave their weapons at the vestibule when they entered to purchase their vices. But still, before September of 1987 came, another two roaming pervs who were from out of town were found shot in the pubes, and left to bleed out in dark places.

While the cops looked like incompetent rubes, and the higher castes of the economic and political powers of Britain were starting to feel threatened in their sacro-sanct right to exert said power to their whims, the ordinary population felt satisfaction that -somebody- was doing the job as it should get done at long last. Without ever giving any official public notice, the hierarchy of the national constabulary in London sent down an order to the Surrey precincts that this seditious felon who was killing their "Good and noble fellow Englishmen" had to be put down like a rabid cur as soon as he was spotted, and sooner if it was a woman rebelling against men.

Harry, of course, didn't really know about this because it had been Dryskholl that had insisted he read the papers of muggle and magical Britain every morning with breakfast. He had explained that a proper House Lord needed fresh information to make enlightened decisions, adding that only Dumbledore would want Harry to be ignorant or cut-off from the public medias. The child usually read the papers or listened to the radio and TV with pleasure, but now that he was alone doing so seemed to only remind him of what he lost, so he didn't remember what he saw or heard. He stopped watching the soap operas that the elfling had found so amusing and captivating because it wasn't fun watching them alone. Half the pleasure of watching those had been Dryskholl's reactions to the plot twists, a bit like the elf laughed at Harry's fan-boy attitude towards English sports teams. It would take well into November before that mental state was rectified.

Inside Lily's trunk, Harry plunged himself to the point of drowning in the subjects of muggle and magical studies his mum had left behind, in prevision of her masteries training. Harry found out just how attached to modernizing the mystical side of society his late mother had been, as she planned on being a combination of apothecary & pharmacist as well as surgeon and healer. Not lacking in ambition or drive to succeed, she had aimed for the equivalent of two university doctorates and three magical masteries before she was twenty-five years old. The masteries could be helped along with several powerful potions that she was learning to brew herself to cut down costs, as the brewer's skills and work time accounted for ¾ of the price.

One of those potions she had already finished and made several doses that she was selling 'under the table' to people who had not attended Hogwarts because they were not from influential families, or muggle-born under the protection of Dumbledore and the Royal Edict on the Right to Magical Education of 1002ad. It warmed Harry's heart to see that his mother had as little care for the laws of Welsh Wiccan society as he did, when he realized she had become a potion-pusher since the end of her fourth year in magical school. The potion she had prepared was one of the first permanent boosters that Harry would ingest. It taught the user the language and basic skills for Ancient Runes, similar to the class taught at Hogwarts, but of a performance caliber in tune with the ICW exams and diplomas, thus justifying the 150 Galleons Lily asked for each set of vials.

It was important to understand that an ordinary student from a working-class family would probably have an allowance of 1 or 2 Galleons per month for personal expenditures in years one through four, then about 4 or 5 Galleons per month from fifth year on. It took a good chance at a solid result from a spell or potion for most families to fork over 150 Galleons, especially to a kit bought from an unlicensed child. On the other hand, the same potion sold in a certified apothecary would set them back by nearly 800 Galleons, so it was a clear choice of having a chance at improving their kid's life or going without. And Lily's reputation as brewer and hedge-witch was solidly established, a fact proven by the client list, order tickets and accounting books left in the study of the trunk. His mother had been making a net profit of nearly 200 Galleon per month throughout third and fourth year by using old equipment in an unused classroom. When she began to use new devices and fresh components, the performance of her brews increased so much that she
was netting around 350 Galleons monthly in fifth year. That was almost the same as the British Wizarding World's minimum salary for full-time adult workers in boutiques! And she still performed in her classes in the top 1% of the entire school, all years confounded.

Harry was proud of the woman's accomplishments, and trusted her brewing skills just like the hundreds of people in her list did. He took the first potion gladly, as it gave him a piece of his parents that nobody would ever be able to remove from him. It would take a month to get the full effects, by drinking one vial each night for thirty days, then the entire foundation for the Runes up to NEWT grade would be installed in his mind. Lily's notes said clearly that you could only use a single set of knowledge per month unless you were a trained mind-mage or psionicist who had developed the skill multi-tracked-mind to process parallel installations. That was something that his mother's notes discouraged before at least age 11, due to the fact it could damage the brains natural growth and innate wiring, thusly stopping or nullifying Talents and Gifts he was supposed to inherit from his ancestors. Harry did the Runes in July, and a course on English literature & medias in August to help shore up his capacity to express himself when speaking with the Goblins or listening to the radio and TV.

Second school year; 1987-88

(Harry Potter - theme)

1987-88
Surrey county
The British Isles & Realms

The start of the new school year at Van Uttebatten primary academy was quite a shock from the last time. For one thing, the teachers and custodians didn't each openly carry a wicked rattan cane in hand as crude demonstration of power over their charges. Which, incidentally, also committed a public show of weakness from adults, terrified of little children stealing said power out of their hands. Instead, it was announced that the county would be enforcing the national rules that stated only the principal could cane a student, and only over clothing, with at least one teacher or custodian present as witness. The days of several men violently dragging the kids to a locked basement room to molest & injure them were well and truly behind them. Now, conventional detentions and an occasional bout of cleaning the edifices or schoolyard were the punishments to be expected.

The second change was of a visible nature too. Instead of having custodians and janitors chosen for being taller than 6' 6" and weighing above 250 pounds to intimidate the kids through simple presentation, all the support personnel were now shorter than 5' 9" and under 200 pounds. They had also been vetted by the county's superintendent, and the local police station, to make certain perverts and thieves no longer laired inside their school. Another very different aspect was that a quarter of the new hires were women fresh from Uni, instead of angry old men kicked out of the police or army for a variety of misconducts. The other jarring novelty was that three of the newly hired staff were not white skinned, but instead two immigrants from the Indies and one descendant of homeland slaves brought in from Jamaica in the 1700's. The new employees' lack of aggressivity and gut roiling anger was almost visible in their body language and facial expressions, as they placidly watched the lines of children sit down in the assembly hall for the Beginning Address of the new school year.

Harry wasn't stupid, and he had varied sources of information, too. He knew that three more of the
old teachers had been replaced during the summer break. Two were gone to retirement to hide graver incidents nobody in the county admins wanted to admit in public. Another was a simple transfer that had been requested for nigh on five years already, and finally the paperwork got passed the teachers' union and admins, thus clearing the way for the person's departure to a different sector of the UK.

Harry's mundane classes were simple because they weren't magical, but they weren't boring, if simply because they implied contact with living people instead of the 'unseen servant' dweomer that did the cleaning and cooking in the trunk. The boy simply didn't have the emotional stability to hire anew house-elf, even if Gringotts could have found him one in a few weeks. It did force Harry to sober up from his acquired taste for hard gin and cooking Sherry, or the costlier Gnomish Calvados his dad preferred. And he also had to lay off smoking his antique meerschaum pipe, or the bigger yet equally antiquated glass & copper nargileh, lest the odors cling to his person or clothes, making the teachers ask very uncomfortable questions about his habits or worse, his nonexistent home life. Which was a right shame as the boy liked having a good, slow smoke with his small drink of alcohol as he read through the diaries and almanac's of the Houses he belonged to each evening, as he learned where he came from and what he should aim for, besides destroying Dumbledore.

{ HP } --- { Have a life, why don't you? } --- { HP }

However, Harry's enforced sobriety regimen had a good side-effect since he needed something to pass the nervous energy from his small bout of withdrawal. The child began to visit the school's playground more assiduously, thus making the first human friends he ever had. Playing hopscotch or marbles may seem like a babyish waste of time and effort when compared to what the Potter 'Blood Compact' had left in his head, but they were in fact vital developmental activities for children to be healthy.

Harry also tried to have peaceful walks around the neighborhood in the evening or early mornings to air out his mind from living so tightly confined to the trunk or school all the time. He went to the small, forlorn pawn shop a few streets over at least once a week, mostly to have a chat and share a cuppa with the old lady that owned the place. Marigold Thismeh had no family left, and the business wasn't going so well, as the new giant stores like Tesco were pumping out more and more non-durable items that couldn't be repaired or reused, just thrown to the bin and replaced by the year's new model. The economy of consumption was well upon them, and small shops that did repairs, exchanges and crafted new devices on commission were becoming a thing of the past. Since she had less clients than ever, Harry's Saturday visits were pretty much the only reason she bothered to open the boutique on that day anymore, so it gave both a little something to look forward to, and a kind person to speak with over warm tea.

It was also the reason Harry started putting efforts into learning to cook and bake. According to The Old Ways, he had to bring a small food item as tithe of gratitude for the host granting him haven during his travels. Technically, the 'Unseen Servant' could do a very good job indeed, but it felt like he was cheating the moral point of the cultural Tradition when he did that. If he bought a box at a baker's shop, then it would be obvious yet acceptable as everything was above board. So, driven by one of the rare positive emotional impulses he had of late, he put his mind to read recipe books and cooking guides, while programming the 'Servant' dweomer to act as a tutor. Harry eventually managed to produce cookies, muffins, scones and assorted small breads that he wasn't ashamed to present to another being for sharing. This small gesture of compassion and friendship made Marigold even more happy with opening the shop on Saturday, as she wasn't the best baker. She would supply the tea and fixings while her juvenile guest brought the solids.

{ HP } --- { Young minds need feeding } --- { HP }
Another small but happy change was that Harry could now use the school's renovated library, which had been found and unlocked. The previous managers had decided that children between ages six and eleven needed firm discipline and correction to walk the narrow path of morality, not all the lefty brain-rotting pipe-dreams printed in books and newspapers. Therefore, during a summer break, they had put thick curtains over the windows and laid drywall sheets over the doors, covering everything with plaster and paint to make the library disappear, like a bad dream come morning light. The new administrators had been appalled at this, and so had the county’s people, so the decrepit old room was found, unlocked and renovated until it was usable safely by anybody. Harry hadn't been truly convinced about the changed situation, but he visited the place in its third week of open services.

The young boy found brand new collections of leisure texts in the Fantasy and Science-Fiction styles that made his mind explode with wonder, excitement and ingenuity. He particularly liked to read the Fantasy, Dystopian and Utopian kinds of worlds because they related so much to his life. In particular, he asked the librarian about Messiahs, Saviors, Prophecies and Quest Heroes, because he wanted to know if there existed books on how to analyze & predict how those stories were told. The young man, a Pakistani immigrant barely twenty-three and just out of Uni, laughed kindly at the heavy-handed approach to literature the diminutive boy wanted to undertake. Still chuckling, he guided Harry through the stacks towards the section for advanced literary studies and textual analytics, which Harry looked at rapidly, dismissing three books out of hand, stating "I know those already", so he grabbed a pile of other manuals then sat to read through all six quite quickly. Despite his amusement at the child's proclivities, the young employee was always helpful, and cheerful, whenever the boy asked his opinion or just wanted to chat when he brought back the books he had loaned for the week. The relationship would be solidly set by the Christmas vacations, so much that Harry baked the young man a Yule Log to bring home to his family, event that had the school staff gossiping amusedly for days.

The most troubling, yet helpful, change to overcome Van Uttebatten academy was that the county had looked over the statistics for the clientele that attended the school, and found out about how many were chronically poor, underfed, unable to get healed right, or victimized at home but not enough for CPS to have the right to remove them or intervene fully in the house. The admins even found that nearly 17 kids were in a situation similar to Harry's, being on the cusp of homelessness or living in a youth shelter run by the Anglican church, five streets away. That made the county execs decide to get radical; they ordered the school to be opened from 8:00am till 6:00pm every day of the week, including week-ends and holidays around the year. The goal was to give the kids a place to eat, shower and be given basic social services to keep them off the streets as much as possible, and without implicating adults that could get violent if their dirty secrets were exposed by their young victims.

Because the county had to do so much structural renovations and clean-up in the campus, and open longer hours seven days per week, plus the new teachers, custodians and janitors, made that the budgets were not balancing. To be honest, the situation at Van Uttebatten had put the county's schooling division in the red, punching a hole in the year's financial predictions. This meant that they could not rectify the pressing problem of complying with national standards about having an infirmary & nurse on campus at each hour of open services. The temporary solution was to establish a formal agreement with the paupers' clinic a few streets away, to handle the worse cases by bringing the child over to them, as had been the method up to date. In the coming years, the school would receive the money to refurbish the old infirmary suite located next to the reception desk in the admin edifice. They would also be able to hire some retired nurses to work four hour shifts in rotations to cover all the open hours throughout the year. And, as these were short shifts spread out with very little traffic in the infirmary to deal with anyways, the people working part-
time wouldn't get worn out so much they couldn't function, even if they were elderly and a bit slower than usual.

While the new constant traffic of people around the school sometimes got on Harry's nerves compared to the old way of having the entire campus to himself half the time, it did do a great deal of good towards healing his damaged soul, mind and temper. Having to be around other kids also meant that he was less depressive, therefore less prone to self-medicating with alcohol or smoking herbs in his pipes. By the time Christmas came, the child had reduced his consumption of alcohol to a quarter ounce of excellent quality Gnomish Calavados or Halfling Sherry as complement to a late evening dessert, just before going to bed. He had also stopped smoking so much, passing from two or three pipes per day, down to one slow smoke on Saturday evening, as he sipped warm tea while watching the week-end movie on television, as a way to rest from the stresses of the school week.

{ HP } --- { Crafty brat } --- { HP }

One of the small durable projects that Harry gave himself for the year was to modify the aesthetics of the Nazi dagger & pistol he had stolen from his uncle's secret stash, when he left the house a year ago. Using the 'shaping fingertips' taught him by Dryskholl as well as the tools in the trunk, the child stripped off the offending iconography easily, but blocked when came time to replace it with the crest of House Potter and his personal glyph as it currently was in his Soul Aura. His attempts showed him that his artistic talents and manual abilities were somewhat lacking, so he looked for what he could do to change the situation. The solution was simple; he looked in the books of spells and techniques left by his mother all over the trunk. He had seen dozens of books in the workshop itself, surely some were about crafting, smithing and other artisanal pursuits?

The child was quite right, given that Lily had been stuck with exactly the same problems as he got when she decided to merge magical and mundane ways together. On the muggle side, she didn't have the diplomas or permits to purchase equipments that were reserved for the medical professions. Unless she had a license and was listed in a syndicate or professional order, she couldn't get so much as glass beakers for her laboratory. In the wizarding community, they also had laws about permits and licenses, but those could be gone around if you had a big family name or the 'Universal Key', meaning a pile of money. But still, even if she could have paid for all the magical healing stuff, nobody in the established wizard workshops wanted to waste time at crafting anything that looked the least bit muggle. And the professional healer's tools were dreadfully expensive on their own, too! So, she came to the inescapable conclusion that she had to craft the pieces and devices herself, thus leading her to assemble a small library dedicated to all the artisanal activities, mundane and magical alike.

Harry was wide-eyed as he contemplated the books on such varied subjects as gardening, farming and ranching to know how fresh and reliable parts of plants or animals were before wasting time and efforts on crafting an item that would break, or burn, as soon as it was used. This was complemented by a selection of spell-books for basic crafts, carpentry and heavy woodworks, up to and including carts, edifices, and sea ships. Likewise, there were books on prospecting the topsoil and underground, to find stones, gems, crystals or metals for smithing anything from kitchen utensils to enchanted protection amulets. There books on making diverse types of glass, pottery or ceramics for the panoply of vials, jars and tubes that any brewer, apothecary or alchemist needed in their lab. Then Harry found some books on gemology, stone lore, crystal evaluation plus magical crystallurgy, even the severely monitored Ember-smithing!

For his immediate needs, Harry followed the opinions of the family portraits, going back to the study to locate a book of beginner's spell-lists. He soon found the thick tome in the reference section next to the main desk. Flipping through, he put in colored paper tags to mark 'Prosaics;
Archivistics' and 'Prosaics; Library Mastery' as the first two lists he should learn. They both related to producing or acquiring data in any form or medium, and processing said data for a report, graph or map. Archivistics was short and could all be learned in one go, but Library Mastery was a longer list, that Harry could only learn safely the first few spells. Having learned those two set of spells up to his energetic and mental capacity would immediately come in quite handy when he would learn the other spell-lists, later on in the year.

After a few months of efforts at part-time in the evenings, he had passed through the two admin spell-lists and was now able to discretely use them to hasten his school work or leisure reading. Which of course meant that any magical studies he did would now progress at a fair clip, making him feel like a born-scholar instead of the unwanted wildling he had lived as for six years.

Now mentally equipped for much better mental processing, little Harry went to the workshop to find and learn 'Prosaics; Structure Law' followed by 'Prosaics; Forging Mastery'. He had thought to limit himself to those but read 'Prosaics; Warrior Law' thus seeing that it included a few crude crafting or maintenance spells too. Above all though, the Warrior Law had spells that could help directly in a fight or survival situation, like if he had to run away to a rural zone, so he took the time to learn that too before taking up his crafting project. The results he got would certainly prove his choice right.

When Harry worked on the blade and gun, he changed their colors by bathing the items in simple potions from his mum's folios, adjusting the sheaths to match. He didn't bless the items in the name of Hades yet, as he didn't feel ready for such an important step in his religious path. He removed all icons or serial numbers from the Nazi regime, made the wood black and the steel lavenderpurple, with white scriptworkes to anchor the elf-wards against detection, perception and theft or losing the items. These two were more symbolic than utilitary, so he preferred to leave them in the trunk as they could be 'called' to his hands when needed.

Harry used one of the empty warehouses of the dimensional trunk as makeshift shooting gallery to practice with all the types of low-powered pistols and hunting rifles that Dryskoll had collected during his short freedom. The human child's hands were still too small or weak for the bigger models or army-grade shells, but the small cal.38 revolver was nice, as were the single-shot Derringers and old World War II Liberator. As long as Harry stayed in caliber .22 or .38, he didn't hurt his fingers or wrists, and could practice safely enough since nobody bothered him where he did his training. A few quick spells set up papers targets on wooden posts, and he had his range ready. For the knives, he used his new crafting spells to build a few almost-dummies that he had seen in films on television. These were vertical wooden poles that were allowed to swivel so that they emulated the retaliation strikes of an enemy. Hit one limb and the force you put in makes the whole pole swing just as hard towards your opposite side, so you have to either block, parry or evade. Yes, it wasn't a very quick movement, and there was never any variation to the response pattern, but it was all that Harry had, and it was far better than any street urchin or young thug would ever have access to. Some cheap self-training is better than none at all.

Summer vacations 1988

(Harry Potter - theme)

1988
Surrey county
The British Isles & Realms
Following the child growth chart that his mother had written, Harry only used potions to bolster his mind or skill-sets during the summer months, when he wasn't being crammed full by the school's official tuition plans. As soon as July came and school let out, he began to drink the potion to learn Latin in its pigdin, mercantile and Clerical versions, to be able to understand and cast the wizarding spells common in Britannia, Europa, Slavia and most of the Mediterranean.

This was followed in August by the potion for Mathematics, Geometry, Volumetry, Calculus, Statistics and Arithmancy. This entire system of lores and skills was almost a quarter of the entire scriptural magicks domain, a vital learning for managing his money, estate and businesses, and fundamental to all exact branches of magicks. One simply didn't go into potions or alchemy without being able to count or extrapolate correctly, and all of transfiguration, transmutation and transmogrification depended on geometry & volumetry for their functioning. Taking that potion would do wonders for his aptitudes at higher learning, giving him an incredible edge that few could dare to contemplate. And again, at 188 Galleons per set, this batch was expensive for bootleg stuff, but Man!, was it ever worth every Knut his mom put in it!

Continuing his foray into magical self-education, Harry decided to see why his mother made such a fuss about hedge-craft, potions, alchemy and healing. He could understand muggle medicine well enough as it was shown in the newspapers and TV often enough that it wasn't much of a mystery, but the magical counterpart wasn't something he'd witnessed much of. As it was, Lily's portrait gave him the advice to read a few lore manuals for starters, to get a feel for the fields of concepts and skills before he took on the spells. Her image told him that every person who planned to live part-time or more in the magical world needed to learn herbology, potions and hedge-craft until at least OWL level to be functionally autonomous. Going all the way to NEWT's was preferred, and following the ICW standards was the only way to be taken seriously as the British testing & licensing system had degenerated into a bad joke over the last two centuries. While Lily was always ready to blame Albus for all the ills of the planet, this debacle was something he inherited, then gleefully continued because he wanted the same result; idiots who always perform at levels inferior to himself.

So, Harry took a trip to the infirmary. Mostly just by walking through a door in the central corridor of his trunk, eh, eh, eh... Harry had only rarely visited this imposing, intimidating hall because he had suffered enough pain, injuries and shame in his young life that imagining the ugly, bloody work happening in this suite of rooms gave him jitters and goosebumps. Still, needs must and all that rot...

The boy read the preparatory guides and manuals destined for children or young mothers and serious hedge-wizards, then found a few spell-lists to match his curiosity. He took up the very basic 'Prosaics; Helpful Magicks' because it was generic everyday stuff that could help him find objects or move heavy things and repair better than his Childish dweomers could. Then he started learning the first few levels of 'Prosaics; Sampling Ways' to be able to harvest, prepare and accurately measure the components of any crafting or potion he wanted to do. This finally led Harry to his premier goal, the 'Prosaics; Healing Touch' which he could learn the beginning levels without risk. In fact, this list was conceived with shortened incantations and reduced gestures not only to help the rescue-wizard waste less time, but also to make it easier for semi-spell-users or complete mundanes to learn and use.

As he read through the three spell-lists he had chosen for the duration of this summer, Harry began to have a nasty feeling in the back of his mind. The further he read, the more uneasy he became, until he saw with his own eyes the declaration that made him want to vomit his lunch atop the offending pages of delirium.
Purely, utterly, born-as-it muggles could learn to employ ACTIVE magicks.

Mere, unimportant, lesser life-form muggles could CAST spells or EMPOWER runes.

The book with the basic family medicine spell-list was rather definitive about it, too. Anybody who knew how to speak, count, read & write and sing, should make the effort to establish contact with the minuscule core of magick inside their body and soul to render it 'Awake', even if they never raise above the level of a Squib, which is actually the name given to "muggles who have an active core but lack capacity for a fully magical profession or artistry" according to the authors. Anybody with better access to their core able to pass the magick saturation & replenishment rate tests are considered 'semi-user' of one Realm of magic, with capacity ranks going up to semi-multi, pure-user, hybrid, archmage-class, arcane-class, and High Harkys classes at the very top.

Being in training to become Anti-Champion of Hades, Harry was classed as 'Pure-user of one Realm (channeling)' but his biological ancestry and activated Blood-Law made him from birth a 'Pure-user of one Realm (essence)'. Together, both capacities forcibly made him into a hybrid user of two Realms, and he still had some partial psionics abilities he could unlock at some point in the future.

Blinking in utter amazement, Harry realized that all the magical or wizarding governments in function, and most churches too, lied to the people spuriously about how magick existed and who could learn it. Then the conclusion hit the child like a freight train going downhill without brakes to control its path. It wasn't about who 'could' learn magick, but about who 'could be controlled' once they had it inside them, and who 'could be reliable' to help the Powerful of society remain in those places of Power they had obtained or trafficked out of the population. Like the way Albus Dumbledore had usurped his way through every stratum of society from a very poor birthing as a half-blood, all the way up to Headmaster of Hogwarts, Chief Warlock of the British Wizengamot, and Supreme Mugwump (what a dumbly childish title!) of the International Confederation of Warlocks.

That was why groups like the Welsh Wiccan Ministry, the White Council, the Watchers and the Librarians all agreed to keep magic a secret from the muggles! They presently had something inside of them that was SPECIAL, that made them feel above and beyond the mere barbarians who wallowed in muck at their feet, the MUGGLES. Laying his head back into the chair, Harry realized that the logic behind this planetary lie was the same as the Nazis. Some poor, miserable wannabees without capacities or talents or their own decided to use the one thing they had since birth that couldn't be stolen or copied, the color of their skin, and mounted a doomsday cult on that sole premise. Once the racial bigotry was enshrined as the reason for their superiority, just as all of Europa had done since the 1400's to justify enslaving Africans or Arabs, then they added to the list of inferiors anything that threatened their place of authority, like any other religion or philosophy. The Nazis had just copied the prevalent psychological movance of the societies around them, not the other way around. The populations were already racist, sexist and ageist for centuries, so adding a cleavage based on magical abilities or ancestry at some point of history would have been easy-peasy for those who enacted the system.

The magicals of Britannia, Europa, Slavia and most of the Mediterranean watershed had been strongly influenced by the Roman Empire, who were avowed bigots, cruel conquerors, enslavers and exterminators of anything they couldn't control. And even if they did control you, if you were too dissimilar to what happened in Rome, or existed in Italy, the Empire would probably go and 'pacify' your deviance by pillaging, burning and salting the land where you dwelt, leaving thousands of crucified corpses in their wake. It was the Roman 'wizemen' who taught, then imposed, the arts & uses of 'Bastonnis' foci to the colonies and conquered victims of the Imperial armies. It was by Roman Law that wands replaced cauldrons, fetishes, runestones and cromlech as
the -STANDARD- tool of modern, well educated spell-casting, until it became the only acceptable form of focus, lest one get a governmental license to do otherwise. Good English magicals were now only sorcerers who used wands bought at a licensed wand-crafter's shop, and anybody else was either a menial hedge-wizard unworthy of attention, or a great philosopher that needed costly and esoteric foci to plumb the tumultuous depths of the Magyck Weaves.

It was all about nothing else than CONTROL and being able to favor those who kept the elites in power, as long as their fragile egos and vapid neuroses were caressed appropriately. The bigotry that wizards felt towards muggles wasn't about being superior to magicless inferiors, it was about hiding their fear that their one and only distinctive characteristic could one day no longer be exclusive to their small, tightly policed sectarian groupuscule.

Harry did end up vomiting his lunch in the bin next to the desk, and then spent the rest of the week-end abed with a fever as his poor brain tried to cogitate all of the high-level philosophy, politics, civics, laws and religious history that he had just put in his head the wrong way, and without any sorts of warning ahead of the act.

"It hurts, dammit! It hurts so damned much!" the boy whined piteously from under his sheets, despite the anti-migraine potion he took.

Alas, poor child; such was the price asked for knowledge of Truth and Reality.

Change, adaptation and growth of self, or else implosion and self-destruction.

Harry would learn, evolve and grow, and be better as a person for it all.

\{ HP \} --- \{ Small criminal matters \} --- \{ HP \}

The constabulary's dreaded nightmare, 'The Pedo Eunuchefier of Surrey', was back in business this year, living up to his name by leaving a wake of four dead men, two dead women, and seven handicapped sods. Nobody knew what the crimes they committed were, as the murderous felon who judged and punished them left the surviving victims in brain-damaged comas. It was widely suspected though that these were not sexual perverts, but instead adults who had committed violence on children under the guise of 'discipline' since they were not shot in the crotch, when the proven pedos were all bled to death via destroyed genitals. The media were having a field day again, the Ministry of the Interior in London was denying everything en-masse as usual, and the local town council was being torn apart between those wanting to enact vigilance patrols by armed civilians, versus those wanting to thank the killer for cleaning their town at last.

This time though, Harry did listen to the radio and TV, and read the mundane and magical papers assiduously each day. He was even subscribed under fake names by Dryskholl to several international periodicals that carried bilingual editions aimed at the English nations. The Europeans were hysterical with laughter at the plight of England suffering the reincarnation of Jack-the-Ripper, while the Americans were practically cheering the killer in his choice of victims and punishments for their sins. The Russians were being bearish (and boorish) towards everybody, while the French snobbishly reminded everybody that such events did not occur in France. The response to French medias by the Germans and Hungarians gave Harry a fit of giggles that lasted long into the evening that day, as they pointed to French serial killers that emerged since WW-II.

\{ HP \} --- \{ Scholastic betterment \} --- \{ HP \}

One good thing about having the school opened all day, all year long, was that they had to have custodians, cooks and one librarian present at all times. The teachers and admins did the regular class-time schedule only, with longer hours to close the year's reports and budgets. This meant that
Harry could now go in the cafeteria for a snack when he wanted, and could sit in the great room with his new friends to play cards or board games without being bothered by anybody with foul intentions, unlike the public parks.

It also meant that the school was taken a bit out-of-sorts this year because nobody understood just how popular the new open hours and services would be, especially with the children themselves. Then again, the types of disfavored clienteles implicated should have told them from the start this would happen. So, the county informed the families of students that, starting next year, there would be thematic summer camps held by the Boy Scouts of England, arts & crafts groups, and amateur sports leagues. Harry was now excited to see what would be offered, and how he could get enrolled without the Dursley's being involved. He hadn't seen or heard from them in almost two full years by this point, and didn't miss them at all.

Third school year; 1988-89

(Harry Potter - theme)

1988-89
Surrey county
The British Isles & Realms

Harry Potter was happy like a clam in the sand on a warm beach. He had just passed the newly instated mandatory health check by one of the school's freshly hired elderly nurses. Why was he happy? Because he had finally caught up to the weight & height averages for his age group. He wasn't the runty cur of the year anymore; that disgrace fell to a poor boy from the other side of the district.

His third year was going to be interesting, to say the least.

The school had modified the programs for the physical education classes to include more training in calisthenics and athletics rather than just playing ball games, track running and swimming for beginners. The coaches now had to get the kids through several standardized exercise routines that even included throwing discus and javelins like in the Olympics. Basic track runs had been replaced by Parkours with mobile obstacles that got changed every week to keep it varied and demanding on the children. The pool now served for water polo and tag-relay speed swimming. This led to a bunch of happily exhausted but refreshed and healthy kids, for a change.

Likewise, the school had changed the very basic and drab arts class into full-out wood and pottery crafting with artisanal manual tools, plus some cloth and leather artistry too. From third year up, it was workshop training with stationary powered drills, saws, planers and grinders and working with glass or plastics. Those in the last year of elementary would learn to use acetylene torches and MIG welders on metal pieces to create small statues or repair junk devices back to function. That was a whole lot different than just coloring sheets barely fit for kindergarten babies, back thirty years ago! Now, the kids got to try things that would help them to decide in what kinds of secondary classes they wanted to progress, and if a specialized trade-school would be a better fit than the local public high school that was only a generalist formation.

Given the two boosting potions for literacy and mathematics he had drunk over the last two years, plus the research & administration spell-lists he learned, Harry was performing well ahead of his age peers, but only he knew of it. He continued his system of displaying only an average intellect,
character and abilities so as to make certain that anybody who looked only at the written report cards and disciplinary records would see nothing that spoke of skills, Powers, Talents or Gifts that could threaten their secret, illegal plans.

However, third year was also the first year that he had standard tests at the end. So, Harry did his usual average, then gave his best on the tests to give the impression that he was able to grasp the subject matter easily, just not interested in making any efforts on regular work during the year. His report card showed that he had literally aced all the government tests, thus skewing upwards his grade-point average rather amazingly high for such an ordinary child.

Harry had become aware that there were two sets of watchers lurking around the county of Surrey at present, and neither meant well for his life and welfare.

There were three elderly squib ladies who lived alone in borderline poverty in small cottages that they toiled to upkeep cleanly. They were put in place by Dumbledore as a back-up to his wards and illegal taps into the Wizarding Ministry's sensor grid. These houses and people were easy to identify & avoid as they were located near the Dursley house, not the school campus. In fact, Dumbledore's laziness and preconceived notions played against him as he thought that the muggle curriculum had barely changed since before WW-II. He truly believed such lacking program of schooling was too idiotic to instruct Harry into ways or abilities that could threaten his masterfully wrought plans. Harry could not possibly become intelligent or autonomous enough to take on adult wizards and win, not if he had just that kind of handicapped education, so he let it be without supervision beyond the squib hirelings.

The second group of watchers was much more direct, and far less illegal, than what the old goat fucker had put in place. Due to Harry's less than savory incidents over the last two years, the authorities in London had begun to panic rather hard. Having one murder or suspicious death per decade was the usual norm for the entirety of Surrey county, not a handful per annum in one small sector. The fact that the method and reasons for killing were almost identical, thus creating a 'signature' from the criminal, had the coppers on the look-out for suspicious activities or persons that could lead to clues about the dastardly killer. What Harry quickly deduced was that the Ministry of the Interior had dispatched officers from no less than Scotland Yard to find and apprehend the so-called "Pedo Eunuchefier of Surrey" by putting the men undercover in bars and alleys, posing as pervs looking for a kid to exploit cheaply.

Luckily for Harry, the bobbies had no Earthly idea they were hunting for an eight year old kid, nor did they understand that Harry never went hunting for victims willingly. It was just sheer, dumb, bad luck that, whenever he tried to walk alone in the evening to fetch stuff at the grocery store or smaller convenience shop, he got accosted forcefully by some damned child rapist who wouldn't accept that Harry wasn't rentable by the hour like any other whore in the sector. Harry had never killed as the primary attacker nor initiated conflict in any of the cases he was concerned; it was always reactive defense. But the cops wouldn't care, not with a firearm used, and not since two of the men from last year had been "Good, loyal, upstanding servants of the nation" who worked for Parliament in London. With people close to the PM's office biting the dirt in a mess of immorality and prurient depravity with kids, the hunt would only get more intense, for a long while.

But it wasn't like Harry could control these damned things! Dammit all to Hell and back!

Summer vacations 1989
Well, this year's vacations were better than the ones before. Harry managed to not kill anybody, even though it was no decision of his, just better luck than before. That and he had decided to use some of the house-elf tricks Dryskholl had taught him about being unnoticeable and untraceable.

Why hadn't he thought to use those before? Damn, but he was a dumb human!

Anyways, as promised by the school, they stayed open every day this summer too, and the new kids' camps were in place as well. Each camp happened in a rural area, in an old camping ground that had been used for such activities before they shut down when the owner died childless. The county's school administrators had bought the antique, dilapidated camp facilities and paid a small amount to have the basics reinstalled like plumbing and electricity in each bunkhouse, and the telephone lines for the admin, infirmary, garage and monitor barracks. The camping spot was on the shore of a small lake where narrow boats ferrying coal to London and the outlying burghs went through, as it was integrated to the network of canals and water-locks from last century.

Harry enjoyed every one of the camps offered as he managed to register without any parental permission required. The mentality behind those camps was to help kids with bad situations, and keep them off the streets in case the CPS could not intervene in the home. Because he fit exactly the profile of child they were targeting, Harry passed through without any problems in school or in his ex-home that no longer mattered.

Whatever the theme of the week was, the camp was held from Monday morning to Sunday evening, all in the same grounds. The only change was that the organizers had assigned one bunkhouse for each style of camp group, so the kids ate breakfast, played and slept side-by-side but did the specialized activities in their bunkhouse, or at one of the external spots with a big bonfire in the middle for hot noon meals and evening fun.

Harry particularly enjoyed the sports and survival training of the Scouts, quickly earning some of the 'Amateur' merit badges that had been offered. They were colored differently than the genuine Scout badges, but had the same ranks and requirements to achieve. The young human performed well in the Parkours and endurance swimming challenges, then aced the knife and hatchet throwing competitions for all ages. The Scout groups were taught how to start & manage a crude wood fire safely, how to check food packages for expiration date & edibility, how to shelter safely if caught out in a rainstorm or snowfall, and how to stay warm & dry if they had no immediate shelter.

When he tried the arts & crafts camp, Harry liked the first time so much he decided to alternate between one week of Scouts and one of A & C until the end of summer.

The artisans taught the children many basic skills at identifying safe, useful materials out of junk or obsolete things, then assemble them in a practical configuration. Without being obvious about it, the coaches were showing the kids how to repair their worn clothing and old shoes by patching them with decorative elements sewn or tacked atop the holes or cracks. Then they showed them how to fix little problems with furniture like uneven legs, rickety chairs, wobbly tables, crooked lamps, and so on. Eventually they started using more useful tools like pliers, hammer, screwdriver, chisel or box-cutter. For those kids who attended the last week of A & C, they were given basic
instructions on how to shut-off a junction box to change glass fuses or flip breakers, how to cut-off water lines if there was a leak and how to patch it with tape & glue, how to patch cracked windows or put cardboard sheets with tape if the pane fell out, etc... Plus, they were taught the safety basics about handheld power tools that any home needed, like the drill, reciprocating saw, block sander and rotary tool with changeable heads.

All in all, the day activities of the camp went a long way to make Harry feel like a full person instead of just a defective freak that nobody wanted. He got to play with kids in a way that didn't make him feel as he were wasting precious study time, and got to learn valuable life skills while doing it. Plus, with his shrunken trunk hanging from an invisible locket at his neck, just like Lily had planned, he had his true home right at hand all the time. Because he used 'Shaping Fingertips' on the wooden frame of his bunk on each bed he was given, he always had a rune scheme that emitted an aura of absence & un-presence throughout the night. That allowed him to sleep safely in his own grand bed inside his trunk, and not share a rather primitive bathroom at night with 23 other kids that he didn't know all that well.

The true benefit of lugging his trunk and having unfettered access to it was that he could take a new set of potions in July and August as he had done before. The choice of learning booster for July was the old Welsh language which would help in learning English history and culture better, and give him an alternate tongue for casting and locking wards. Almost nobody spoke magical Welsh anymore, not even inside Dumbledore's self-named Welsh Wiccan sect, the bloody fools. The poison he chose for August (irony, that) was from the Cult of Hades. He had received a dream at night from his deity, granting him the power to Bless a series of 30 vials with godly effluves so as to imbue them with Thanatos, the Lingua Esspiritu Mortis, the tongue of Death and official governing language of Hadenshire. Harry would thereafter be able to speak the Holy Tongue to converse with Tenebrous Pioneers or other entities he could summon from the cult. It would also give him yet another exotic method of casting or locking spells that nobody could undo for very few outside the Hadean church ever learned it as fully as he would receive.

An unforeseen side-effect of learning Thanatos via holy unction rather than the classic, neutral, alchemical draughts his mother made, was that he absorbed a great divine blessing deeply into his mind and soul during the month. Not only did he obtain one of the most ancient and revered Celestial tongues next to Angelic Nephilim or the demonic Common of the Lower Planes, he also became calmer, more at peace with himself and existence. The reason for this was that the potions and curses Dumbledore placed on him to insure he was impatient and prone to anger were slowly eroded and 'died' from prolonged contact with the Will of Hades to support and bolster his new faithful, on his path towards priesthood. The effects of such calmness upon his learning abilities and entire life would be profound, as would be the death-blow to the nefarious plans that had been set against him, as they all depended on his being unable to control himself.

{ HP } --- { The fun side of magick } --- { HP }

During his vacations, Harry wanted to learn new spell lists but the camps' day & evening activities took away almost 75% of each day, so that limited his efforts to things that didn't ask for a lot of concentration. He looked through his trunk's study to find stuff he could read and practice as he walked or swam, or was just sitting during a toilet break away from the groups.

He settled on two short lists of easy dweomers that could actually help in his every day life on top of being fun to use. First was the 'Prosaics; Tricks of the Trade' that had a lot of the classic and cliché effects that people associate with fair grounds magicians and cartoon villains. It went from the very useful 'detections' to the just amusing glowing eyes and artificial smells to scare away people. The list was mostly to help kids practice the beginner's techniques and skills, with a handful of practicality so they could help around the house or shop as well. The second list was
'Prosaics; Circus Act' which had a lot of instant body boosters, spectacular acrobatics, and a few spells to help appease animals to work with them. The good sides of this list was that the spells would help Harry with his generalized health and sports activities while also giving him a better aptitude with the living animals inside his trunk, that he kept for food and zoo-therapy as suggested by his parents.

The fact that the little tricks of both lists could be combined with 'Prosaics; Warrior Law' to give him an edge during a fight, even with a mage or priest, was something that he thought about later on, when he was nearing the end of summer. Realizing that his personal defensive capacity were pretty much shitty, the child resolved to work on this during the coming year. He wouldn't make much of a Anti-Champion of Death if he didn't get serious about being lethal in combat. Reading theology treatises wouldn't help when the other guy had a gun or a Wand of Bolts.

Fourth school year; 1989-90
(Harry Potter - theme)
1989-90
Surrey county
The British Isles & Realms

Whelp, there was no two ways about it; the bobbies were all a-twitter with worries and bile as the much reputed (and dreaded) "Pedo Eunuchefier of Surrey" had not claimed a single kill or maiming over the entire summer. The Ministry of the Interior was frothing at the mouth at the thought the killer could have moved out of town or gone silent after his inner impulse had been satiated because that meant the entire investigation was going to get scuppered. Scotland Yard were hard-pressed to justify their undercover agents' expenses for the period since they caught nobody, and didn't even have a probable suspect in sight. The local bobbies were split between anger at being undone by a criminal, and yet happy to see a dozen pervs taken off their streets.

None of that brouhaha mattered to nine year old Harry Potter as he walked into Van Uttebatten academy for the fourth year in a row. The teachers were still competent and nice like the last two years, and the services were still offered every day of the year, so he lucked out and he knew it.

The classes for the year had been slightly adjusted from last, but only to update the textbooks to more modern versions since the old ones were rather dated, especially those on world history and the recent technologies. Due to the Internet becoming publicly accessible without fuss, television was no longer the benchmark for learning and fresh news bulletins. The BBC report at 6:00pm on the telly was a nice thing to accompany dinner, but being able to visit other channels from diverse parts of the country, or even the world, without special and costly subscriptions was a good addition to his daily routine for staying informed.

That was also the one true change for everybody in the campus; the addition of mandatory typing, computer usage and Internet search classes. Each week, the students were given a short lecture on the machines themselves, then had the second period to search for a series of predetermined subjects. Once they had found the few websites on those subjects, they had a sheet with form-questions to answer to prove they had really researched the problem tasked. Harry quite accidentally excelled at the skills required because it worked a lot like the enchanted typewriter and self-indexing books his mother had left in her trunk.
Maybe wizards were modern after all, and it was the muggles who were copying them?

Who knew the multiverse could be so weird, anyways?

{ HP } --- { Divine Quest; first } --- { HP }

Harry Potter hadn't wanted to become a murder at nine years old, except that he did pledge his heart, magic, mind and soul to the Cult of Hades, the church of Death. Somewhere, somehow, he should have guessed that it wouldn't just be his own enemies that he would kill, and it wouldn't be clean-cut cases of obvious guilt versus transparent innocence all around. Warfare was crass business; nobody came out of its bloody trenches civilized or clean, all the history books and anecdotal reports from old soldiers said it clearly. So did the few segments of battlefield medicine Harry had read while learning his apothecary spells.

Still, he really should have thought about it more.

But the choices were made, and his God demanded results on the task set. If Harry wanted to prove that he was more than just an accidental novice without potential, he had to gird his loins and get his hands to it. He would never get promoted to acolyte or full priesthood if he balked every time a little death-dealing was in the works.

Thankfully, the actual acts themselves were not some great titanesque conflagration like the epics in the Fantasy novels he read as entertainment. His God wanted the woman dead, but the how was entirely up to Harry's own devices, as long as she passed before the first of November, at noon sharp. The child had not been told why that date and time, and it didn't matter anyways.

Death was never late nor early, never rushed nor slovenly, but always at the appointed Time.

Such was the creed of the Faith. So would it be for this woman.

Harry didn't know her crimes or sins, nor did he know if she was innocent or noble hearted.

She was scheduled to die. End of story.

Therefore, on the evening of Tuesday, October 31st, the All Hallow's Eve of the Pagans and Wiccan, the Samhain of druids and witches, Harry Potter committed his first cold blooded kill.

He walked up to the house of the young mother of three infant children dressed in a banal Halloween costume that represented the classic Death; the grand black robes with a fake plastic scythe and a cheap black-colored tin lantern with a battery-powered light inside. The Tenebrous Pioneer who tended his greenhouse and food animals almost ululated himself into a tizzy at the sight of his summoner dressed, essentially, in drag. From his deathly perspective, at least. Now that Harry spoke Thanatos fluently, he got the cultural references easily, and got the joke as well. It really was funny, too, if you could see the context for what it was.

Standing on the front porch of the completely unknown woman, Harry accepted the candy with a gentle smile, and gave the woman a blessing in soft-spoken Welsh that left her stunned for a minute before she closed the door. As Harry walked away and activated the house-elf scripts of invisibility and un-presence sewn into his cheap cotton robes, the 'Childish; Trickeries' spell he had used on the woman took hold. His Welsh verse had been a camouflage for casting 'Poisoned Dart' at the woman's exposed throat, but softly pushed, without causing any injury, just delivering the vegetal toxin atop the skin. The perfectly mundane plant venom would react with her skin to become a rash, her airways would swell shut, then she would enter neural shock to finally die, in 23 seconds flat.
Harry had not even reached the end of the street when he felt the woman's soul leave her body, and thus learned the lesson his deity wanted to teach him. For the truly faithful of Hades, there was no such thing as a wasted or useless death, and all mortal or celestial souls were judged equitably in the End of Things.

Later that night, Harry celebrated his Halloween commemoration for those beings he had effigies of in his shrine. Hades rewarded him by sending the Shade of Dryskholl for an hour. The child and elf were incredibly happy to commune so, especially when Harry received confirmation that house-elves did in fact have a soul and got judged by Hades as fairly as others. The elfling had received a reward such as he truly deserved; he had been tasked to serve the ancestors of House Potter in their own places of Felicity until such Time as Harry himself would arrive for his own afterlife. And so, Dryskholl finally received in Death what menials and criminals had denied him during his ailing life, a good family that cared for him.

From that moment onward, Harry doubted less and less the motives of his chosen deity, and felt far less moral qualms about escorting souls unto the Path of Beyond.

"Requiesce in Pacem, Ego Spiritu Sancti. Id Mote Est." Harry whispered as he left.

Summer vacations 1990

(Harry Potter - theme)

1990
Surrey county
The British Isles & Realms

On the summer of his tenth birthday, Harry Potter was greatly amused by the foolishness of the adults around him. The squibs that watched over Privet Drive were still as useless and clueless about his lifestyle and conditions as ever, and never bothered to come ring the Dursley's doorbell to ask. The child was well aware of this because he had periodically returned to his ex-residence to place discrete elf scripts that anchored detection and divination wards over the household. Since he had several divinations texts in his possession, little Harry had begun to practice scrying and remote sensings two years back, as an added layer of security. He wasn't even truly surprised that Dumbledore and the Ministry never came calling at the house to insure he was still present.

In accordance to his mother's notes on magical society, having that much power that produces that much instantaneous effect on reality played havoc with people's sense of urgency and basal morality. A great many wizards and priests had the mindset that if Magyck flowed from your wand to empower the dweomer you cast, then you had every right to cast the spell, and all laws or justice be damned. After all, the Wizarding Ministry's motto was "Magic is Might" and they never bothered to hide it, regardless of how fascist it was. The White Council wasn't any better, what with their Wardens going around murdering people without any formal trial or even just a publicly logged Act of Accusation the population could be aware of.

No, one of the great problems of the magical societies seemed to be that all the governments, churches and guilds were all geared towards shutting down public debates, quelling any intellectual gatherings, and above all censuring or banning multiple segments of lore, know-how, technique, science, occultism, arcana and esoterism in favor of having the dumbest, most limitedly educated population that could possibly still make enough tradable goods to be taxed. That was the
inescapable conclusion that any geopolitical and historical analysis came up with. The so-called 'White' and 'Light' and 'Pure Goodness' groups were all a sham front that hid the common agenda of all rich elites, magical or muggle alike; stay on top, no matter who it hurts or destroys. This conclusion gave Harry the impetus to read again through the books on insurgency, anarchy, political resistance and 'Sovereign Citizenship' that Dryskholl had gotten him. While the child's gut feeling was that some positions expressed were cooky or flat-out delirious, some of the underlying concepts weren't that crazy either. He may not want to have a civil war or crash a country, but Dumbledore was both head of Wizarding Britain and the magical UN at the same time, so it wasn't like he had a choice, not if he wanted his freedom.

Suffice it to say that Harry was both amused at the easy con he was pulling upon hundreds of wand-waving fools, and yet he was also truly disdainful of their collective incompetence. If they could lose trace of a child despite all their sensors and soldiers, what did it say about their self-styled elites? That it was the supposed "The Boy Who Lived" and killer of the greatest dark lord of Britannia, Europa and Slavia in several centuries, who had vanished into the Ether without leaving traces or anybody caring to look; what did that say about this Welsh Wiccan society?

His mother's commentary on the endemic lack of logic and forethought was apparently quite on-point. If the individuals already thought in a certain way, they would have been far less capable of the structured thought and rationality necessary to detect invasion of their Inner-World by curses and potions, and so would not have whelmed defenses in time. Plus, they were culturally indoctrinated to believe that the most powerful spell-caster had inherent rights and 'authority' over other magics simply because he had a bigger core or stronger spells. It was almost like dogs sniffing each other's ass to smell who had the strongest odor to determine the leader of the pack. Her evaluation about Dumbledore's potions and curses passing so easily through people's minds because they were already predisposed to believe anything about Britain's greatest magick wielder were now making a whole lot of sense in the boy's eyes.

In any case, Harry read the magical papers with a nasty, superior smirk as he saw the fake images of their supposed "Boy Savior" representing a bespectacled, small, stunted and underfed pauper dressed in worn rags that was pretty much how he had looked at age 6. Somehow, the reporters or editors got their hands on an old still photo of him and did some sort of extrapolation to age him by four years to match the date. The 'simulacrum' looked close enough that if he still dressed like that, with a mess of short spiky hair that exposed his forehead scar and the ugly round glasses, then yes, anybody in Diagon Alley would recognize him without effort.

It was too bad for Dumbledore that he had in fact changed his body and his aesthetics long ago, when the Awakening Rite had blasted through a great many things. Then, helped by Dryskholl, he had fixed or changed his out-worn clothing, fixed his hair so it was longer but much more manageable, and taken nutrient potions to correct the previous five years of starvation. Getting his wizarding vaccines and food supplements diluted in each plate he ate also helped, something that he had kept up to this date, thus explaining why he now stood amongst the tallest of his year group and sported a good, lean, athletic muscle mass compared to the other kids. Bookworm he may be, and proud of it, but he wasn't a slouch or lazy bum either. He liked sports and camping with a tent and wood fire in the out-country, something he had taken to doing at least once a month throughout the year, regardless of the weather.

Being able to ask the Tenebrous Pioneer to cast a Hadean Gate to reach his favorite spot inside of mere seconds was a great incitement to get up and move. Being able to just drop himself in a forest and run, jump, climb or swim without reproach or stupid limits from stodgy adults certainly helped to keep him fit and spry. It also allowed him to practice the limited fishing, trapping and hunting
skills the Scout camps from last vacations had taught the kids. This year he would be with a more advanced group as they started splitting the students by capacities and merit badges earned.

Again, Harry split his time half & half between the Scouts and crafting groups. He liked the outdoors and team sports of the Scouts, but needed to learn the manual trades and crafting skills to insure his long term survival if he ever got separated from civilization or lost his magic. Also, the dimensional trunk he hid at his neck could in fact be found and stolen, it just took specialty spells that the master aurors and Unspeakables all had as part of their jobs, like their uniform and badges. Harry could not EVER take for granted that the trunk would always stay with him, or never get broken into, especially if Dumbledore detected its existence.

This year, Harry's Scout group was introduced to the wonderful device called a crossbow. A very old and simple idea that had been discovered by humans some 7,000 years back in China, the wood and rope contraption made hunting and defending MUCH easier. Especially when the eager young female coach showed them the other variant, the stone-bow, made with a small thread basket attached to the bow string to hold stones, pellets or other small projectiles instead of being limited to the classic arrows. It had less range, true, but the same punching power within the distance that it did cover. Plus, it was able to kill a small animal without damaging the pelts or tradable organs, thus preserving the best monetary value of each catch.

Nobody was surprised that Harry and several others chose to use their time in the crafting group to carve, sculpt, polish and test their own stone-bows. It was both a practical test of what they had learned, and in some cases the only protection they would have back home when they returned to Surrey. Harry was particularly proud that his bow tested as the strongest hitter and the longest reach. He had also talked with the hunting coach and the crafters until he had managed to make a string-basket with enough diameter so that he could still use regular arrows to benefit from the maximum range the bow could shoot accurately, at almost 500 feet far. The testing of the weapon allowed Harry to center the new wooden sights he added, a small wood cylinder at the back and a round crosshairs made of wood and thin thread at the front. He got four different merit badges for his product at the camp's Leaving Feast.

Harry kept up his yearly tradition of drinking two sets of potions to increase or bolster his mind, just as his mother had planned. Unlike most members of the Welsh Wiccan sect, Lily had known the value of speaking 'creature' languages, especially for those with scholarly dispositions. If a poor human wanted to increase his magic and fortunes, learning the traditions and methods of neighboring species and sects was the easiest, most direct route. Therefore, she had managed to acquire the pensieved memories of several young students from Hogwarts and other, smaller schools not belonging to the Welsh Wiccan, to compile two useful draughts. This year, Harry would be learning Dethek, the tongue of the Dwarven populations, and Peeptalk, the animal speech common to all birds and were-avians. Once he was done, he could appreciate the Dwarves' affinity and aptitude with minerals and forging as their language had hundreds of terms or phrases dedicated to the metallurgic arts. Likewise, Peeptalk was odd at first, but in the end just as easy to process and use as Parseltongue, which he practiced regularly.

Speaking of which, Harry was now in a good enough place emotionally that he began to practice not only the language of Parsel, but also the magic aspects of this art. After doing some research on the ancient magick, he found what he needed on a not-so-recommended map of Magical Britannia normally restricted for aurors. It was an old thing from his grand-father Charlus' belongings that Lily had copied when she became aware of it; explaining why many of her components' sources or clients were indicated on the colored map.
Going in the late evening after the camp's curfew started, Harry used house-elf glamours and muggle make-up to change his appearance, with elf wards stitched into his clothing as well, then passed through the floo in the trunk to access the public arrival floo in Diagon Alley. He ventured down Knockturn Alley fearlessly with his weapons openly displayed just like the locals, all the way to the end of the district filled with sicklies, whores and criminals. There he reached the much disparaged Hedgerow Terrace, a neighborhood filled with squibs, weak semi-spell-users, and poor disowned wizards who couldn't find jobs anymore despite being magically capable because their old families had black-listed them in the Ministry. This area was the place for people looking into original Celtic, Welsh or even Viking practices & traditions. Almost everybody here was Of The Darkes, and carried out The Old Ways in their daily lives, something Dumbledore and the Ministry he commanded decried in the Daily Prophet often. But, for Harry and hundreds of others, it was Heaven on Earth as all the best gardens and greenhouses, farms and ranches, and many food producers or apothecaries were located in this vast pastoral enclave.

And it was VAST; you just had to love space expansion enchantments and religious Fidelius wards that hid an entire faubourg the size of Little Whining right next to Diagon District and Knockturn District without being perceivable from there. At almost two miles long by a mile wide, the Hedgerow Terrace was literally the lung and liver of magical London, no matter what the fools in the Ministry or Hogwarts said in a vain effort to protect their ill-gotten powers.

The Terrace was a nice clean design, inspired by druidic and elvish glens of old, that was several oval plateaus that became smaller as they sunk in the middle, thus creating both lateral and vertical space to let in the sunlight and fresh air. There were four levels then the bottom floor, plus a wide ring of flat greenery around the dug-out zone. The large plantations, farms and ranches of livestock were all on the surface, in the perimeter's green fields. Each property had plots of land that varied from 500 x 500 feet going up to 2,000 x 2,000 feet, all bordered by a double row of trees with bushes in between and a small ditch of running water that created the homestead threshold to anchor the wards. The small streams flowed under permanent one-arch bridges made of field stones to link together into a larger district ward that added a second bubble of protection to repel diseases, vermin and detections from the overall zone.

At the very outer perimeter of the green fields was a single long coursive boulevard that had narrow townhouses of three and four floors, old-style Victorian lodging houses and low-end boutiques stacked high with tenements atop them, on both sides of the thoroughfare. This long curving merchant road served as the geographic border for Hedgerow Terrace, and made a living wall to protect the green space from being encroached or damaged by the rest of London or Wizarding Britannia. The poorer and less magically able citizens lived in the renting rooms or cheap tenements while the shop owners and few professionals had the townhouses or the odd ramshackle homes. It was a teeming mass of sentients of dozens of species that easily equaled all of Diagon and Knockturn together.

On each level of the Terrace Proper, the public street was located on the very lip of each step, with low-gradient earthworks & field stone ramps spaced out regularly to allow passage of mule carts between all elevations without problems. In the center of the bottom floor was an antique druidic cromlech that stood two levels high topped by dozens of bronze braziers, creating a sacred space for communal prayers and special rituals. The Season Market was there, in the deepest middle of things, functioning all year long with only the thematic decorations being changed to match the religious events on the Wheel of days or the Natural cycle.

Amusingly from Harry's view of things, there were houses built as two-level dwellings dug-out of the stone & soil inside the risers of the plateaus, while their roofs served as the gardens for the house above. The overall look was like the mythical Shire of Tolkien, where the Hobbits lived. Neighbors were set apart by hedges of boxwood, cedar, or other types of trees that grew tall and
firm, up to the level of the plateau above. To maximize illumination, nobody in the Terrace put trees or walls in front of their plot of land, only on the left & right sides up to the public street, with occasionally a thin, short fence made of wood or animal bones to keep the traffic off their land. Most of the Nature cultists and high quality artisans of the Hedgerow Terrace lived in the sunken zone as the homes were all designed with the same floor-plan that included a showroom, workshop and warehouse on the ground and spacious living quarters for eight people the elevated floor. Another thing unique to the Terrace homes was that all of them used their garden plot to grow herbs or spices, recreational weeds and several highly magical potions components.

Harry marched vigorously towards the sunken zone, smiling under his make-up as he took in the amazing sights of such openly living and working magicks, all being done regardless of the diktats of gormless bureaucratic drones who actually feared the magic in their own core so much that they tried to erase the Powers of others by paperwork. Humming a slow funeral dirge under his breath, the young Hadean cultist followed the narrow avenue down to the very bottom of the Terrace to reach the small kiosks that composed the permanent Market. His Goblin account manager had told him that the best option for him would be here; the sect of the British Ophidiomancers. They could possibly help him unlock his full Affinity and find a magical serpent with which to Bond, thus allowing him to practice Parselmagic and Ophidiomancy at higher caliber than the basic cantrips he had been limited to without a live snake.

It took very little effort to find the kiosk as it was made of wood carved in the shapes of hundreds of different snakes. As he approached, Harry saw that upon each serpent was engraved Parselscript that described the snake, ecology, abilities and usages in magic. The kiosk itself was a veritable encyclopedia of snake lore, as well as a true crafting masterpiece, despite that it was too gauzy and tent-like for Harry's tastes. Once inside, he was quickly attended by a member of the guild by dint of asking the woman a question in Parseltongue. She shunted her neophyte client to an acolyte while she answered the 'specialist' for his delicate needs. After about two hours and several scans, Harry had obtained an alchemic elixir to finish breaking the illegal binds on his Affinity, and he had been sold a copy of the ritual to summon a serpent familiar. The happy child paid and returned to the summer camp via one-time portkey that dropped him in the small copse of trees he had marked with a homing dweomer just for that use.

Harry drank the elixir at the end of the camping week, when he was supposedly sleeping at home before going out for another week of camp on the following Monday morning. The potion worked as declared, eroding and dismantling the bindings until his Ophidiomancy Affinity was completely unlocked, just atrophied from not being used for so long. Harry spent three full weeks to slowly learn and practice a few more spells relating to snakes and reptiles before he used the few days between the end of camp season and the return to school to enact the Familiar Ritual for a magical serpent.

And here little Harry made an innocent beginner's mistake.

If he had done the ritual in the open public park or in a rural area like the camp grounds after they closed to the public for their maintenance cycle, he would have gotten a simple yet friendly snake native to Britain's magical ecology. Instead, he used the ritual chamber inside the trunk, never fully realizing the boosting effects that it would give to his spell's effects, nor the reach it would have across the dimensional veils.

He got an answer from something truly marvelous.

Faye-Drakhol akr-Seelie, Stygian Faerie Drake, from the Styx River connective demi-plane.

 Barely 24 inches from snout to tail tip, with 36 inch wingspan, the small dragon-kind was a sub-
race of the Faerie Drake species, amongst the Nexfae races. The creature resembled a miniature
european dragon in body type and head shape, but had wings like a butterfly rather than a bat, and
was colored a deep charcoal black with purple eyes, tongue, horns, fangs and claws. It also had
several dark sapphire-blue highlights in the wings and horns that shone occasionally.

The small being was actually as intelligent as any human could become, but had never been
formally educated and was barely two centuries old, making it an infant for its sub-race. It was a
pretty well known fact that Faerie Drake could live around three millenia if they weren't attacked
or sickened in a way that sapped their magick or damaged their brain stem passed their capacity to
use their innate healing abilities. The baby dragon was already named by its parents and Harry only
had to understand its language to translate it to human speech, English in this case.

His new familiar was called "Rehz Ib Fettach" which had no real meaning in English until Harry
could really comprehend the specific Draconic Dialect as well as the Reptilian Common, and then
he had to learn the provincial style that Rehz was raised with.

The Stygian Faerie Drake had many natural capacities, including the ability to become invisible,
dampen his heat signature, stop his smell, move without leaving traces, 'Blink' in Material Space
up to 1,000 feet, 'Dimension Shift' into the Styx or the Border Ethereal several times per day, and
he had permanent 'Shen Power Sight' as all Faerie Drakes did. Personally, he could breathe a small
cone, 10' long x 3' wide, of concentrated mist that would stun, disorient and drug his victims with a
powerful psychedelic toxin produced by glands in his throat. Or he could spit a wad of digestive
acid, if he needed to reduce something for consumption. And yes, he could do it in a fight as it was
an inborn defensive reflex that he had trained. His main weapon was no doubt his Horns, as he
could charge them with magic until they emitted an aura of pure negative energy that would bypass
most known defenses to attack the mind, magick and soul of living entities in the 25 feet radial area
covered by the pulse.

Above all else, Rehz Ib Fettach was intelligent, with free will and the capacity to learn, to educate
himself and eventually be a well civilized entity that matched his human companion.

When the goblin manager saw the Faerie Drake, he almost laughed himself into a heart attack, ah
he had just made a good amount of silver on a bet with several colleagues about how exotic a
familiar his client would Bond. It truly was a good day to collect debts.

{ HP } --- { Bobbing bobbies a-bob } --- { HP } { HP }

Back in Surrey county's muggle side of things, the police and civilian authorities were starting to
calm down. It had been two years since their "Pedo Eunuchefier of Surrey" had struck, and
nowhere in the UK or Commonwealth had anybody died of similar causes and methods. The
blokes at the Ministry of the Interior in London were gnashing their teeth at the thought the bastard
had evaded capture in such fashion that even The Yard and Interpol had no clue about any possible
suspects. While it was true that the lack of dead bodies was the appropriate order of things in the
Realm, the fact it came from the killer's decision rather than his imprisonment bode ill for the
future. The investigation went on, but now at a reduced pace until more cadavers were uncovered,
or an order from 10 Downing Street put them back on war footing.

Fifth school year; 1990-91

(Harry Potter - theme)

1990-91
Young Harry Potter couldn't be called little anymore, as he had grown like a weed as of late, thus passing the four foot height mark sometime during the summer. In the year-long health classes mandatory for 10 year old's, the teacher warned all the children about possible growth spurts, pains in the joints or nerves as their bodies worked overtime to prepare them for puberty, and adolescence after that. The descriptions of anatomic details, hairs, odors and other unmentionable stuff had turned all the poor kids fluorescent pink in the face as they wanted to hide under their desks. Or at least, Harry had, much to his further discomfort.

Thank Hades and Gaia that it wasn't Vernon or Petunia who told him these things!

Thoroughly embarrassed by that discussion, the boy made sure to read through his mother's notes about it all, just to insure he didn't skip on a ritual or potion that needed to be in his system for the phases of his growth to proceed correctly. This brought him to realize that he would soon arrive at the moment when the Potter 'Blood Compact' would download the Family's Charter into his mind for him to -accept- the ancient Blood-Law and become a fully functional, deciding member of the clanic group. This was the vital step to insuring his autonomy inside the magical communities, and the sine qua non caveat to any further inheritances from any magical Houses, Guilds, Churches or private contracts still in abeyance. If he refused the Charter of his birthright, then no Blood-Law or other Magical Concord would ever accept him until he was over the age of 21 and did the ritual to found his own lineage, independently from any other in existence.

Since Harry was initiated by the Cult of Hades in full novitiate, he knew far better than to think being the only living Potter meant he was alone in the family, or that his decisions affected only his small, limited person. The ancestors, heirlooms and portraits of all his Houses watched over him, even those he didn't physically own yet. Plus, he was never more than a spell or prayer away from contact with his kin, even if they resided in Hadenshire. Only those that had already passed into The Beyond were out of reach from all entities, including the Divines. So Harry understood that when his mind was mature enough, just a bit before age 11, the Potter Blood-Law would integrate to his memories, mind, magicks and soul, and he welcomed the holy event as it would seal his positions for ever. It would also free him magically from several more of Dumbledore's curses and potions, while also legally opening more rights in higher society.

The rights he would obtain through Gringotts' banking contracts with House Potter and House Black were among the first things he would set in motion to blockade the whiskered bastard's choke-hold on his life. Then he would reactivate House Peverell unto the wizarding world, and see how people reacted to that piece of news. After that, he would silently use his mother's many aliases to run business ventures and muggle-world investments under the wands of everybody, while also paying out bribes, gifts and contracts for criminal deeds to further loosen Dumbledore's hold, or just distract his minions away from him. When he came out as a practitioner of The Old Ways of Magyck, the geriatric wanker's beard would light on fire and burn off his nose! And the rest of his sect of faithless betrayers would follow after him, the very second they heard their precious little messiah had oathed himself to Hades, Arbiter of Passage.

Oh yes, the Light of Wizarding Britain's phallocentric, sorcerous cabal would wilt and wane, and blink out in a puff of inglorious shame and humiliation, when the public learned of how dark gray their wunderkind had turned out. And blessed by the darkest of all the gods, too!

However, there was still this bloody last year of primary school to live through. The curriculum
demanded not just mandatory basic human health & biology classes, but also home maintenance &
cooking, basic personal economics, and an innovation being spread throughout the kingdom called
'British laws & civility'. To accommodate the increased number of classes without shorting the
existent courses in the schedule, the 5th years had days that started at 9:00am and finished at
5:00pm all week long. They also had teachers that asked for term papers in theoretical subjects
while the manual skills classes had one or two projects to complete each month. All told, Harry
enjoyed the fresh classes and faster paced tuition. Also, this year was also ended by standardized
government tests, so he could lay low then end his entire primary schooling with a good showing,
as long as he didn't go above straight A's. Getting a slew of A+ or extra credits would certainly
have someone panic, if not Dumbledore then some cretin inside the Ministry of Magic who
couldn't tolerate that the boy who killed the Dark Lord be that intelligent.

{ HP } --- { A manual git, this boy } --- { HP }

Harry decided that he had learned enough from sufficient sources to try his hand at creating a few
items of hedge-craft besides just candles, incense, oils and some glyphs on his clothing to walk
around undetected. The few wooden whittles he'd made were cute, but in a very folk-art way,
which he liked and thought enough to do the job he asked of them. Now that he had Rehz helping
him with counsels and fetching items during the process, it was far less lonely and he experienced
less accidents.

His first creation was the classic 'wooden spoon' of the homestead's leader. Basically a two foot
long piece of birch whittled clean with the last four inches shaped into a relatively flat oval spoon.
The thing was engraved with scriptworkes and elf wards, then given a Blood Tithe directly from
Harry's hands. The item was then let to steep in a shallow pottery pan filled with enchanting oil to
seal in the runes and protect them from wear & tear for a few years of use. This was a good,
generic focus for beginners to have in hand, especially for all household charms, herbology,
potions and alchemy. For the rest, it was tolerable but gave no advantages.

The second item Harry created was a necrotic construct. Yes, he had begun to study the lesser
necromancies as part of his training into the novitiate of Hades, and thought it was now time for
him to work with bones and parts of animals, not just plants anymore. Harry was already used to
slaughtering his own chickens and turkeys, or helping the Tenebrous Pioneer with the bigger
livestock, so it wasn't such a drastic step for him to take. Plus, he had already killed in combat and
murder so, again, not such a big difference. Besides, he wasn't animating anything or going into the
Anathema of Magyck, just cobbling bones and stuff together. His goal was to create his own
personalized Holy Sigil of Hades so he could begin to learn and cast prayers above the novice
grade. It was in fact a milestone of apprenticeship that the postulant make his own Sigil before he
was granted promotion, and Harry felt it was time to move onwards. Since the device was a simple
flat pendant scrimshawed out of bones then set into a silver frame to dangle from a chain made of
both bone and silver links, the artistic and mechanical complexity weren't all that great, but it was
the thought that counted. Harry dyed the bones lavender-purple, keeping the silver its natural dull
grey. He used the workshop's magnification table to engrave scriptworkes and elf wards into the
pendant and chain, then gave his Blood Tithe and a good steep in holy oil the recipe for which had
appeared to him in a dream the night before.

The pendant functioned well, and Harry could feel his Faith and Sorcery respond well to the
addition into his aura. Bolstered by the event, Harry offered to make a similar pendant, but sized
and fitted to Rehz so as to give them a link and the capacity for Harry to protect him remotely. The
little Faerie Drake accepted gratefully, slowly realizing just how kind and caring his human was,
compared all the others he'd seen in his 200 years of life. He also realized just how lonely and
isolated Harry was. Despite making friends in the school, he could never ask them home as they
could never know of the trunk or magic in general.
The third object Harry wanted was much more complex, and something he had been thinking about as he read some of the lore associated with the White Council of Edinburgh. He decided to make himself a Shillelagh, or druid's staff. The boy scoured several rural areas that the Tenebrous Pioneer could open gates to until he found the appropriate tree. It was an old English Oak that had been felled by lightning, a few weeks back. It was partially blackened and still had bits of cremated mistletoe fused to sections of the branches. Impressed by the size, strength and magic inherent to the mighty vegetal, Harry decided to render the tree's entire mass down to separate parts, except for the trunk that stayed in two long half-logs just as they had been sliced by the lightning strike. The Pioneer helped with cutting and transporting the bounty back to the trunk's warehouse since landscaping was its basic job description. Harry spent many days with Rehz drowning in old Welsh and Celtic texts about the druids, witches and animists of the epoch, until he decided what kind of staff he needed to craft. He wanted an item that would serve him during both his priesthood of Hades and Gaia, not be a specialized thing just for killing or molding Nature to human whims.

The finished product was an eight foot length of gnarly, burned bark and cremated mistletoe and mushrooms, the bark being dark emerald-green while the inclusions and incinerated additions were dark amethyst-purple. The top of the staff was actually shaped as a torch sconce, the limb being split into twelve slats to shape a bowl that held 'Spirit Flames' that Harry had been able to invoke for the first time of his life. The sconce bowl was reinforced with inch-thick triangular flanges of silver to give it the ability to strike like a mace. The foot of the staff ended in a boar-spear shaped head with a cross-bar for the same reason, also reinforced along the edges and fuller with silver to have a sharp edge. While silver was a bad choice for striking and slashing weapons because it was too soft and deformed easily under impact or torsion, his patron God Hades had revealed to him the recipe for Hadean Silver, which was smelted by adding the freely Tithed blood, magic and soul of the crafter. This silver always had dark ocher veins running through it, and could tolerate wear or hardships like dweomercrafted steel. This made the finished weapon just as good as if it were forged metal instead of carved wood. As completing touches, Harry added the crests of Hades and Gaia just beneath the sconce bowl, but on opposite sides, to properly Bless the item on top of all the scriptworkes and elf wards he had placed. The last step was to steep the staff in a tub of oils that were mixed from diverse plant saps, animal bloods, Nightsoil from the livestock pen, and Blood Tithes from Harry and Rehz.

The magical aura of the activated staff was breathtaking, and calming at the same time. When he first took the weapon in hand, Harry was reminded of good Bishop Gloutnay and his decades of service to Mystra. And so, his first official gesture with the staff was to carry out a private mass in the trunk's ecumenical shrine in the names of Hades, Gaia and Mystra, to thank them all, and the spirit of the noble oak, for allowing him to confect such a magnificent item of Faith.

Harry felt that a few things were missing from his fighting kit, but also felt that he wasn't ready to design or craft them yet. As age, experience and Divine Wisdom flowed through him, he had begun to truly trust in those small instincts that came when he was pondering important parts of his life, so he accepted the hint and waited for the proper time. Death, after all, cannot be late or miss an appointment, no matter what happens around it.

{ HP } --- { And so we of Potter Blood are gathered } --- { HP }

It happened to Harry as these things tend to happen since the last few years have come to pass, after he had succeeded his Awakening Rite. It was Wednesday, October 31st of 1990, the All Hallow's Eve, the Samhain of his Faith and tenth such season since his birth. As was his custom, he had done his morning exercises and showered, then had a breakfast composed of eggs, crepes, toasted bread with field fruit jam, bacon rashers and baked beans with brown gravy. Everything had been hand-made by himself in the previous week then stored in the pantry for the day of prayers and remembrance. He now stood serenely in prayer before the small ecumenical shrine he had built.
and consecrated for commemorating his gods, ancestors and friends four years ago. It now had a framed picture of Rehz Ib Fettach and small preserved twigs from the birch and oak he had used to craft his first important Faith items. He gazed in satisfied peacefulness at the grey candles that he had crafted with his own hands, smelling the bee's wax and holy herbs of the incense as they burned, bringing his prayers and good wishes through the Ether to those that deserved them.

The Tenebrous Pioneer that Harry had rented to tend his greenhouse and livestock barn stood by his side, whispering lowly in Thanatos the prayers and supplications of the season. He wished farewell to the departing Autumn that had granted his House bountiful harvests, and welcomed the ponderously slow Winter that would rest the Land so that it may awaken full of life when the Wheel of Days pivoted anew unto Spring.

Harry went to his classes as regular then disappeared back into the hidden basement room, from where he entered his trunk and had a normal dinner at 6:00pm. It was as he did his evening prayers in preparation for communing with his departed ancestors and friends that the first symptoms manifested. The Potter 'Blood Compact' was activating automatically to download something into his memories, magick and mind.

As the clock struck 8:00pm, the human child felt the Veil thinning around himself, the partition between realities becoming permeable just enough for direct conversation and perception, but not passing objects or beings across. Sitting on stone thrones before him were now situated all of the Potter, Black and Peverell forebears, as they attended witness to his accession to the first adult step of the clanhold's leadership. Tonight, the Most Ancient and Most Noble House of Potter would have its Magical Heir instated, and his position in the Charter would be unassailable by any mortal or Celestial, not even The Manipulator or his potioned puppets.

Sitting on the greatest throne in the middle of all the three noble Houses was the darkest, most powerful of all the witnesses; the Divine Hades, Lord of Hallowed Nepenthe, Sovereign of Hadenshire, God of Death, Arbiter of Passage, Guide of Beyond, Guardian of the Grand Gate of Reality. He was dressed in an armor composed of black padded base layer, dull grey chain mail hauberk and deep lavender-purple full-plate armoring on top. His great helmet covered his head entirely, the face being a smooth oval plate of shining, reflective silver that mirrored only Truth and Reality back at whomever looked into it. Or at least, it was one of the god's avatars or lesser images, since Harry didn't think little old him deserved or warranted so much attention as to have the Tenebrous One attend this private ritual in person.

The Shades of the three dead Patriarchs of the noble Houses stood from their thrones and walked forward one pace, so they were just behind the throne of the Divine Hades, before James Potter spoke aloud, his voice carrying through phonically as much as mentally.

"I am James Charleson Black Potter, the late Lord Potter emeritus, Scion of Black, Scion of Peverell, sire of the Heir of the Name, House and Family magicks of Potter. I present onto my son by Blooded birth and lawful marriage, magical and spiritual Heir of our kin, the Charter and Blood-Law of House Potter."

Next to Harry appeared a ghostly facsimile of the real scroll which was safely stored deep in the foundations of Potter Manor, well out of reach of enemies, climate or Time. Harry took the time to unfurl and read through the detailed but simple texts, understanding that once he put his personal Sigil on it, he would be bound by Blood, Mind, Magick and Soul to the ancient Creed and morality of his Family. Yes, he would have the chance to make changes or updates, as each Lord did, but the process was both heavy and slow, and it implicated the assent of the ghostly ancestors and heirlooms, but it was still feasible.
After reading through the much beloved Charter of his ancestry, Harry prayed to Hades and Gaia for the Tithe to be given freely from his body and magicks, that he be bound to his Family in the one way that truly mattered amongst the magical communities and churches. He was now Harold Jamieson Evans Potter, Head of Family, Lord of the Most Ancient and Most Noble House of Potter, Earl of Claymoors of the Scottish Lowlands; Heir Ascendant of the Most Venerable and Greatly Spiritual House of Peverell, Heir Presumptive of the Most Ancient and Most Noble House of Black; Peer of the Britannic Realms by Edict of the Crown and Throne of England, anointed of Hades, his God and Patron amongst the eddies of Faith and mortality.

In confirmation of the rite's validity, the Scion, Heir and Lord rings appeared on his hands in appropriate succession, then merged together by House until only the highest crest for each stayed visible. An antiquated medallion made of ceramic strung from a chain of porcelain beads appeared at his neck, dropping to hang over his heart. A set of old, ornate bronze keys manifested in empty air near his chair and slowly floated to rest on his lap, filling him with a sense of home and peace as he had never felt, even from his Awakening.

A powerful voice reverberated through the air and the minds of all assembled, be they alive or dead or between the Veils. "I am Hades, God of Death, Judge of Passage, Arbiter of The Beyond, and Guardian of the Grand Gate of Reality. I am the patron you have chosen freely for this part of your journey through the mortal planes, and patron deity of the House of Peverell, of whom you have accepted Heirship. I welcome you into the Halls of your honored ancestors, and offer you the fealty of the Family and House. May your reign be long and prosperous."

Standing from his throne, the Living God gestured for the three Shades of the Patriarchs to sit back so he could assume control of the ritual period. "I have come today, via my avatar, to bear witness to your acceptance of the Potter Charter, and was satisfied. Now I offer you the same for the Peverell Charter, regardless of what the fool Dumbledore has wrought. Will you assume the position that is yours by birthright and magick, of your own free will?"

Harry was completely besides himself with emotions, as his deity once again showed that he cared enough to get involved, and had solutions that could right the wrongs he had suffered all his meager life. Nodding silently, the child bowed from the waist, not uttering a word for fear of losing control of his already strained self-restraint.

The God raised his left hand, the armored palm facing up so that a large scroll made of gaseous soul-stuff that shined electric blue appeared in his grasp. With nary a thought, the phantom scroll floated gently towards the child, to alight in his own waiting, trembling hands. As before, he took the time to admire the scroll then unfurl it to read everything, trusting that Time moved differently in the ritual period so he could do everything needed in a short interval. After learning the sacred texts of the oldest House to sit in the British Wizengamot, Harry prayed his Gods for the Tithe to be given freely, in honest and glad acceptance of the new charge of trust and Family.

He was now Harold Jamieson Evans Potter, Head of Family, Lord of the Most Ancient and Most Noble House of Potter, Earl of Claymoors of the Scottish Lowlands; Head of Family, Lord of the Most Venerable and Greatly Spiritual House of Peverell, Baron of All-Hallows and the Hoo Peninsula; Heir Ascendant of the Most Ancient and Most Noble House of Black, Magistrate of Zezetshire Cairnhills in the English Midlands; Peer of the Britannic Realms by Edict of the Crown and Throne of England; anointed ecclesiaste of Hades, his God and Patron amongst the eddies of Faith and mortality.

The child closed his eyes as his mind trod through the changes in titles, ranks and styles that getting the Peverell Charter signed had given him. He knew that the ‘Blood Compact’ of the Family would download into his memories, mind and magick over night as he slept, and then his occult
affinities would change to incorporate the spiritual heritage of the almost obsolete House, before balancing everything inside of him into a functional whole. It would take a few days and nights of meditation and rest, but it would happen in due time.

So would it happen with the House of Black as well. The Charter had not appeared or been offered, probably because potions and curses still fettered some deep parts of his magick specifically against receiving anything from Sirius Black or his House. Even the Goblins had not been able to pass along parcels, mail or just verbal messages in the ten years since the man had been exiled. Dumbledore had well and truly muddied the legal and diplomatic waters, something which could be undone only if he died, if Harry left Britannic borders to go meet his godfather, or if the boy finally managed to pump enough magicks and willpower through his entire being to finish breaking the damned binds.

The voice of his God brought him out of introspection, as the deity declared with his cavernous voice that echoed through space, dimensions and Times "You have served me well, these passed four years. You have followed the terms of novitiate without pause or doubts that would have made myself or my higher council wonder of your devotion and dedication to our Faith, Creed and Cause. The Test of Murder was passed with simplicity and humanity, showing your soul and goals in life quite clearly. Cruelty and battle-rage will not be your Creed or method, not when a peaceful, dignified solution can be had. I applaud this, for death should not be something other than intensely private and solemn, though not lonely or desperate, not while I rule Nepenthe, in Hadenshire upon the Styx. After consulting with Jergal, Seneschal of Death, and the higher council of my church, I find reason to promote you to acolyte. You may now begin to read and learn the true holy texts of our Faith, not simply the common lores and laws available to all scholars and governments. I hope to receive your Faith and service for many long years yet, young one, for we have a long path to tread before I pass you unto Gaia's dominion."

Standing unsteadily from his chair, Harry bowed at the waist, honored beyond description that the Divine would send an avatar to assist his Oaths and grant him promotion when a simple mortal priest could have done the job easily. Without further adieu, the Fundamental God ceased to exist and so did his throne, as if they had never been present at all, in such a way that all the chairs of the honored ancestors were placed as if there had never been a higher ranking visitor in the middle of their phantom room. Again, the three Patriarchs stood, each in turn giving a blessing upon the child's life, health and magicks before the assembly dissipated into the Ether.

Harry cried honest, happy tears as the slight grey mists of Time and Reality receded from around him, releasing his person, familiar and shrine back into the Prime Material Plane. He would take a small late snack with a celebratory ounce of very fine Goblin wine and a long smoke of tobacco, hemp and calming herbs, before taking a long soothing shower and bed at midnight. He was exhausted physically, but mentally he felt as if he had lived and relived the same life five times in the same hour. Having no reserves left, the child permitted himself his small feast with Rehz Ib Fettach by his side, while the Tenebrous Pioneer went about his nightly duties in the greenhouse and livestock barn, now that his own prayers were done too.

Tomorrow would be soon enough to live well and happy with his elevation. Tonight, Harry Potter planned to lie as peaceful and tranquil as the honored dead, even if the bloody midget of the mists decided to till him into his mattress for fun. As long as he wasn't woken up, he'd handle it another day.

Despite being a sorcerer of great learning, erudition and occult abilities, Albus Percival Wulfric Brian Dumbledore was actually rather ordinary when it came to his Faith, Creed and morality, no
matter what cold shite he tried to peddle to the credulous masses. He had nothing of an actual Warlock, let alone an Atlantean-tradition Warlock, except the title that signified he had acquired the right to sit in the Wizengamot chamber as a voting member. Likewise, his title in the ICW was simply a reflection of the fact the Confederation was mostly of male wizards who were all named symbolically 'Warlock' when they achieved a seat inside their home nation's Gamot. It wasn't a reflection of studies or training pattern, just an honorific title with little true worth, given just how several nations had hereditary seats, some were elected by popularity, and yet others were bartered and sold between holders or governments like pints of ale in a tavern.

No, Albus Dumbledore was not the brightest candle in the chandelier, and yet he always managed to somehow blind himself with his own luminous splendor, no matter how dark his glow actually was. In this case, the moron had the gumption, the sheer hubris, to think he could interfere with the Blood-Law and inheritance rules of the Most Venerable and Greatly Spiritual House of Peverell, Barony of All-Hallows and the Hoo Peninsula in Kent, on England's lower eastern coast, not far from London-on-Thames. The House who had always had Hades, God of Death, the Styx River demi-plane and the Underworlds, as its only patron in recorded history.

An act of wisdom, this was not.

And even less an act of self-preservation.

So it wouldn't surprise anybody affiliated with the cult of Hades or the Church of Death that the foolish old crone suffered an unpredicted, and unblockable, heart infarction exactly on midnight of the Halloween night, at the height of Samhain, when the Veil was thin and the Divine Powers could pass easily from one reality to another. Nobody would ever know what Albus Dumbledore saw that night as he lay in bed, nor if it was in the room, his mind or his dreams, but the house-elves who found him and brought him to the castle's hospital wing for emergency treatment had never seen such a face of horror and despair on a human before, in their centuries of service.

Madam Poppy Pomphrey, the school medi-witch, did what she could and then some more, pushed as she was by the loyalty compulsions and potions flooding her body for the last forty years. Alas, it was all for nothing; Albus Dumbledore was alive, but in a coma that initially looked as if it was just his body breathing on without any soul inside. Then, 13 days after the event, the man's vitals started to Beep the sensor spells, showing that he was emerging from coma into normal healing slumber managed by his innate magicks. Another 13 days later, towards the end of November, he opened one single eye and tried to speak but could not articulate his thoughts aloud. The heart infarction had crippled the right side of his body, from the small toe to the top of his head, making his mouth and vocal chords work asymmetrically or not at all, thus making him incapable of any speech, even incoherent words or vocalizations of pain or despair. For the first time in is entire life, Dumbledore was mute from a cause that wasn't a quickly resolved 'Mutare Vocis' during a duel or back-alley fight.

Given his resulting status, Pomphrey was finally able to free herself of his standing orders that absolutely all health issues of the staff, children or house-elves be resolved by his own hirelings inside the castle walls, or at least the grounds under the wards. This was something that even the potions of Severus Snape couldn't repair or attenuate, so the medi-witch could finally appeal to St-Mungo's Hospital for an emergency recovery team to transfer the geriatric dictator to the hands of somebody else. It only took minutes for the trauma team of healers to arrive by Floo, and only seconds more for the hospital's dispatcher to have spread the news to a dozen papers and gossips who would pay a goodly number of Galleons for the fresh news about Dumbledore.

Nobody could find a reason for sudden heart failure, and even less for the massive damage that had killed tissues, nerves and veins all around the cardiac complex. The only way the healers were
able to give Albus a menial semblance of health and mobility was by putting a permanent 'Organ Bypass' enchantment anchored to runes tattooed on his wrinkled chest to reestablish sufficient blood flow. The only recourse for his mobility was to have a tailor craft clothing that had thin but heavily ensorcelled wooden rods everywhere throughout to give the vestments the ability to follow his willpower to move his body for him, in those areas that brain influx or blood no longer flowed correctly. Muggles would call this system a "medical exoskeleton" and hail the sheer modernity of its conception, if they were aware it existed.

The great and mighty Chief Warlock of England was reduced to being a puppet with broken limbs dancing on twisted strings, just as he had inflicted on thousands of beings for a century.

Who says Hades has no sense of fairness?

Who says that Death had no sense of humor or irony, albeit dark ones?

No matter what potions, alchemies or surgeries he would try, Albus Dumbledore would never recover any usage at all of his right side, and only be able to speak or move because he wore animated cloth golems enchanted to emulate his human abilities. If ever that layer of powered vestment was removed or dispelled, he would immediately be an immobile, silent cripple who couldn't defend himself with anything other than legilimancy, and only from the left eye which cut off two-thirds of his total mind-magick for the rest of his life.

The immediate consequence was that Dumbledore ran afoul of the health & sanity clauses of the charters of the school, the British Wizengamot, and the ICW. You had to be demonstrably healthy and sane in order to hold any post of public authority, especially as a judge or Lord.

When the Hogwarts Board of Governors looked into his file, they found out that he had quite liberally rewritten his original file by stating his birth date and age as being a full twenty five years younger than true. He hadn't passed his NEWT's in 1914 on the start of the muggle's Great War, not if you counted backwards from today. He had spent 50 years as headmaster, 30 years as transfiguration professor and alchemy tutor, and spent almost 10 years before that on the road to complete his masteries in arithmancy, transfiguration & transmutation, and alchemy. That was 90 years at least, and there were doubts as to whether he took only ten years for his higher diplomas as those dates didn't mesh with the official reports in the guilds or Ministry schooling records. Furthermore, the Hogwarts Book of Souls had no Albus Dumbledore listed before 1873 as potential student, and he was the only 'Albus' named for that decade, and none came for a good twelve years before that.

As if falsifying the dates in his school and employment files weren't enough, the second investigation caused by this discovery found something even more dark in progress. It averred that Albus Dumbledore had never been sworn-in as Headmaster of the school. He had signed in blood the contracts as staff and oaths as teacher for the first twenty-two years, then for some reason that wasn't written anywhere, the Headmaster of the day, Armando Dippet, had stopped forcing Dumbledore to sign in blood the contracts for his position, link to the castle wards and position of authority over the pupils. In essence, Dumbledore had been completely free to do as he pleased inside the grounds and edifices without any risks of being punished by Mother Magyck for his crimes or sins.

This made the bureaucrats panic and alert the aurors, but also the medias, and then St-Mungo's to check if the cause of the heart attack couldn't be some form of ward backlash or oath-breaking retribution. So, the entire investigation from the Board of Governors transferred over to the aurors, in the hands of Madam Amelia Bones, Regent of House Bones, head of the DMLE, the very worst event possible for Albus Dumbledore. She would NEVER stop digging into his dirty laundry and
hidden crimes until she had enough to see him fed Squibbing Oil, then hanging him by the feet from the battlements of Azkaban Prison for a few days before letting the Dementors take his soul.

But no, things got worse from there anyways!

Because he had held a posting of public trust without being blood-oathed as stipulated by the school charter and British Law, then he was automatically dismissed from that post and forbidden from ever holding it anew in this life. This immediately freed the house-elves and portraits who wasted no time in demanding the attention of the aurors and Madam Bones to report the innumerable depravities they had witnessed Dumbledore commit inside Hogwarts, or plan in the castle and commit outside. This caused the immediate suspension of all school staff for an emergency medical evaluation and debriefing at St-Mungo's.

However, the loss in dishonorable circumstances of one oathed posting also meant that he was deemed as being an 'Oath-Breaker' just as if he had signed the pledge and broken the terms, thus incurring the wrath of Mystra. That meant an automatic dishonorable dismissal from the Wizengamot as both Chief Warlock and simple Warlock, no appeals or electoral recall process possible. It also opened all of his work files as Chief Warlock that he had sealed under the "Needs of national security" to become available for investigation by the aurors and Unspeakables separately. And that was when the authorities found that the lying bastard had not ever taken the Gamot blood-oath, not as proxy, not as seated Lord, not as Warlock and not as chief Warlock. Dumbledore had been sitting, presiding sessions or tribunals, and voting the Potter proxy for a decade, without ever having the legal or magical right to do so. Which triggered another investigation into his entire tenure in the Wizengamot chamber and offices, as well as his truly abusive wielding of the chief Warlock's capacity to seal files or make entire cases disappear into the tenebrous, bottomless mists of "National security" justifications without any checks or balance about it.

The British Department of Schooling, Department of Magical Law Enforcement and Wizengamot Services were all panicking about what had been uncovered while Dumbledore was in his first week of permanent infirmity, but it was only the beginning. The ICW began to receive reports from both its embassy in London and the British delegation in Basel, Switzerland, where the Great ICW Rotunda was located since founding. Because of the ICW charter and the Treaty that links it to member states, the very moment that Albus was dishonorably removed from his posting at Hogwarts, he was automatically put on probation at the ICW until a public trial under their venue and laws could be done. However, the moment it was discovered he was an 'Oath-Breaker' to the British Gamot, he was given an immediate dishonorable dismissal from the Chamber as both Supreme Mugwump and foreign representative for the Sovereign Magical Nation of England, Realms & colonies. This had the catastrophic consequence of removing the last diplomatic privileges he could use to hide from the aurors or Unspeakables, in England or abroad. Then the ICW Enforcers discovered that Albus never signed the blood-oaths for participation in the Assembly, nor those for holding an executive posting in the organization. He always used fake parchments covered in mundane texts and signed with a muggle fountain pen filled with house-elf blood to emulate the magicks of a Blood-Tithe to fool the auditors and diplomats each year, ever since he set foot in the ICW fifty years ago.

Now completely devoid of any public postings, governmental authorities or diplomatic privileges, without any nobility title or personal reputation, mister Albus Dumbledore, not noble and not rich, holder of no votes anywhere, with diplomas and guild memberships whose validity or legality were now being questioned, saw himself chucked into Ministry cells to await interrogation. He was cooling his heels in the drab grey, raw masonry room under the Gamot chamber's floor barely nine days after being transferred to St-Mungo's for treatment. He had received his golemized clothes only two days ago, and still wasn't used to moving in them, let alone relying on them for his
autonomy or spell casting. Not that the last part would be a concern as the Elder Wand had disappeared from his hand as his dark, nightmarish visions of Death, an unending city of bones and great lines of tormented souls began, just before the heart attack struck. Neither house-elves, teachers or healers had found it since, and his original dragon heart-string wand had been seized upon arrest. They had wanted to put magic suppressors on him, but only the written report from the hospital stayed their merciless hands away from his person.

Then Albus heard what he had dreaded all the past decade, on the wizarding wireless that the auror sentry was listening to, since there was nothing to do in the small ante-chamber next to the locked cell. The news of his decheance and arrest was making the rounds of the entire planet, fast enough that Sirius Orion Black III, Head of Family, the Lord Black, was already beginning proceedings to have his entire case before the ICW used to push Britannia into granting him his day in front of the Wizengamot or Royal Throne at long last. The loss of control over both the Potter and Longbottom boys was now consumed in full, as was the loss of dominance over the broken lordship of Black.

Albus Percival Wulfric Brian Dumbledore had nothing left in life except regrets, memories of the broken plans he had fomented for The Greater Good, and his brother Aberforth's eternal contempt, which he was given freely forever.

{ HP } --- { The Goblin king's vengeance } --- { HP }

One could never say that Ragnok Backsnapper, head of clan Gutspiked, 471st king of the British Goblins, was a creature of benevolence and mercy. Not unless you had partaken of the Halfling Sherry a bit much for the entire week beforehand, and smoked some interesting recreational herbs too.

Yet, in this period of Yule 1990-91, he found himself smiling and humming an old religious Drow chant normally used in sacrifices of victims on the Altar of Lloth, their Spider Queen that dwelt in the Abyss. He sat happily by the side of the blazing hearth in his office, slowly honing and oiling a spiked scourge with many strands in prevision of applying it most generously unto the back of a hairy mongrel cur that had escaped Lady Justice for far too long. The monarch was almost finished with one instrument and gazing indolently upon the pile of others that needed some maintenance before being put to 'good' uses, when his secretary called him urgently.

"M'lord!" the breathless voice sounded through the crystal intercom on the desk, "The Gamot has just voted Dumbledore out of the assembly on proof of 'Statutory Oath-Breaking' via denying and falsifying of blood-oaths demanded by law and treaties." The poor secretary took an audible gulp of water before continuing "He has been remanded to the high security wing of Azkaban Prison pending a full trial, but the ICW have already deposited in full chamber their official request for extradition to Basel. Apparently, he pulled the same bullcock trickeries on them as he did here."

Smiling widely for the happy turn of events, he snapped a small spark of magic at the crystal to switch on his microphone to order "Get me the Potter account manager in this office the moment he's able to present himself with all his client's files on Potter and Peverell, plus the Black Heirship since it hasn't been rescinded and Sirius Orion Black has no children in sight. And have the floor's kitchen send up a banquet for a dozen people. I want all the assistants and the Black manager with his team too. We're going to war over this, and I'm not letting go till I get me some hairy wizard's noggin on a spike!"

"By your will, majesty!" the secretary replied, full of violence and bile for the bearded fool who had done so much damages to the reputation and relations of Gringotts with its human neighbors all over the planet. The young goblin would be sharpening his ax and arrowheads as he sent out the messages, hoping that his mighty and generous king would let him punish the human a small bit,
between his own turns at the felon's oily, stinking hide. This really was shaping up to be an incredible Yule season, after all.

A few very joyful days later, the Goblins of Gringotts were given the rare pleasure of receiving, for the first time of his life, the young Harold Potter inside their hallowed halls under the city of London. Due to the cursed bindings on his magical core, Harry could not enter the bank or Goblin lands in person as long as Albus Dumbledore had any pretensions of being his legal & magical guardian. He had emitted a 'decree' in the Wizengamot chamber that he was not certain Lord Voldemort's magic hadn't damaged the boy's mind. In light of such doubts, the felon had ordered that any and all banking correspondence or decisions be given to him alone for disposal, unless the child initiated contact - from afar - or reached the age of 11. Since Dumbledore had also committed the legalistic tracasseries to bar anybody from accessing the Potter accounts and vaults unless they presented in person for an Identity or Inheritance Blood-Tithe Ritual, it was in essence a catch-22 permanent block on Harry ever gaining access to anything in this life.

Until he found a house-elf who ferried the necessary documents between Gringotts and Harry.

The Manipulator had blocked the Potter, Peverell and Black accounts but never knew anything about those that Lily Evans had under her many legal names and pseudonyms. This was the very first fatal mistake he had made concerning the woman, and it would be the last he ever did.

The Goblins were motivated to follow the very narrow letter of the illegal decrees just enough to avoid a genuine war, but still grant the child the basic services he should have at his age and capacity. The small diplomatic snit they had in public was just a bit of a warm-up in preparation for what came to fruition now. And it really was a menial little paperwork snit, as no honor duels had been declared and no pass of arms was fought in the field. That said snit netted the Goblin Nation further civil rights, commercial benefits, and more freedom of movement on the surface for their non-titled citizens was just that much more fun for everybody inside Gringotts.

Now, the bearded Manipulator was finally cast aside like a bad batch of mushroom lager that even the goblin-hounds didn't want to sniff, and for cause! That meant that just as with the Gamot and ICW, the good King Ragnok was now able to order audits and investigations into each and every act that Dumbledore had done inside his sovereign lands since the decrepit human was born. And boy did they find plenty of crapulence to expose in the public medias or courtrooms all across Britannia, Europa, Slavia and the Mediterranean shores!

Albus had been silently piling up a trove of stolen monies and artifacts by committing Line-Theft at least once a decade since he had passed his OWL's with somewhat ordinary results. The man would study all the muggle-borns in his vicinity then pick one who should be related to a Pureblood wizarding lineage through an affair or rape that had been hidden. Once he managed to steal a few drops of blood to power his genealogical divinations, he would decide if this was the target he wanted. When he had settled on a choice, he cornered the person and used a bevvy of compulsions and potions to make the helpless victim sign over all their worldly possessions in both magical and muggle societies with a falsified blood-bound contract. Then he compelled the person to go home, write a suicide letter and use a 'Dark Cutting Curse' to open their throat all the way to the spine. A few days after the death was discovered by the aurors, Albus sent his solicitors into Gringotts to deposit the contracts and begin the transfers into personal vaults under fake names.

Since the year 1889 when he sat his OWL's to this day, covering 101 years of felonies, Albus had managed to steal no less than fourteen family inheritances, and insured the End-of-Line of five families who could have survived, even if the manner it happened was crass. In any ways, the revelation of this was the door that slammed on the kneazle's tail, making everybody inside the jurisdiction of the ICW, and especially Britain, take to the streets in massive riots, from the lowest
peasant or vagrant to the highest lords and diplomats, all chanting for Dumbledore to be given the worse sentence imaginable to wizard-kind.

Poisoning with Squibbing Oil followed by obliterating his decades of occult studies, surgically destroying his vocal chords and hand tendons, then finally abandoning him in a muggle asylum for the insane. He would always have a vague echo of his magicks and powers, but never truly remember them, only feel the soul-deep loss, which he could never explain to anyone.

Chances of such cruelty being done, however, were thin. The population might be screaming for his death, but it was not in any ways sure they would tolerate that it be done in this manner, mostly because it meant that somebody else could be sentenced to similar as well. With the way that corruption and unnaturality had stalked the halls of the Wizengamot for nearly a century, you would be hard-pressed to find a single citizen who would trust the tribunals or aurors with this kind of power over the life of anybody in the country, even against non-humans.

Such was the good news that young Harry Potter was explained by King Ragnok in person, as he showed the juvenile Lord the sights of Diagon Alley ablaze with torch-bearing rioters from the window of his office, high in the upper floors of Gringotts' façade. With the portly, and extremely afraid, Minister of Magic Cornelius Oswald Fudge standing on a hastily conjured platform, just before the white marble steps of the bank, to appease the crowds, the Goblin monarch was finally able to give the boy the audience and rituals he should have undergone since the deaths of his kindred. With the powerful confidentiality and security wards keeping the noises from the busy commercial street out of the room, the Potter, Peverell and Black account teams began the long and tedious job of getting their client up to speed on his estates, businesses and legal standing.

At the same time, one of the Goblin Nation's senior ambassadors walked out of the massive front doors to go deliver to Cornelius Fudge the Goblin Nation's ultimatum. Ragnok demanded that the Treaty dispositions be applied in full; because he had falsified contracts, inheritances and legacies through the bank, and that most of his crimes were against under-age persons to boot, Albus Dumbledore was to be handed over immediately for trial and sentencing. In recognition of the great torts and depredations the man had inflicted upon all organizations he had been a part of, Ragnok graciously offered to delay the application of sentence for up to a full calendar year so that all governments, churches, guilds, schools and chartered Families, could interrogate him while under the effects of the Goblin's version of Veritaserum. Of course, any and all new crimes discovered and proven would be added to the appropriate charge sheets, and the monarch offered the use of his dungeons and executioners to apply the compiled and structured sentences of everybody so the geriatric con-artist couldn't reduce, deflect or escape his due punishment.

Cornelius Fudge was usually a methodical waffler of the first order. Today though, seeing a veritable tidal-wave of support for the Goblin proposal offered out loud in public coming from all walks of life, politics, economy and Faiths, made the decision easy and quick. For the first time in over 75 years, the British Ministry acquiesced the Goblin Nation's prerogative in holding, judging, sentencing and processing the suspect, as long as each implicated organization or Family victimized was allowed a turn at the man's mind to extract his secrets. For the first time in recorded history of the Wizengamot elections, Cornelius Oswald Fudge saw his popular approval ratings climb above the 92% bar and stay there for three weeks when Ragnok published a photo of Dumbledore chained in a Goblin oubliette with four goblin-hounds lurking outside his door, salivating at the thought of his pain and misery.

It was now a good time to be a Goblin, or just a Gringotts employee for other species.

Harry Potter couldn't be any happier, especially since his Heirships and Lordships had been officially recognized by Gringotts' inheritance and ritual departments, and Ragnok himself upon
viewing the pensieve memory with the department heads and account managers. The parchments were sent to the Wizarding Ministry of the Welsh Wiccan, and also the White Council, Watchers and Librarians, just to be certain Harry wasn't accosted or hassled without due cause. He may be a child but he had two active lordships on him, a third lordship pending, plus he was Peer of the Realms Britannic as confirmed by Buckingham Palace, so the aurors, hit wizards, Wardens and ICW Enforcers had to be made aware of what they were dicking with, to avoid a diplomatic or judicial incident. Especially since Harry, being an under-age child, had the right to nominate a Goblin warrior as his Champion in case honor duels were asked of him. A small privilege which he immediately accepted and enacted from a list of candidates Ragnok had vetted himself.

Pity the fool who tried that tactic to steal his Lines and Heritages!

With all the accounts and vaults opened up to what was allowed for his age under the Potter and Peverell charters and Gringotts client conventions, Harry could now visit and use most of what he had inherited. If certain objects were still barred from removal from the Family's vault, he could simply pay the bank to make a functioning copy to keep in his trunk, a favorite alternative for precious books that several ministries or councils would want to seize or destroy.

Young Harry was also, in the last week of June, able to have a first video-conference with his blood-oathed godfather, Sirius Orion Black III, the Lord Black, by using the enchanted mirror in the private Master's vault of his trunk. Several of the legal, political and diplomatic chicaneries surrounding Albus Dumbledore had begun to unravel at a fast clip since his transfer to the Goblin cells, so the two relatives were finally able to start exchanging letters via the Gringotts secured mailboxes, and then through the communications mirrors on a fixed schedule. A first live meeting should happen during the summer, at the Great ICW Rotunda in Basel in July, to celebrate Harry's 11th birthday properly, with living family instead of just honored spirits.

Christmas break 1990-91

(Harry Potter - theme)

December 1990 – January 1991
Multiple locations
The British Isles & Europa

Harry didn't know yet just how different his Yule season celebrations would be from the past years. And he certainly didn't know how catastrophic the upheaval that would shake the entirety of Magical Britannia, Europa, Slavia and the rest of the ICW members would be. It was like a tremor shook the entire planet all at once because the magnetic poles were resetting and a new Ice Age was dropping on them, all together without warning signs.

The first shock to the system was the public declaration by the Magical Ministry of the Welsh Wiccan community that Albus Dumbledore had taken gravely ill from a heart infarction and all current prognostics were dire. In fact, he was fully crippled all over the right side and not expected to ever recover his mobility or autonomy. Even his right eye and side of mouth were non-functional, thus severely handicapping his spell-casting abilities and legilimancy skills.

The news was published in the Daily Prophet and a live interview with Minister of Magic of the Welsh Wiccan community, Cornelius Oswald Fudge, passed on the Wizarding Wireless. He was accompanied by the Head of Staff for St-Mungo's hospital and Madam Bones of DMLE. What
they were saying was rather bland, as in medical reports and the beginnings of an investigation into why Hogwarts staff waited 26 days before asking for outside help when Dumbledore was found by the house-elves, on the 26th of November. Also, the preliminary questioning of the medi-witch and Heads of Houses at the school were raising severe concerns which had just triggered a very large and far-reaching audit of the castle by DMLE and Ministry officials.

On the more useful side of things, his muggle relatives were spontaneously confined by DMLE agents, then scanned & interrogated by senior aurors to find the extension of Dumbledore’s manipulations, frauds, abuses and Line-Theft attempts against himself and his Houses. This unavoidably led to the aurors discovering that he spent the last four years of his life as semi-homeless, with his trunk being his portable residence. It was only because he had inherited the trunk through a Gringotts account with all paperwork from his mother, married Lady Potter, on file that the DMLE was prevented from seizing the item or forcing their way into the rooms to search & seize whatever they wanted. Some pink-clad bitch named Dolores Umbridge, who wasn't part of either the DMLE, aurors, Unspeakables or wizarding CPS, suddenly appeared on the premises. She then proceeded to try to verbally bully the child and aurors with fake laws and falsified Ministry documents into confiscating the trunk, or at least letting her have some sort of preponderant authority over what was allowed inside in the name of keeping the country's blood and culture pure and wizardly.

It never had a chance to work, especially not when the goblin account manager and House Potter's newly hired human solicitors arrived during her racially offensive diatribe.

Umbridge was publicly forced to back off in great painful surprise when Harry's solicitor presented the boy's memory in the Wizengamot's projection pensieve, along with a formal complaint for attempted breach of Chartered Family heirloom & residence, plus attempt at theft and censorship of Noble Family Library, and blatant attempt to use powers & authority never assigned to her posting or job description. Harry was immensely gratified to be seated in the Gamot chamber as the memory was played and the case argued, so that he could stand up and ask her to her face if she thought she was doing Dumbledore’s mugwumpish bidding, or trying to take over at abusing children from him now that the spot was open.

The uproar of outrage the Warlocks and proxies shouted at the witch was nearly enough for the Chief-Witch, Madam Griselda Marchbanks, to have the meeting vacated and the chamber evacuated by the aurors on sentry duty. In the end of the short trial, the felonious witch was fined 10,000 Galleons, suspended without pay for a month, and lost three years of seniority, which decreased her salary & benefits, but most importantly rendered her unable to hold any 'senior' position in the Ministry or national institutions for at least five years to come.

Minister Fudge was so ill-at-ease to explain why a person purporting to be his particular senior under-secretary and chief of staff for his cabinet had thought it was a good idea to inflict such treatment on any young heir of any house, let alone think it was legal, especially after the recent revelation of serial Line-Theft and assassinations by Dumbledore. Fudge was in such hot water over his ex-subordinate that he had no choice but to dismiss her completely from the Ministry in disgrace, lest he himself become a victim of the seated Warlocks' retaliations. The elections were coming up soon, and any popularity he had garnered by handing Dumbledore over to the Goblins was already dissipated like morning dew in the sunlight. He could not afford any scandals our doubts to his fitness for office, specifically not his morality and sanity. The pink-obsessed witch disappeared from public sight, but would reappear shortly, nastier than ever.

{ HP } --- { Hogwarts is burning! } --- { HP }

The most deplorable situation that Harry had to deal with in July was the emergency meeting of the
Wizengamot requested by the Hogwarts Board of Governors, through its chairman Lucius Abraxas Malfoy, Head of Family, Lord Malfoy, Baronet of Wiltshire. The board was to submit its written update on the investigations currently going on inside the venerable castle-school, and make proposals to palliate the mess that the collapse of the administrative and teaching staff had caused.

Unfortunately for Harry, everything seemed to conspire to make him miss the closed-door session, despite that he had an entitled right to sit and vote regardless of age or blood status, due to being the Lord of House Peverell. When your chartered Family is called "Most Venerable" and "Greatly Spiritual" by the legal texts of the nation, you get privileges unlike any other. And when that house is mentioned directly in the constitution of the Wizengamot as being older than the legal existence of Britain as a sovereign country recognized by its neighbors, you get more privileges. One such privilege was that ANY Peverell by Blood-Law inheritance had the right to be present inside the Gamot chamber and speak upon any matters. Further, unlike recently created Families who were less than 1,000 years old, the Peverell had no minimal age limit to receive status as Scion, Heir or Lord, and no voted statute, regular or emergency, could keep the Seated Peverell Lord from voting in the chamber for ALL proposals and matters.

Lets just say a lot of people tried very hard to forget those laws, and make others do too.

That state of mind was the reason why -somebody- lost Harry's summons to the emergency meeting, and then the auror on sentry duty tried desperately to block him from entering the chamber, despite the fact the same man had controlled his identity and let him in just last week for the trial against Umbridge. When reminded forcibly of the facts about the trial's outcome, the man had winced in misery as he realized the power and legal authority the 10 year old wielded through lawyers, Gringotts and his legally, magically empowered titles.

Once seated in the Peverell's historical chair, Harry had to get into a shouting match with the room's junior scribe to be accounted present and voting, since the newbie had never been confronted to the antiquated laws and privileges of Venerable Houses, nor the Peerage of the Realms Britannic despite the plethora of Peers present. All the others were over 21 year of age already, so the scribe had never bothered to control them passed their visible characteristics and presence. It was only the arrival of the Gamot's senior scribe, who knew both Harry's situation and the obsolete laws enacted by his multiple lordships, that prevented the mess from escalating into another trial about Royal Peerage, Entitled Nobility and Blood-Law rights. Now fully seated and named in the scrolls for calling quorum and votes, the honorific 'Warlock' child was trying to relax when he saw something that made him want to throw Hadean pain prayers at the crowd.

Dolores -fucking- Umbridge, dressed as girly-pink as ever, was sitting in all her bactracian glory next to the delegation from the Board of Governors, at the private solicitors' table. In fact, she was giggling like a prepubescent schoolgirl as she tried to stage-whisper something to an elderly Board member that Harry didn't know personally, but recognized from the portfolio his account managers had prepared. Lord Myzere wasn't a noble or member of the rich elites, but he was Pureblood from a respected Wizarding House. He had been close to the Death Eaters until Voldemort went off the rails in the late 1970's, when he distanced himself publicly. Harry could respect the High Traditionalist mindset as he shared it, but racism and incestuous retardedness he would not even contemplate. This man was at least an adversary, if not an outright enemy.

Chief-witch Griselda Marchbanks had been the head of the Wizarding Department of Schooling until Albus Dumbledore had been declared medically unfit for service. She had been the first to put in practice the new laws recently voted just after Dumbledore's first arrest that stated nobody could hold multiple elected, nominative, judicial or governmental postings alongside other bureaucratic or corporate jobs. When you have one charge of public trust, you devote yourself to that one task and nothing else, except your Chartered Family obligations. So Madam Marchbanks was now
solely the chief-witch of the Wizengamot, and several dozen other postings had so been vacated and refilled in the months since last November. Banging her gavel with alacrity and severity as she called for order and decorum, the elderly woman showed clearly why she deserved the post rather than anybody else.

Once the chamber was seated at rest and accounted, the Hogwarts Board of Governors began to submit its findings, and it was a hecatomb that scared many with how far-reaching things went. Only the fact that most in the chamber had been cursed or poisoned with loyalty elixirs by Dumbledore to go against their conscience and self-interest kept anybody from wishing for a Time-Turner to go back before the revelations, when events and life were so much simpler. It was a good thing that all voting members had been scanned and vetted by the Department of Mysteries as being autonomous of free will at last, and that they all wore their Familial sigil ring. The protections on those artifacts should protect the parliamentarians against further attempts at manipulating their minds and actions, for now.

The report about the situation at the school was such;

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Professor Minerva McGonagall would not be able to return to teaching in September, because she was too traumatized and emotionally destroyed to make a stable administrator. She had been mind-raped repeatedly, had compulsions implanted in her mind via Imperius, had been obliviated hundreds of times over decades, and been severely drugged for obedience, loyalty, subservience, ignoring violence done to children, ignoring bullying and tolerating the abuses of authority that Dumbledore and 'high officials' did in the name of their jobs. Also, the healers from St-Mungo’s determined that the blood-bound loyalty potions in her system would take nearly a full year to finish metabolizing, so putting her in authority over children or any sort of teaching job was not a good idea. What she would decide to do with her life when that year was done was still very much unknown, even by her.

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Professor Pomona Sprout was lucky she had been deemed inoffensive and unimportant by Dumbledore who was as bigoted against Hufflepuffs, and generally self-blinded as they came. He had only poisoned her with small doses of weak loyalty elixir to make sure she never called him out on his tolerance of bullying and violence towards those students he himself was targeting for long-term exploitation. Her mind and body were already clear, and she was fit for full duties. She would be back at Hogwarts in September, but as a teacher only.

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Professor Filius Flitwick could thank his bi-racial parentage and goblin ancestors for having been left mostly alone. He had received small amounts of loyalty, befuddlement and forgetfulness elixirs over the last forty years, but had metabolized all of it so fast that Dumbledore had to lay back for fear of his manipulations becoming visible to the half-goblin. Further, his links with the Goblin Nation and Gringotts bank were dangerous in a way that the aurors would never be, so the old magus had to be extra careful and distant towards the charms expert. When he realized his potions were no longer working beyond half duration and one third of strength, he had to let it go and work around the part-goblin lest he be discovered. Flitwick would be able to return in September, but as a teacher only.

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Potion master Severus Tobias Snape, Lord-Elect Prince, was being kept in St-Mungo's Janus
Thickey ward for long-term spell damage victims, and would not be able to work anywhere but his room for the foreseeable future. The man had been quite literally enslaved since he was eleven years old, when he first set foot in Hogwarts. Dumbledore had used an unholy mixture of alchemies, curses, legitimancy attacks to reprogram his Inner-World and Identity, had obliviated hundreds of his memories, and confounded hundreds more.

He used the young man's emotional instability and social loneliness to commit Line-Theft when he told him that his grand-parents, the Lord and Lady of House Prince, had disinherited him then Cast him Out of the Family due to his half-blood status and recommendations from James, Heir of Potter, and Sirius, Heir of Black. When young 15 year old Severus signed with a blood quill the Gringotts parchment that stated he understood the terms of his disownment, it was actually a fake crafted by Dumbledore who dispelled the phantom text to let the real document become visible to present at the Ministry via lawyers. It was actually a fraud contract declaring that Severus acknowledged unspecified debts, towards a confidential Pureblood patron. It declared that because he had not been able to fulfill the terms of patronage, and thus reimbursed the debts by handing over the entire Prince legacy that wasn't bound by Blood-Law or inheritance ritual, like the actual title or the land plots.

The potion master was mentally broken and emotionally destroyed, and then his magicks were unstable because Dumbledore had manipulated him into pronouncing a magical vow that was now proven to be unrealizable, so he was suffering Oath-Breaking backlash. The only way to save his life and sanity was to keep him charmed comatose, with an automated dialysis perfusion of 0.001% Squibbing Oil given by intravenous line, directly into the liver, until the backlashes were finished passing. At this point, not a single healer, mind healer or apothecary wanted to declare any prognostic about his chances of living, let alone coming out sane, functional or magically able. This also had the problem of putting the Prince heritage in abeyance until an Heir could be found or declared.

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Medi-witch Poppy Pomphrey would be kept in the hospital for the foreseeable future as she had several curses and compulsions buried deeply in her psyche, besides a stronger variant of loyalty elixir. She was awake, aware and functional, but severely depressive and had tried to self-injure several times already.

It was thought to be a mechanism Dumbledore put into his compulsions to destroy her credibility by looking insane in case she was called to testify against him. Another troubling situation was that each time the healers had asked her opinion about the other teachers in the beds near her, she had either spoken nonsense, lied flat out, or told them to ask Dumbledore because he was an alchemist, not her.

Even when she was asked about children's basic health issues that she encountered every year for decades, she had been indecisive or given answers that were just slightly off-kilter. Another troubling find was that she had been mentally programmed to give different qualities of attention and care according to the Hogwarts House the person had been sorted in during their school years, and to treat non-Hogwarts educated people with about 75% of what optimal care was supposed to be. She was made to pamper Gryffindors and Hufflepuffs like they were fragile jewels, treat Ravenclaws at par, and treat Slytherins at 66% or less of normal, and to be rude about it.

As time went on, the mind-healers were finding more and deeper layers to the compulsions and damages done to her Inner-World and Identity. She was clearly not fit for any job or posting, especially any school or child healing tasks.
Librarian Irma Pince was one of the worse cases of direct, repeated Imperius victimization that the aurors and mind-healers had witnessed in their lives, including the Blood Purity War and the troops of Gellert Grindelwald during the muggle World War II. Irma Pince was also the only human to have been so thoroughly mentally programmed that the compulsions, obliviations and false memories were spread throughout her Identity, Dreamscape and Inner-World, to the extent that nobody was able to figure out where the person ended and the heuristics matrix took over.

She was like a superbly configured flesh golem or homonculus; visibly indistinguishable from normal humans, but the mind, memories and magicks were under enslavement at 85%, leaving her only 15% of free will for her daily routines. She had particularly strong loyalty, obedience, subservience, willpower erosion, temper worsening and patience limitation alchemic elixirs still percolating inside as she had been dosed every month, despite the fact these could last up to a year with how strong they were prepared. Dumbledore absolutely wanted NOTHING about the magical communities outside of Wizarding Britain to pollute Hogwarts' library, and even less about hybrid or non-human species being intelligent enough to be treated as more than just creatures.

The only non-human species who were still present in the library were the Goblins, the mermen of Black Lake at the foot of the school, and Veela since a few of England's wizarding families had intermarried with some, in the distant past. Every other species was declared a 'dark' or 'grey' creature to be feared and avoided, with precious few exceptions like the phoenix and unicorn who were deemed 'Of the Light' because Dumbledore had a phoenix familiar, and the Forbidden Forest had unicorns right next to the children. The equines were one of the five basic wand cores used by humanity, so forbidding children to learn about them would be truly ludicrous. That, and the Ollivander Family would scalp his beard, braid it into a whip and flog some common sense into him if he ever tried to harm or speak ill of unicorns, let alone bar knowledge of them.

Amongst the many crimes Dumbledore had done was to use Irma Pince as unpaid labor to evaluate and repair any books or scrolls he brought her, then have her be his anonymous intermediary in the black markets for antiquities where those texts he didn't want were sold. This was how the school's library slowly lost nearly 40% of its total collection in the last 63 years, since the process began the first year that Pince began to work. As she was new, nobody was familiar with her temperament therefore Albus was free to modify her drastically without fear of revelation. He had exploited and abused her since.

Keeper of Grounds and Keys Rubeus Hagrid was found to be a victim of serial mind-rape, had severe limitations on his personality, memories, mind and magicks installed deeply into his Identity, and had been dosed weekly with loyalty, obedience, docility and subservience elixirs for most of his life since he entered Hogwarts in 1938.

Unlike any other staffer, he had also been implanted micro-wands made mundane spider chitin tubes filled with Dumbledore's beard-hair filaments soaked in house-elf blood to prevent from triggering the wards of the buildings Hagrid would visit during his life. This extraordinary step was necessary because Hagrid's physiology had the strength and endurance to metabolize Dumbledore's best alchemies in one tenth of the time it took the humans, or roughly half the time it took Flitwick to do the same. Also, as a half-giant, Rubeus was naturally extremely resistant to most forms of wand-cast mind-magicks or controls, thus requiring a truly esoteric method to leash him into slavery.

Because he was both afraid and jealous of his many great strengths, Dumbledore targeted him from
childhood for binding and limiting so that he not become a threat to the almighty and authority of himself. That was why Albus took the drastic action of manipulating Armando Dippet into expulsing Hagrid even though he knew for a fact that fifth year Prefect Tom Riddle had not seen anything that linked Hagrid’s -illegal- acromantula pet to the death of Myrtle Warren. Seeing him expelled, wand snapped and penniless in the street was the first step of the half-giant's life-long enslavement to appease the paranoid fears of Dumbledore.

The complex set of mental programs, poisons and implants had been too much drain upon his magick and life-force to survive the removal and weaning process at St-Mungo’s. Hagrid died in service of Wizarding Britannia and was given a simple but serene funeral by those professors and ex-students able to attend him.

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Caretaker Argus Filch was never going to return to work in any job whatsoever. The poor old man was found to have been a semi-spell-user of Essence specializing in scriptworkes and hedge-crafting that Dumbledore had rendered squib during his first Line-Theft, a century ago. He was initially a Scion from the House of Ahronnack who got all of his monetary and estate legacy not bound by Blood-Law or rituals stolen by Albus when the felon was only fifteen years old.

Over the decades, Dumbledore had kept Filch at hand as some sort of living trophy, and as a lab rat to test his alchemies until they were properly attuned for the victim of the moment. It so averred that the part-Kneazle Misses Norris was actually his familiar bonded under The Old Ways, and she had been victimized by Dumbledore as well. He used the cat hybrid as lab test subject, put several repulsion and compulsion curses on her to make the students malign and harm her, and severely bound the magical link between Argus and her so they couldn't draw strength from each other to fight off his curses and potions.

The man was presently in the Janus Thickey ward, in a medically maintained coma because he had stopped breathing when Albus Dumbledore was read the Act of Accusation for Line-Theft against House Ahronnack. It was probably a hidden oath or contingency against court testimony that Dumbledore had put in him long ago. No healer wanted to risk their career by speaking aloud a prognostic on the matter, nor about if he would awaken. The cat had fallen ill along her master but had not survived, which worsened the human’s condition immediately as he felt he death and Passage. He had nothing left to live for, and nobody thought he'd ever awaken.

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The most egregious case of malfeasance from Dumbledore was Quirinus Quirrell who was victim of a possession by a malevolent specter picked up during his vacations in Albania. The castle wards against such events should have triggered and isolated the poor man so that he was given help. However, most of the wardstones were so badly maimed or rewritten by Dumbledore's inept attempts at invisible dominance that less than 15% of the functions still worked at all. Most of the venerable wards that had made the school's reputation for safety were off-line or destroyed when Dumbledore realized he would never control them, and he also needed to sign the blood-oath to have sufficient access the modify the settings, which he would never willingly do in his life. He preferred to de-power or destroy the schemes he wasn't able to hijack to his will, leaving the venerable institution almost bare of shields or detectors.

As such, Quirrell's health issues were spotted by the healers during his preliminary screening interrogation with the aurors. The specter inside him fought to get away and actually tried to posses two different people before being chased out of the castle grounds, instead of being contained and exorcised by the wards, as they had been designed to do when they were built.
As a result of this criminally depraved act against the common health and safety of Hogwarts, professor Quirrell, junior auror Malice Irene Selwyn, Lady-Elect of House Selwyn, and master medi-wizard Horace Thespis Delson, have died in service to Wizarding Britannia. They were brought to the DMLE morgue for secured autopsies by the Unspeakables, and given honorable funeral rites by their families, for those who had any left.

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Professor Sybill Trelawney was both a criminal fraud and a victim in the circumstance.

She had been near homelessness as she was deeply indebted but without gainful employ. She saw and advert in the Daily Prophet about Hogwarts searching for a Divinations professor, to replace the person going to retirement. She had no Third-Eye opened, and not much skill in divinatory arts at all to be frankly honest, but she had an ancestor who was famous at it; Cassandra Trelawney, an Oracle of confirmed Gift who served the Church of Cosme.

So, she obtained an interview with Albus Dumbledore in his brother Aberforth's dingy bar, in the early evening just after dinner. She presented herself in her most Bohemian clothes, embalmed in incense smoke and herb oils to affect an air of mysticism and esoterism that old men of Dumbledore's generation have always fallen for like the superstitious suckers they are.

She gave a false prophecy.

She acted like a Pinewood Studios pro in a classic James Bond movie.

She did like the Oracle woman played by Jane Seymour, in 'Live and Let Die', from her youth in 1973. That was her role model, when she was doing an audition for a job. She put on her atours and glamours, colored bead shawl and tinted round glasses with sparkling runes in the lenses, and perfumed herself with diluted confounding and emotionality elixirs to manipulate the senses of the audience seated within ten feet of her stage.

And that fateful evening, Albus Dumbledore was her exclusive audience at a private séance. She read the Tarot to predict for England great turmoils and dark mists of desperate loss, before could be found a Beacon of Pure Light in the far: Dumbledore himself. She had used cards marked with invisible sigils that only the charmed lenses in her glasses could see so she could use some basic sleigh-of-hands to shuffle and pass the cards to her needs for the Future she wanted to pronounce. It was always vital to cater to the specific desires of the audience seated before you, if you wanted to get paid and have return customers in your boudoir.

After that, she had faked reading floating holy glyphs in the smoke of the censer she had brought, when it fact they were simple illusions she had programmed to react only to her aura so that it wouldn't trigger by accident. She had put in five different patterns, and the false prayer she chanted triggered the pattern fitting what she saw the customer desired to hear.

Then, the job not cinched yet, she had pulled the Full Monty out of her wand. She had done the biggest fake of her life of con-artistry; she managed to fake the pronouncement of a Prophecy.

Given the Blood Purity War in progress at time, and the fact she was great friends -secretly- with Rita Skeeter who was at the beginning of her journalistic career, she had heard a lot of juicy gossip, privileged Ministry informations, and frankly illegal classified auror reports, from her old childhood friend. Sybill had used a conglomeration of three dozen sources to manufacture the utterly falsified "Prophecy of the Savior Child" that would defeat Lord Voldemort, if he were properly guided by the Powers, Magicks and Authority of a wise mentor; Albus Dumbledore.
The poor deluded fraudster could never have divined in her life the true nature of Dumbledore as the worse predator and killer to ever disgrace Wizarding Britain, not even to save herself.

Albus immediately and without warning or forethought attacked her with legilimancy, but not to verify her honesty or find hidden details of her Prophetic Gift. No, she had tagged him quite well, when she profiled his mindset in preparation for her con. He was a superstitious, credulous fool who believed dearly that the Multiverse and Pantheons of the Divines had -something- of great and extraordinary portents in store for him, and his devout followers. The moment the false tale of Prophetic do-gooding had left her lips, the vainglorious, vapidly narcissistic old cretin had jumped on the one chance to prove his mentally deluded beliefs of superiority to everybody.

So he immediately attacked her mind not to verify, but to establish an external mind-magic lock that was coded to respond only to his Blood and Magic signatures. Her Prophetic Gift and masterful Talents at the divinatory arts and techniques would never again serve anybody but Albus 'The New Merlyn, Regent Archmagus of Britannia' Dumbledore, no matter what came. He also made her sign the cheapskate contract he had prepared in case the job applicant proved just good enough to pass by the Board of Governors, but pliable enough to not need too much of his overstretched attention and schedule.

The morning after, when she presented herself to Hogwarts to prepare the new school year as she had been programmed to do, he began to dose her with particularly strong, Blood-bound elixirs to insure her silence, docility, obedience and limit her magical Talents and Gifts before any audience other than himself. To further her isolation and make certain nobody ever tried to steal his pet Seer, he Imperiused her to drink cheap muggle cooking Sherry by the bottle every day, and used a psychic curse to make her suffer pains equal to a low but constant Cruciatus whenever she was less than 50% drunk on the specified alcohol.

From that point on, she was made to 'Channel' Prophecies or Divine portents at least once a year, because Dumbledore was a needy, tetchy little bitch of a eunuch that absolutely had to have his ego stroked and be confirmed as the biggest, baddest and magikest Warlock in the land. In the years he had hired her, he never saw through her lies and frauds, and never stopped believing that some poor child born at the end of July would be the prophesied 'Savior of Wizarding Light in Britannia, Europa and Slavia' from the foul clutches of the Dreaded Lord of the Darkes, Heir of Slytherin, Voldemort.

Sybill's mind may have been churned to mulch over the years, but she was still remarkably lucid as Dumbledore believed that a true Seer, Oracle or Prophet never controlled when it was that the Divines channeled their message through them, and that the person remembered nothing. All he needed to feel safe, and in sufficient control of her, was to limit her magicks and social exposure so that she didn't wander out of his grasp, or attract the attention of enemies or aurors. Due to this lucidity, she was able to remember several fragments of self-deluded deblaterations that Albus uttered before her, when he needed a human presence to hear and appreciate the truly mind-warping complexities of his schemes and machinations to keep himself at the top of everything magical, political or economical in England and Europe.

It was how she remembered his supposed discovery of Lord Voldemort making 'Horcruxes' when he attacked the Potters, as Albus had planned. He believed it so hard because little Harry and Neville Longbottom were both born on the end of July and came from proven Light Wizarding noble Families, which Albus had somehow imagined was a prerequisite for the Savior Child to be worthy of becoming his apprentice and Martyr of England. Sybill never gave him names or details other than "a child born at the end of July", without saying any gender or what year or epoch they would be born in. Dumbledore imagined everything else on his own, and then fomented the devastation of two Lineages without external prompting.
So, the aurors and DMLE now had in hand a very thick addition to the already massive folio concerning the investigations of Dumbledore's crimes against Harold Jamieson Evans Potter, newly minted Lord Peverell, Lord Potter, and Heir Ascendant of Black, Peer of the Realms.

It was also why the Unspeakables wanted to speak to Harry in the bowels of the Department of Mysteries, preferably without lawyers and certainly no Goblins, so he would be completely at their mercy as they charted the course for "Britain's Greater Good". Thankfully, the Goblins and none of the titled noble Houses had let that abuse of power and station in the Ministry pass by unchallenged. The Unspeakables were told, and shown, with Umbridge's trial that Harry would NOT be anybody's pet victim again in his life. Plus the fact that Harry's famous scar had been examined, surgically emptied of cursed wooden residues from the exploding nursery room furniture, and healed in a way that left no scars at all. There had never been any horcrux in the boy's face, just some splinters contaminated by negative energy that struck him when the dresser detonated from the backlash of the protections Lady Potter had placed around the crib. According to the Soul Stones inside Gringotts, the Dread Lord Voldemort, born as Tom Marvolo Riddle Jr, was well and truly dead, not in suspended animation, not a wraith, and not coming back. Well, unless he had hidden a phylactery while turning himself into a lich or lich-lord, but those things could not be scanned from afar, and the soul stone would go dark if it was done.

Whether Harry's hard-earned peace and safety from harmful tests and rites stayed true remained to be seen, as the Unspeakables were secretly plotting dastardly and frankly... Well... Unspeakable things, yes. That's what they were plotting. And, they weren't alone in wanting ill luck and plagues upon the combined Houses of Harry Potter, so Time alone would tell.

Professor Rolanda Hooch who taught flight and refereed Quidditch had been potioned for loyalty and a very low level of attention and reaction towards violence, bullying and children being injured. She had also been programmed to be sullen, distant and uninterested in the lives and welfare of anybody but her own family, most of which had died during the Blood Purity War. She would be fine come September, and since her responsibilities and authority had always been limited, the healers saw no problems with sending her back to work.

The other teachers were victims of lazy efforts at control spread out over decades, being given loyalty, befuddlement or forgetfulness elixirs according to whatever Dumbledore thought needed to be hidden from the aurors and open public. Most of them had already metabolized the drugs for more than fourteen months by now, and were not showing symptoms of active programming, although each had been mind-raped repeatedly, from their time as students and throughout their careers. Those who would not return in September had made the choice for themselves, not because of medical advice or pressures from the Board.

Charity Burbage of Muggle Studies chose to leave for other employment, preferably in private tutoring rather than a public or group setting. Given how out of date he curriculum was, and that she hadn't seen a muggle since she had visited a squib aunt in Manchester at age 13, it wasn't seen as a damaging choice. She would have been replaced come September 1991 anyways.

Septima Vector of Arithmancy, Bathsheda Babbling of Ancient Runes, Aurora Sinistra of Astronomy and Sylvanus Kettleburn of Care of Magical Creatures, chose to return to their posts in September 1991, but only with conditions and assurances about the castle getting new wards that would actually function, and the true salaries and benefits that their contracts stipulated, with all arrears and legal fees covered by the school. The requests had already been accepted by the Board.
and the Ministry's Department of Schooling.

It had taken two hours for the Board of Governors to submit and read abstracts of the report from the partial investigations. Multiple deaths, multiple comas and handicapped victims that would never recover fully. Several professors who were seen as heroes in their fields were compromised to the point they could barely function as muggle teachers for a regular high school class. Most of the non-academic staff was decimated, except for Rolanda Hooch who had never been all that active or important in the school anyways, so a pitiful victory that was.

{ HP } --- { Help! Hogwarts is still ablaze! } --- { HP }

And then there were all the collateral discoveries that worsened the case even more.

All the mess about Harry's scar and -NO!- it wasn't a horcrux, or phylactery, or whatever the Hells you thought it was. He didn't even have a damned scar anymore! It had just been contaminated grime that shrapnelized when Voldemort got vaporized by Lily's booby trap. Or James', the aurors hadn't been sure than and still weren't. But the boy didn't have a Dark Lord embryo in his cranium, so all the fucking shite that Albus "I know everything!" Dumbledore put him through was for a big fat nothing.

Rubeus Hagrid had been hiding and helping a growing colony of Amazonian Acromantulas in the Forbidden Forest since 1943, or 48 years. The worse part was that Dumbledore had known full well, but used the health and safety of his pet's brood to emotionally blackmail Hagrid into cooperating when the alchemies were wearing out too fast to be safely reapplied. If the grounds keeper wanted to keep his arachnid friends alive and happy, then he had to cooperate with Albus for everything asked. The truly evil part of this was that Acromantulas may be able to speak with humans and other species, that didn't make their mindset any less alien. They were both incestuous and unattached to their kindred. They were predatory in a way that was murderous and cannibalistic without consideration or remorse, and they admitted it openly as they saw no trouble or immorality in this way of feeding. In their five decades of presence, the spiders had killed-off half the unicorns, a quarter of the centaurs, and exterminated approximately thirty-two species of animals, while endangering fifty-seven others and forcing nearly three hundred types of creatures to migrate out of the forest to keep their kinds alive.

One of the further crimes of Albus Dumbledore discovered was that he forced Hagrid to collect the excess silk from the Acromantulas' secondary nests and aerial roadways to be brought back to Hogwarts. Inside the castle's lower dungeons, he had tasked several of the oldest and least mobile house-elves with steeping, cleaning, spinning and weaving the silk into commercial rolls of 200 pounds that he sold at a good profit on the black market. He dodged the permits and taxes on sales and revenues, and it all went into his pockets as he never gave the school, forest preservation fund or Hagrid anything of the proceeds.

Besides this abomination of an environmental hecatomb that threatened the reliable provisioning of food markets and apothecaries all over Britain and the world in coming years, it also created an imbalance in the magicks of the Laand that was in desperate need of druids and geomancers to correct. It would take a Grand Ritual of Antiquity to set right what was damaged, or else the diseases and cursed magicks would continue to spread through the forest and out into the rest of Scotland by traveling through the three Ley Lines under Hogwarts. The purulent tumor that Dumbledore had accidentally let happen was a genuine threat to the magical and ecological balance of the entire planet, if given three or four centuries to degenerate further.

Then, of course, were the Centaurs who could decide to stop being isolationists long enough to
drag Wizarding Britain before the ICW Assembly to have them tried for accidental genocide and warfare through criminal negligence in their stewardship of Hogwarts, plus of course the utter lack of supervision and oversight where Dumbledore was concerned. As he had been Headmaster, Chief Warlock of the Gamot, and British representative as well as Supreme Mugwump at the ICW, that could become quite the kettle of fish to fry. For once, the Board of Governors had managed to bypass their usual disdain for part-humans and non-humans by inviting the leader of the Centaur Herd at the first submission of the draft report, to show good will and try to find remedies without dragging the ICW Enforcers into it. Except for the accursed Acromantula colony; everybody in the Gamot chamber was of the opinion that the heavily armed and armored Enforcers and their trained Battle-Basilisk familiars would do a better and faster job than the British aurors and hit wizards put together.

x--------x

It was discovered, during a thorough search of his personal living quarters, that the old bastard had been stealing the research product of several professors by obliviating and confounding them to forget they had done the work. He made them think he had done most of everything and they only served as revision committee when they were free. Thusly, he put nearly four hundred discoveries in transfiguration, transmutation, potions, alchemy and arithmancy to his name by depositing the patents at the Wizarding Ministry without contest by the real authors. Severus Snape had seen nearly two-thirds of his life's work defrauded and extorted from his hands in this manner since he set foot in Hogwarts. The same could be said for Minerva McGonagall, Pomona Sprout and Septima Vector.

On top of damaging the ecology and stealing their studies from the professors, he was also systematically underpaying everybody by ungodly percentages and pocketing wholesale the salaries of Cuthbert Binns and Rubeus Hagrid without telling them.

Professor Binns was a ghost, an honored dead for several decades since before Albus set foot in the castle, so he wasn't supposed to be paid anything but mysteriously got paid a full salary with benefits and pension in the accounting books. Nobody had figured out where the monies went.

Hagrid was to be enslaved and kept poor and destitute at all costs, so Dumbledore fudged his hiring contract by making the gentle giant-kin believe that the small hut and food he got from the castle were an alms for his “unnecessary but appreciated service” to the school's community. Since he was forcibly made to believe his choices were this menial labor, homeless vagrancy or prison in Azkaban, Hagrid had agreed without being mentally able to look further.

Severus Snape and Poppy Pomphrey had spent thousands of hours at preparing potions vials that disappeared to be sold on the black market, just as Pomona Sprout had worked her fingers to the bones in the greenhouses and fields to produce high quality herbs that were also absconded for resell in back-alleys and dank sewer chambers.

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By pure accident, the Unspeakables that were helping with breaking the illegal wards around Dumbledore's office and quarters found his poor Fire Phoenix, held captive inside a stasis bubble crafted out of Laen volcanic glass. The magical crystalline material was weird in that it became super-enduring at any level of heat or flames, but became brittle like eggshell in sub-zero temperature. The perfect prison to keep a phoenix between bouts of poisoning it with alchemies, implanting the Imperius in its mind via legilimancy, and using micro-wands like those found in Hagrid to insure control over long ranges and anchor permanent Dark blood-wards against divinations and scrying.
This gave Albus the perfect vehicle for instantly sending or fetching illegal parcels, sending booby trapped mail to unsuspecting people, and he had even trained the bird to listen to his mental imagery to find and steal small objects for him. In many cases where a person had lost a family heirloom left out of their wall safe for a few minutes, or an important letter had been misplaced, it was actually Fawkes stealing things while Dumbledore piloted him remotely like an animated flesh puppet.

The poor magical entity was in St-Mungo’s research lab, being treated as a VMW (Very Magickal Warlock) with all the regards due to entitled nobility. Nobody knew if he would awaken, nor what state he’d be in if he ever did. For that crime alone, the desecration of a creature of Pure Goodness, its enslavement by Dark means, plus forcing it to commit legally punishable crimes, Dumbledore was already facing three death penalties right there.

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The goals of Albus Dumbledore were always to make money and dodge all aurors or regulatory departments, so that the unlawful and immoral profits ended in his pockets. Ever since he had been born as a pauper's second son in a rural farmstead, and a half-blood at that, Albus had been obsessed with becoming rich, famous and powerful above everyone he could perceive or become aware of by reputation. And like all con-men, his criminalities and depravities in the name of money and self-importance knew no bounds in this world or the next.

{ HP } --- { Is it over yet? / No, it is not. } --- { HP }

After five long hours of reporting, the entire Wizengamot chamber sat in stunned silence, as if someone had dropped a sleep drug grenade in the middle of the floor to knock-out everybody, all at once. Only the animated dicta-quills were still making noise but were unheard as they toiled under silencing wards to not bother the Warlocks and Ladies in their deliberations.

Chief-Witch Marchbanks took in a deep steadying breath, before asking of Lord Malfoy, "What is the status of the school as it stands? And will it be able to reopen at all or partially, come the new year? We need to know now, so that the families can find other institutions or hire at-home tutors until this is all resolved, physically, legally and magically."

Lucius Malfoy stood from his chair at the Board's table and responded in measured words, wearing a grave expression on his face. "We honestly don't know if operating Hogwarts for the coming year is either safe, feasible or even desirable, with the limited staff on hand. Firstly, we have measured the workload of all administrators, heads of Houses and teachers, to figure out by how much they were being overworked or underpaid. On average, each employee was being made to produce three to five times what their list of tasks & responsibilities officially required, while at the same time being paid between 85% and 65% of what the -unmodified- contracts for a single job stipulate. In this, Dumbledore milked them like cows, by all four teats, and left nothing for them or the students after that."

Gesturing carefully and decoratively with his gloved hands, the Chairman of the Board explained in detail; "Minerva McGonagall was exploited shamelessly for decades as sole teacher of transfiguration, master developer of alterative magicks, Head of Gryffindor, and Deputy Headmaster, but paid only 85% of the base salary of a regular professor, with all benefits and her pension fund halved, and most patents or copyrights stolen. Severus Snape was teacher of potions, resident master brewer, resident apothecary, master alchemical developer, Head of Slytherin, and Deputy of financial affairs to Gringotts. He was paid only 85% of the base salary, all benefits and pension halved, 90% of patents and copyrights stolen, and 98% of his apothecary production was stolen for black market resell. Plus, of course, Dumbledore used him as his spy inside the Dark
Lord's ranks during the Blood Purity War, without a copper Knut for his sacrifices. Pomona Sprout was teacher of herbology, master developer of herbology techniques, master breeder of new magical plants, manager of the greenhouses, responsible for stocking the vegetable potion components warehouses, responsible for half of the foodstuffs used daily, and Head of Hufflepuff. She was paid only 85% of the base salary of a regular professor, with all benefits and her pension fund halved, and 90% of patents or copyrights stolen. Filius Flitwick was teacher of charms and Head of Ravenclaw, paid at 75% of the regular salary, with all benefits and pension fund limited at 33% of expected. For the others, their workloads are just a bit worse than written in their contracts, or else Dumbledore deemed they were useless to his plans so they got paid 65% of what should have been, with no benefits or pension allocated."

Making a wider, more expansive gesture of his left hand, Lord Malfoy spoke through tight lips and clenched features. "For those who ignore it, and in the spirit of open declaration of vested interests of my Family, the celebrated master of Potions, Alchemy and Apothecary Arts, professor Severus Tobias Snape, the Lord-Elect Prince in Abeyance, is the godfather of my only son, the Heir Presumptive of House Malfoy. I am personally aggrieved by the crimes, depravities, seditions and treasons committed by Albus Dumbledore, but I am trying to function objectively nonetheless. It is in this objective, arithmantic approach to the situation, that we have come to the following conclusions about the internal workings of the school. Please peruse the following charts and itemized lists, passed by the Board's official solicitors."

Once everybody had a stapled folio in hand, Lord Malfoy affected as dignified a pose as he could, then explained the reality of what remained of Hogwarts today. "While the investigations are still ongoing at the DMLE, ICW and Gringotts, we can already surmise the following problems to overcome. We need a Headmaster that can be trusted and relied upon, and a method to insure that the contracts and oaths are never again bypassed. We need a Deputy Headmaster who will have conditions, contracts and oaths exactly similar to the Headmaster. We need a Deputy Accountant delegated to Gringotts, bound as the first two. We need a medi-witch or healer that is qualified and bound with oaths that cannot be perverted or bypassed by the person or external forces. We will need a dedicated apothecary to produce the potions for internal uses, as well as manage the outside sales that are supposed to happen. Likewise with a dedicated farmer or rancher to handle the vegetation crops and livestock's to be sold outside. We absolutely need four distinct Heads of Houses that are not admins or teachers, or infirmary personnel, or cooks, or custodians, or anything else than Head of House, responsible for the welfare of the students and relations with their families."

Taking a sip of cold water from his goblet, Lord Malfoy pursued; "We would need to have a few more house-elves, but do not need people to be kitchen staff, serving staff, custodian, disciplinarian or grounds-keeper, since these functions were never written in the Hogwarts Charter, and were never necessary. Firstly, corporal punishment was historically carried out by the Heads of House or Headmaster, but never any other personnel, thus a dedicated disciplinarian is a nonsense and should not be employed. Also, historically, detentions were supervised by the teachers who gave them to avoid kicking students out of class to dump them on others without personal involvement. We strongly recommend this becomes the norm again. The other tasks have always been the province of the house-elves who take tremendous joy and pride in feeding the future of our nation and partner countries that send their children here. I see no reason to alter this proven method, nor to asperse insults upon the elves by taking away their tasks and usefulness, which few among us would have the amount of daily magicks needed to do."

The white-blond haired lord finished the demoralizing report "As you can see, we need several people, on average three, to replace each professor we are losing, plus a few more permanent employees to equilibrate the workloads equitably amongst the entire staff. And that is to say nothing of the costs and delays implied by the analysis, retro-engineering and integral replacement
of the entire ward scheme, from the monoliths up, because of centuries of idiotic Headmasters
trying to configure the ward layers to permit, bolster or ignore their pet projects of the moment.
Already, the Unspeakables are talking about de-powering the grid by blocking the Mana Source
under the school's Power Sink. Be aware that the ward-masters of Gringotts, contracted as second
opinion to validate the analysis, have agreed with this prevision because of the enormous
difficulties in repairing the damaged stones and channels, and the non-viable financial montage
that would result from renovating instead of creating from scratch."

Chief-witch Marchbanks asked in hesitant tones, "I can see that the new personnel and job
allocations will multiply the yearly budgets, but will the revenues suffice or will we have to raise
tuition, or even install a new support tax? And what are the price estimates for the wards?"

Shaking his head negatively, Lord Malfoy replied carefully "The tuition should not need to be
adjusted since several irregularities were found in the accounts by the Board, DMLE and Gringotts
who are all still hard at work, digging through the morass. However, king Ragnok has given us a
tentatively posited opinion that if the hundreds of frauds and thefts perpetrated by Dumbledore had
not pauperized the school so, the revenues from the percentage taken on all patents and copyrights
resulting from research would be a considerable yearly intake. Plus the sales of raw or processed
herbs, potions & apothecary craftings, rare components harvested from the Forbidden Forest with
great care, and legally certified copies of the library's exclusive books, all delivered by house-elf to
stay fresh/hot and on time, would make a small fortune every year. Technically, king Ragnok and
his accountants do not understand HOW or WHY the school should be insolvent, nor unable of
material autonomy. It was built on the model of Catholic walled abbeys prevalent in the epoch, a
millenia ago, so that production of foods, medicines, weapons, clothes and erudition were all done
inside the safety of the castle. The Hogwarts designed by the Four Founders and given the Royal
Writ in 1002ad is not the Hogwarts we have known for the last three hundred years. But, to answer
your other question, it is on the last sheet of the folio."

Madam Marchbanks and the seated Ladies, Lords and Proxies turned the sheets until they had the
ward rebuilding projects' draft estimates in sight. The immediate gasps of fear or outrage rang out
the moment the people could intellectualize the magnitude of the numbers lined up.

Old Warlock Tiberius Ogden, Head of Family, Lord of Ogden, put his wand to the crest engraved
in the wooden banister in front of his chair to signal the Chief-Witch that he wished to address the
subject at hand. Given the permission, he whispered harshly in the dead silence that filled the
chamber. "Are these valid? Can we trust these numbers or will they suddenly grow like Devil’s
Snare in a dark cellar? Because I don't think that we could have that much money in our hands
unless we sold six Noble Houses at auction for at least 66% of their book-worth."

Nodding forlornly, Lord Malfoy sighed deeply as he declared "No, I can't give you that guarantee,
Lord Ogden. As previously stated, these are only preliminary estimates done by eye, not even
actual first drafts after divinations, geomancy and scriptworkes engineering were done. It says, and
I sadly quote, 'A best guess of 19 million Galleons over three years to build new, or above 27
million Galleons over seven years for a renovation of the original Ember monoliths and Mana
source channels respecting historic accuracy and emulating the traditional crafting style' as Head
Unspeakable Saul Croaker said."

Madam Bones glared through her heavily enspelled monocle as she wanded the calling crest, then
harshly questioned Malfoy; "And why, pray tell, is the price difference so large? Is it not the same
space being utilized, and in the same manner?"

Shaking his head, Lord Malfoy countered "From what the Unspeakables and Gringotts have
explained to us, if they build new, they can use modern techniques that use less space and channel
Powers more efficiently in small crystal tubes, instead of wide masonry pipes that spread around liquid Primal Essaence as the ancient system does. Repairing the old system however, would mean cutting the castle horizontally to lift it off the foundations where most of the devices, meaning the fabled mythalar pillars, power sink and mithril lances, were buried without physical access. This was done to keep the tremendous radiations and acidic vapors of condensed Primal Essaence limited to the chambers and channels of the ward control grid. And also to keep thieves and idiots from damaging the ward matrix, which obviously failed anyways. Still, rebuilding the original means using the original methods, tools, materials and staying inside the alchemical and energy limits of such techniques, which I remind you are a millenia out of date. Thus the wildly different prices."

Several in the chamber held their forehead or put their face in both hands as the whispers of prayers to the Divines abounded around the debate hall.

{ HP } --- { Are you fucking kidding me, you accursed twits? } --- { HP }

As the murmurs of anguish and distress abated across the debate hall, Harry Potter touched his wooden spoon to the signal crest in front of him, much to the amusement, or scorn, of the Warlocks in neighboring chairs. Being recognized by the Chief-Witch, he asked his question, to the great interest of the assembly.

"My Lord Malfoy, cousin by alliance of my Black Blood-Law, could you explain to us HOW the successive headmasters were able to usurp or damage the ward scheme and devices, if they were sealed away in foundation levels that had no physical access? I seem to find a logical impossibility, in this report. Did they apparate or gate inside the spaces? Or have a house-elf deliver their nefarious tools to remote control them afterwards?"

Lucius Malfoy appeared to ignore the plebeian whispers about his family affairs coming from all over the chamber while at the same time studiously observing and memorizing the reactions caused by the juvenile Lord's speech. He had just recognized the familial standing and alliance that had been wrought between their Houses in a manner of The Old Ways, in abidance of the Pureblood and High Traditionalist Darkes cultures. The tizzy emanating from select parts of the assembly were a balm on his wounded heart that helped to regain strength enough to face the rest of the crimes and personal offenses suffered from the sapping of Hogwarts by Dumbledore.

Bowing at the waist with his left hand at his left hip and his right hand resting atop his serpent-headed cane in the manner of High Lords of Magick, Lucius replied Harry politely with a small, knowing smirk that made even more whispers pass around the Light and Neutral factions of the political spectrum, while the Darke and Darkness groups were wondering about the shift.

"Your question is neither amusing nor amateurish, My Lord Peverell, Lord Potter, and Heir Ascendant Black, cousin by alliance to my House of Malfoy. In truth of fact, all the methods that you stated were used by several parties at some point in history. Firstly, the power sink where sit the mythalar pillars was not fully airtight or watertight as the liquid Primal Essaence had to flow and circulate around the stonework plumbing to irrigate the mithril lances which were the active emitters of the ward scheme. This meant that when the wards were commanded by the keystone hidden in the war-room atop the Turris Magnus, in the small lantern above the headmaster's office and quarters, they could make the hyper-dense fluid recede to the sink. Once the pipes were dry, they could crawl through the ducts to access the hidden foundations. This was done by physically scratching off the runes and figures on several of the crystal segments that compose the keystone to change the program into new configurations. The original coding had been optimized for the Ley Line junction and an epoch of great warfare, but several wanted to reduce the wards down to a 'peace' or 'civilian' setting, that permitted more active modifications to the castle structure, resident
populace or allowed visitors. As such, when the masonry ducts were breached, all the other methods slowly became feasible, as they sent an elf to crawl through the pipes with a portkey beacon that allowed the wizards to then go down directly to the power sink's floor, and eventually gaze upon the Mana Source itself. But, it was done over centuries, by dozens of inept or felonious cretins, none of whom knew what damages they wrought upon the school and grounds."

Madam Bones interfered in the explanation by asking "And that is the reason they want to bisect the castle across the ankles, and lift it in the air by four full floors? Because the original structure was never meant to be accessed or modified unless the castle was sacked and demolished in war by the enemy forces?"

Nodding in genuine sadness, Lord Malfoy confirmed the simple facts. "The architecture of the day was grandiose when they crafted stone and wood, but their abilities with utilities like plumbing and drainage devices made of metals or crystals was quite primitive. Everything relied solely on gravity, evaporation or the tidal action of the Black Lake to flush and remove the offal from the cesspits sunken in the base of Hogwarts, just above the sealed layers. These were no doubts masterful creations of genius for their day, but we have evolved beyond these methods. It would be far less costly, and much quicker, to build a new system that will not need to bisect the castle for levitation, just surgically boring through a few floors and walls to pass the requisite crystal piping to connect the existing devices. And while I am proud of being a High Traditionalist of the Darkes, even our philosophy understands that life brings changes and adaptations to us all. The new construction is what the Board favors for solution. Thank you."

Madam Marchbanks pounded lightly the gavel-wand of Magistrature upon the small wooden wooden block shaped like the first Wizengamot Grimoire to sound-off her demand for attention as further points were forthcoming. "Alright, ye scurrilous bunch o' daft males! There are two Board members who have voted against the report their committee has just deposed before us, and they have come with their own solicitors and scribes to make presentation of their arguments to the Gamot in this emergency session. Lord Prudent Myzere, Head of House Myzere, you have the floor open for your dissenting presentation."

Standing up slowly, the elderly wizard used a long mahogany cane capped by a dog-head pommel to stay upright on his feet, at visibly great efforts. Skin pale and sallow, with a sheen of sweat over his brow that would soon drip into his barely focused eyes, the ancient Warlock tried to speak clearly despite a slight stutter every twenty words or so. "Ladies, Warlocks and Proxies of the British Wizengamot, thank you for allowing the presentation of our minority brief. While I have served the Hogwarts Board for nigh on eight decades as my father and grand-father before me, the House of Myzere can no longer remain silent at what has caused this debacle, and the cascade of threats to our society that has been unleashed in result."

Sitting back at his chair at the Board's table, he was right next to Dolores Umbridge who was in the very first chair of the private solicitors' table on that side of the Governors. The frog-like smirk on the witch's face set many at ill-ease, and her overall bactracian mien did nothing to set minds or magicks at peace in the room.

Lord Myzere pursued in his slow pace; "Albus Dumbledore was a criminal and a tyrant with little morality of humanity, but then again he was a half-blood from a poor, peasant family whose name had not been valued for centuries before his elevation. He was defrauded by a half-blood witch who had made a career out of conspuating and degrading the most sacred of our esoteric arts, Talents and Gifts as if it were muggle Burlesque for skit on the stage! All of these depraved seditions and treasons of Britain can be squarely laid at the feet of half-bloods, mudbloods and muggle-lovers who repeatedly assail our culture, our institutions and the very magick in our bodies and souls, to steal it from us! I think that the solution is as simple as it will no doubt set the
bleeding-heart lefties of this chamber a-twitter with great ejaculations of bombast."

Taking a steadying breath, Lord Myzere gestured magnanimously to Dolores Umbridge as he presented her to the Warlocks. "Our minority of the Hogwarts Governors have retained the gracious professional services of Madam Dolores Jane Umbridge, esquire, Heiress Presumptive of House Selwyn, certified notary, licensed solicitor and barrister of the Gamot. She has used her lengthy work experience inside the halls of the Ministry of Magic to assist us in our august task of righting the immoral wrongs, repairing the cultural damages, and safeguarding our bodies and souls from further encroachment by these foreign, non-wizardly menaces. Dolores, please."

Umbridge stood up from her subaltern chair to make her lengthy, vapid, self-serving speech about repelling half-bloods, mudbloods and muggle-influenced fools out of their halls of power and schools, while purging by wand-fire the creatures and monsters like Goblins and Centaurs, who pretended to have the same value as humans. She was fully enraptured in her two seconds of glory inside her own mind's eye, only to crash to reality in excruciating pain and emotional distress when that hated voice of the BOY resounded across the debate hall.

"Point of Order, madam Chief-Witch! The Houses of Peverell, Potter and Black challenge the rights of presentation and debate of this being inside these august walls!" Harry Potter shouted to be heard over the din of disapproval that had already begun just as Lord Myzere was finishing his reasons for holding a minority presentation against the Board's general consensus.

Gaveling her bock most vigorously, Madam Marchbanks ordered the chamber to decorum and peace, unless they wanted to evacuate and reconvene another day. "By entitled rights of the Most Venerable and Greatly Spiritual Houses of the Britannic Realms, Colonies and Commonwealth, you have the floor in priority, Lord Peverell and Potter. Depose your point of order."

Standing from his ancestral chair, Harry Potter whelmed all five feet of his height to appear as impressive as any Warlock seated in the room. His black robes with purple highlights and details were sumptuous, and his purple gloves thin and supple, showing his dexterity and contrasting with his many sigil rings of title, rank and style. The suddenly visible presence of Rehz Ib Fettach upon his left shoulder left many stunned as the senior scribe announced loudly the identity and lawful presence of the familiar bound by the High Traditions of The Old Ways.

"Madam Chief-Witch Marchbanks, my fellow Ladies, Warlocks and Proxies, honorable members of the Board of Governors, thank you for hearing my interruption to your debates, for I assure you it is of primordial importance. " Pointing his be-winged right index at Umbridge, the child accused firmly "I refuse to act like a Dumbledore potioned puppet any longer, or to claim Imperius when staying inert whilst depravities occur before my eyes! Not a week ago, this witch stood in chains inside this very chamber of parliament, accused of frauds, interference in DMLE investigations, attempted breach & seizure of hereditary Noble residence and heirlooms, attempt at censuring or destroying the Family Libraries of multiple Noble Houses, passing false orders to the aurors from an office holding no such authority or privileges, and attempted Line-Theft. She was fined a paltry 10,000 Galleons, sentenced to loss of three years of seniority and forbidden from holding any position of 'senior-level' authority, in either legislative, judicial or bureaucratic branches of our nation's government and institutions. Minister Fudge sacked her in fear for his own seat, not because he actually wanted to as he had tried to minimize her sentencing as much as the laws allowed him to. He most certainly showed neither decency nor good taste when he did so, in full view of this hallowed chamber. And now, today, we see why that decision was badly reflected and shouldn't have happened."

Harry leaned forward, putting both jeweled hands on the banister to grip it fiercely to keep from casting pain and mind-warping curses at the error of Nature that so aggrieved him yet again.
"Therefore; what is she doing inside this chamber during an emergency session, which is the very definition of senior-level authority and decision-making? And what is she doing attempting to influence the discussions about the future and management of Hogwarts, one of our national institutions, thus usurping for herself a great swathe of authority and power over the lives of thousands of our citizens and foreign students? And why in the names of Hades, Gaia, Cosme and Mystra, is this rabid bitch allowed to pretend so scurrilously that she is the heiress of any house at all? And Selwyn? Really? She tried that very line in her trial a week back, and both the House Selwyn solicitors and Gringotts rebuffed her lies as yet another attempt at Line-Theft and Line-Graft! She should have been put in chains and carted off to Azkaban for that, and yet she's here, at it again! Why is this tolerated, madam Bones and Madam Marchbanks? My fellow Warlocks? Why must we suffer this obscene spectacle of horrors, hypocrisies and perjuries, without any protests? Answer me, you damned daft twits! Wake the fucks up and do something, ye knaves!"

Despite all her protestations, Dolores Umbridge was made to attest of her links to House Selwyn by Blood-Law, adoption or marriage and present the proofs she had for declaring herself Heiress of the House while the last known member in the direct line of heredity had just died a few weeks ago during the investigations inside Hogwarts. When asked if she had the Heritage Ritual documentation from Gringotts, the woman replied that she would never let those foul sub-human under-beings touch her Blood or Magick to steal and submit her soul to their fell arts. She was Selwyn because she said so, and her word as witch should suffice, unless they were half-bloods and blood-traitors like the Weasleys.

Smiling just as toothily as Rehz, Harry stunned the chamber by standing up and declaring loudly like a scandal once in a while was good clean fun; "Whelp, that helps things along! I'm a half-blood! My titled noble Pureblood father married my pauper muggle-born mother in lawful and magical matrimony before the Prelate at the Temple of the Moon, in Diagon Alley. Therefore, fulfilling your exacting criteria for investigative requests, I ask anew: where is the damned Heritage Ritual report? Where is the proof that Gringotts recognizes your claims to the Seat of Selwyn in this Hall and in Society? Depose your proofs or be sentenced for Line-Theft, ye scurvy cad!"

The explosive tizzy of outrage and invectives that followed was as noisy as the morning rising tides in the wharves, while the scribes were going insane at trying to make sure the dicta-quills didn't skip of miss any of the events unfolding in the august deliberation hall.

Madam Amelia Bones, Head of the DMLE and auror corps, was congratulating herself for having the instinct of setting her 'Monocle of Doom', gifted to her by her late husband Edgar when she attained the rank of Senior Auror, to its panoramic view & recording. That wide angled perspective would complement well the auto-pensiever that was linked to her psyche since birth, as was usually the case in the titled and noble houses that were not sworn to Dumbledore and his 'Light of Wizarding Britain' in the last six decades. It was now obvious WHY he had tried repeatedly to have the ancestral protection devices disconnected or even seized by DMLE, as the numerous Line-Thefts, murders and enslavement's proved. Only those who were properly linked to their Family's heirlooms or auto-pensiever could have resisted the mind-rapes and control potions of Dumbledore, if only because when their families or Gringotts accountants detected disparities, they would have looked at the memories stored safely in the vaults and seen the crimes immediately. It also explained WHY Albus always hit victims who were just entering Hogwarts; their personalities were in a period of flux that would be worsened by new friends or enemies, schoolwork stresses and the dreaded puberty changes. The parents and goblins never really paid attention to the attitude changes or fluctuations in kids that age, so the child-predator had a chattel of captive preys to chose from at his leisure. Well, Amelia was pretty sure that auto-pensievers would be quite the raging fashion in the coming months, and so would recording jewelry and eyewear like her beloved, and lethal, monocle.
Several of the 'Light' or 'Good' faction members had no idea what to think or believe anymore, with the massive, steady rock that had been Albus Dumbledore removed from their daily lives, and now one of the preeminent 'Light' Houses going full-on Traditional Darakes like the boy's parents had never oathed to Albus in the first place. While it was a clear truth that Umbridge was evil and perjurious, and an openly avowed specist bigot and blood-purist of the most fanatical sort, many in the left side of the Gamot's spectrum didn't know that they wanted to kick her out without an audience. Not if it meant giving this presumptuous child and his wildly different, unpredictable policies a venue without adversaries to forcibly make him spell out his goals. And, for some of the elderly members of the sectarian parliament, letting any younger arrival that was so clearly let in only on the force of his titles, ranks and styles, rather than their perfunctory confirmation vote, was an emotionally hurtful reality.

Many of Dumbledore's elderly contemporaries born in the 1800's still sat in the hall, holding on for dear life to their lordships and proxies far passed the capacity of their bodies or minds to tolerate the workload of sitting in deliberation or voting through protocols & procedures. This meant that even if Dolores Umbridge was painfully, visibly, an abhorrent creature who should be tried, sentenced and cast to Azkaban hence-with, many who were officially 'In the Light' were not clamoring for her interrogation, nor did they support Harry Potter's lawful point. In fact, many of the so-called 'Good' geriatric Warlocks would vote to repudiate the point of order if it was ever put to the question docket, although anything objected by a 'Most Venerable' or 'Greatly Spiritual' House would no doubt be declared 'Standing Gamot Protocol' and see the woman at the very least kicked out and fined for interfering in an emergency session. Whether she was arrested by the aurors or just made to formally prove her House affiliation was also up in the air, and the ancient magi knew full well that the times when they could have affected the outcome of such processes were far gone, like their health or mental acuity.

Therefore, it wasn't a very great surprise, even if disappointed or disgruntled many, when Madam Marchbanks banged vigorously the Epic Small Mallet of Loving Corrections on the wooden Portable Epitome of Serene Sagesse with a gusto that exuded lustful desire for a good, hard fight on the chamber floor. Who knew the decrepit biddy still had it in her, at the ripe old age of 169? She had been lead-proctor at Dumbledore's OWL's and NEWT's, and worked in education all of her adult life. Maybe she wanted a bit of excitement before retiring back in her native rural village?

Bang! Bang! And BANG! The wooden artifact noisily struck the other wooden artifact, creating a shower of magical sparks and faerie fires that splashed all around the debate hall, surprising most out of their torrid word-wars with their neighbors. A few had to be injuncted directly by the Chief-Witch, who did the task with visible glee and joy as she made the mallet activate, creating a five foot long warhammer that weighed like a quill feather but hit like a dozen angry vikings.

"Now hear ye this, ya lots of mangy curs and bitches! I said TO ORDER THE ROOM! Not ignore me cuz I'm a wrinkled, useless old mule!" Marchbanks' rural accent was coming back with alacrity as she cast aspersions and vitriol on the family lines and parentages of the few hard-headed fools who hadn't sat back at peace yet. Squinting her eyes and her lips pursed like a miser's coin bag in front of a niffler, she mentally triggered another function in the mallet as she administered an 'epic loving correction' to the skinny backside of a geriatric warlock with a giant-sized ghostly hand that smacked the obstinate man spectacularly and resoundingly, right off his feet and face-first into the hard wooden pews in front of him.

A wave of nervous, tittering laughter coursed through the hall as many let out the overload of stress and anxiety, all the while hoping that Griselda would reign in her Irish temper before things got really handsy between them. As he got to his feet and then his chair, the old crone was heard to complain "Damn it, woman! I know it's been a while we got together for a tryst, but you could give
a poor bloke gentler hints! My bones are fragile at my age!" he whined like a spoiled brat, making many think the Chief-Witch had probably used the only method the old wizard could understand or follow in reasonable delays. This of course set off another bout of nervous laughter by the assembly as his neighboring Warlock on the right used a few Episkey's to heal his bruises from getting knocked about. The helpful old gentleman had troubles keeping his wand straight as he was bubbling with bombastic humor spasms at his friend's predicament too.

Madam Marchbanks took advantage of the pseudo-pause to declare in a darkly menacing tone of voice as she caressed the wooden mallet "Dannonvale! You mannerless cad! See me in my office after Gamot is out! You obviously need a reminder of manners and decorum. Since your poor late parents can't attend you, I will! Now sit, while you still can!" She aimed a powerfully charged glare at the old wizard who crumbled in his chair, pink in the face from embarrassment as the audience howled with liberating laughter again.

"Now, now! Peace and decorum in this Gamot or ya'll be evacuated! We have ourselves a point of order on the docket, and since the person intimated by said point has indeed a proven and adjudicated history of perjuries, falsifications, abuse of & hijacking of authority, trying to pass herself off as law enforcement, and just skated-by on Attempted Line-Theft, I find that there is indeed enough matter to be asking her for genuine, material proofs in the convened manners. Madam Dolores Jane Umbridge, esquire, where are the Heritage Blood-Tithe Ritual reports from Gringotts' Wizarding Bank, or any other magical bank, or chartered conclave or Living God church? You have many options under the Law of the Land to prove your claims without any injurious burdens or demeanment to your person and magicks. So, then? Them parchments?"

Seeing as Umbridge had not gone to Gringotts or anywhere else to get blood-tested for House affiliations, the senior scribe used the Gamot's self-updating registers to find her date of birth and schooling records, but disregarded her Ministry employment file as it was proved and adjudicated she had forged and falsified many details in it. Finding his quarry, he exclaimed aloud "I have it, Madam Chief-Witch! Yon Dolores Jane Umbridge, pure user of one Realm in the wizardly arts, styled 'witch' in the Welsh Wiccan traditions. Her parents were a low-bred blue collar Pureblood from an untitled Family and the fourth daughter of the then already deceased Lord Merrymack Elvar Selwyn. The Lord of House at her birth never accepted her into the main Family, nor the extended House. Nor have any of his successors since. She may have a small parcel of Selwyn biology in her, but magically and legally, she counts as a half-blood by the way the legal and cultural definitions are written. Also, the last person to hold the title of Lord Selwyn, however briefly, was the poor late junior auror Malice Irene Selwyn, Lady-Elect, who hadn't even had the time to go pass the full rituals when she got killed at Hogwarts by the specter possessing Professor Quirrell. In her preliminary documentation filed with both Gringotts and the Ministry clerks, she had formally written her desire to enact terminal disownment by magic of all the dead or illegitimate branches of the Family and House. Dolores Umbridge's name is in the list of people to be formally removed from the Selwyn Blood-Law and grimoire."

The order came from Madam Bones faster than Madam Marchbanks could pound her gavel for order; "Aurors! Seize the Line-Thief! Search her person and effects, now! Put suppression cuffs on her and drag her to the interrogation cells in DMLE, now! And why we're at it, get me her wand and any other focus you find. I want to cast some Priori Incantato charms on those before she leaves the room. I want to make sure she didn't pull a Dumbledore on us already."

The Gamot members were in a frothing rage as the results from the divinations on her primary wand, second wand hidden in her sleeve, and two kitten shaped amulets in her hair. She had anchored Imperius curses to the cat fetishes, and the magical threads linked to the auror at the door that had tried to block Harry from entering until he was threatened with a public report, and the junior scribe who had tried to refuse Harry's right to sit in council with the Warlocks due to his age
and not having the summons parchment in hand. It was soon proven that the young man had been ordered by Umbridge to destroy Harry's summons and erase his name from the register of active members as if the titles and lordships of Peverell and Potter had never been attributed.

The wand hidden in her right sleeve was emitting a low-powered compulsion towards Lord Myzere to make him think it was his idea to hire Dolores as private notary and barrister to present his dissenting memorandum to the Gamot assembly. He had done the 'research' and redaction all by himself and planned to present it alone when Umbridge told him that at least one other member of the Board agreed with his findings, but had not known how to present them in such an articulated and credible manner. It averred the second Board Member was being coerced by Umbridge through blackmail about his homosexual trysts with several minor-aged boys whom he had drugged or spelled during his employ as live-in private tutor. His position as Head of the Private Tutors' guild of Wizarding Britain was immediately terminated, as were his teaching permit and private tutoring license, then he was carted off to the cells with Umbridge.

The brouhaha in the Gamot after that was truly memorable, to the point that even the innumerable camera flashes from the press gallery didn't diminish the dint or quell the querulous displays of the seated Ladies, Lords and Proxies. Out of options, and well passed dinner anyways, Madam Marchbanks struck the Epic Mallet so forcibly on the wooden booklet that it flew off the bench, across the chamber floor, to 'gift' it's Sagesse unto a witch getting into fisticuffs with a younger Warlock. The resplendently noisesome impact of the effigial book was heard over everything as it struck hard enough to make the poor witch spin around a virtual axis located at waist-height like a hotel's revolving door, only to land face-first into the wooden benches with her arse up in the air and her skirts and robes draping all around her inverted torso and arms. She stayed there, legs splayed like a wilting flower, while everybody got a good look at the hot pink with yellow dots muggle spandex yoga shorts she wore under her Wiccan wardrobe.

The highly emotional "Ahrgh! Me poor eyes! They burn! Make it stop!" from old Lord Ogden got the whole room into yet another row that Griselda was wise enough to let loose steam on its own, this time. Maybe the aurors could handle the evacuation on their own after all.

Summer vacations 1991

(Harry Potter - theme)

July 1991
Multiple locations
The British Isles & Europa

Harry Potter was smiling as he contemplated the drab grey concrete buildings of the Vice-Archiduke Ulyrance Van Uttabatten - GCVO public elementary academy for what should be the last time of his life. He had finished writing the mandatory governmental tests for 5th year students and done as good as he possibly could, given that he needn't hide his mind and skills anymore. Well, not on the muggle side anyways. Until he moved around Hogwarts itself, he had no real idea of just what kind of environment it would be, or what decisions he would be obliged to make and live with.

One of the downsides of finishing primary was that he no longer had the right to attend their summer camps, not that it did much change in his schedule. Because of the officially recognized lordships and heirships, he had to meet tutors at Gringotts several days per week to receive concentrated classes on estate management, general business, contract laws, church & religious
laws, politics, international diplomacy, travel & border laws, nobility civics and High Traditional etiquette. This led to a charged calendar, with a few necessary pauses set throughout the two months before high school began.

{ HP } --- { Liquid folly & tears } --- { HP }

"You aren't nearly as funny as you think, old man!" poor and much maligned Harry Potter griped at his oath-bound godfather through the enchanted mirror placed on the desk, in the Master's vault inside Lily's trunk. The device was a god-sent gift, yes, but right now he could do without such a piece of charms-craft if it allowed him to tune out his relative's barking canine laughter. The migraine he had wasn't getting any better, but he couldn't get drunk or take a healing draft because he had a language potion to drink tonight, as he always did for summer vacations. It wasn't because the plebes got lazy under the sun that he had to follow suit, especially when studying and self-improvement was as easy as quaffing a draught when he lay down for the night.

This year it was Orushkeh-Tegh, the language common to all Kobolds, Goblinoids, Orcoids, Ogrin and Troll-kin, for the month of July. He would finally be able to interact politely with his account managers to the point where they weren't afraid to see him face-to-face inside Gringotts when doing regular business. August would see him partake of the Cyrillic Alphabet and the tongues deriving from ancient Greek onwards, so he could understand the Latin tongues and their derivatives even better than the potion from three years ago had given him.

Sirius kept on chuckling anyways, not any more inclined towards tact or maturity than when he was mates with James and their schooldays crowd. Sitting back in his lounge chair, the 31 year old male looked far too pleased with himself and the situation to not deserve being smacked upside the head like a moron. It was just too bad that Harry was stuck in Surrey while the ultra rich and stupidly dandyish Lord Black was in France, waiting for his trial date to cross into England at long last. The Potter Lord promised himself to learn more about mirroromancy to be able to send spells and psionics through the mirrorscape next time the man-child pissed him off.

"Well, look at it this way," Sirius quipped with a bullshitting smirk, "At least now people know you can play the game by the rules that were set in place, and make them work for you. The bad thing, however, means that they'll now see you as a real threat and try to neuter you, or take you off the field. Make it look like a rogue bludger, I'll wager, or a new spell gone bad."

Snorting in dark amusement, the 10 year old replied "Good luck with that, since I don't play any quidditch, and I never try to learn spells alone. I learned my lesson about over-casting or trying stuff above my level at an early age. Watching a brand new book burn because I thought I could cast a Blue-Bell Flame on it to keep my fingers warm while I read it wasn't the cleverest thing I ever did, but I learned no to try things on myself or stuff I need to stay alive."

Snorting in mirth at his godson's ancient history, the older male shook his head to fluff his long silky black hair, like a dog shaking itself. Gazing at Harry through the mirror, he said in a rather crude attempt at being sly; "You know, if you aren't interested in suffering through all this crap from the Wizengamot, Ministry and bureaucracy, you could just name a Steward for House Potter and let the hireling plow through the offal in your stead. Given how you're headed to Hogwarts in a month, that would be the wise thing to do. Especially since I'm pretty sure that the teachers will be a lot different than they were when I was there. Without potions and curses in them, they just might actually teach up to ICW standards, or better, and that'll take a lot of your time and effort to perform up to par." With a negligent gesture of his left hand that almost sloshed his rum & coke out of the goblet, he said in a disdainful tone that wasn't particularly subtle anymore "Let the grown-ups to their jobs, for a change. You should have from the start."
Harry suddenly became so rigidly stiff that even his magical aura seemed to freeze, giving Rehz a raw feel of the boy's nastier side. Making an incredible effort at staying calm and collected to not give the pseudo-adult bastard the satisfaction of seeing him out of control, Harry baited him in a sickly sweet tone. "Tell me then, dear lordly uncle of mine, who could possibly be educated, reliable and trustworthy enough to handle all of my convoluted affairs? I don't know that many people, and most of them I wouldn't trust that much. Maybe with my health and keeping the doctors on a leash when I'm in the hospital for surgery, but not with my Families," the child told in a nonchalant manner as he buttered his bread roll with short, swift strokes of the knife.

Sirius Black wasn't subtle by nature, and that also extended to his limited capacity for picking up on micro-expressions and higher, snobbier linguistics. Even the part of his dog animagus' senses that transferred to his human form didn't help him to read people better, especially when he let his deluded hubris and self-importance run-off with his common sense. It was the biggest reason he had gone for hit-wizard training rather than auror or DMLE inspector; he had never really gotten past the flash-bang type of magicks, or reasoning. That was also the main reason why he didn't pick up on the physical and verbal cues that were coming off his godson pretty clearly.

"Well, your old, mature, uncle Remus is available. He's always available, as it is." The older man replied in tart attitude, after a long pull of his cheap, low-class boozy drink.

Sirius didn't like sobriety when he was younger, and liked it less after his short stint in Azkaban, under Dumbledore's betrayals. Now that he was rich, independent and above the common plebes' usual petty concerns, he had no intention of being sober if he could avoid it. And since he could pay some goblin and human hirelings to handle everything for him, Sirius felt no qualms about slowly burning off the Black fortune on muggle casinos, whores, drugs and booze during a permanent vacation, slumming across Europa and Slavia. He was high enough in the pecking order of politics and economics that he didn't have to give a wank about whatever opinions the nay-sayers and do-gooders had about his habits.

"Well that's funny," replied Harry in a studiously neutral tone between bites of his dinner, "I don't recall having any uncle named Remus in the Blood-Law of either Houses that I belong to, so you'll have to be more descriptive. A color photo would help, like his passport or driver's license. Just to be sure. Who knows? Maybe Dumbledore obliviated him out of my head, like he did with dozens of things since I was born." he declared in a bored tone that his uncle wasn't able to read through due to being already passed half-drunk despite the early hour.

Sirius grumbled nasty stuff about Dumbledore, then elaborated in slow, careful phrases as he needed to pay more attention to the conversation than he really wanted to anymore. Man, was this kid a burden to carry! James was never this intense, and never all the time like that. Even that poser bint Lily had finally gotten slacker passed fourth year. Sirius really hoped the boy wouldn't end up as uptight and high-strung as his mother had been in the beginning. Having a few mudies every five generations to refresh the family tree might be wise, but man were halfers and their kids hard on his nerves! The sooner the little bastard was shipped off to Hoggy Hoggy old Hogwarts to be kept in line and silent 10 months a year, the better off Sirius' life would be. He was only doing as much as he did because of James' memory, not because he cared that much after ten years of not seeing the kid or having any relations with him.

"Well, he's the third guy amongst us Marauders, the team of boys that was the Guardian Light of Hogwarts, against them damned Slytherin bastards. SLURP! All Death Eaters in training, the lot of them slimy snakes were. Not a single one that ever ended well. Not a one! Just look at that tosser Snivellius Snape! If ever there was a stereotype for greasy haired loser of a back-alley vagrant, it was him they based it on! SLURP!" Sirius expounded quite strongly, despite noisily guzzling his alcoholic beverage as if the bar would close before he could order another. "But we gave as good,
and better!, than those poison spitting vipers ever did! We Marauded them off to Timbuktu and they stayed there! Ah ah ah! SLURP!"

Laying back in his lounger, Sirius dropped the empty goblet on the side-table, folding his hands on his belly to make his case for Remus Lupin being hired. Not that he thought he had that much of a case to do, anyways. HE was the adult, so the kid would obey him, just like he would have obeyed James, Charlus or Fleamont. Period.

In that reasoning, Sirius Orion Black III made the same stupid mistake as Albus Dumbledore and Dolores Umbridge had done before him. It would end just as well, too.

"Remus John Lupin was prefect for three years, in the top 3% of his year each year, and never lower than the top 5% grade stratum in his entire schooling. And that was despite all the numerous detentions we got because of all the pranks, Marauding and fun stuff we did. He got himself four masteries since he graduated, and all at ICW standards, too. Lemme think, they were: history of the magical world; history of the muggle world; duel, combat & defense for professionals; then finally teaching kids & tutoring professionals."

Then, slurring in a disdainful tone, Sirius added in a tipsy way "The guy is the worst bookworm ever, but he has a good head on him. If I remember right, He's finishing another mastery part-time. In bloody magical artistry & restauration of enchanted antiques, no less! And he's doing it just for fun! Well, he also said it would combine with his combat diploma to earn him a curse-breaker license so he could take freelance contracts from Gringotts, at some point. Maybe. I don't really remember what he said all that well. He talks a lot, anyways. He's like you, in fact. Or more you're like him, cuz he's older and came before you, otherwise you'd be the Marauder instead of him. But you both talk too damned much for anybody with taste's common sense. Damn but he's such a fucking nerd, that guy! No wonder he's still single after all this time spent sucking-off books instead of cunts!"

Harry set aside his empty potage bowl to concentrate on his main dish while the 'Unseen Servant' dweomer cleared away the soiled dishes. Rehz sat on the table on a ventral couch that Harry had custom-built for him to be able to eat at the same level as him and any guests they had. He had eaten his meals with Dryskholl as equals, and had no intention of doing differently with his familiar, especially given how sociable and intelligent he was. And right now, Harry thought he'd rather go talk about Nightsoil's alchemical properties with the Tenebrous Pioneer than sit here and be insulted to his face, the way this conversation was turning.

Harry asked snidely "If he was so damned good at helping out kids and teaching any age group, why wasn't he helping ME, his erstwhile nephew, in those ten damned years? More specifically, why was I living in the basement of my damned primary school, if I had an honorary uncle that was so competent he has multiple masteries at ICW standings? I would like to know that, first."

Sirius shrugged it off indolently as he signaled the fearful house-elf for another rum & coke from his position of debauched laziness. He was in a private VMW room in a wizarding 5-star resort in Calais, on the shores of The Channel, facing Dover in Britain. He could have seen the ferries crossing if he bothered to sit up to look over the balcony banister, but that would have demanded that he be paying attention to the world, and he didn't want to. He wanted to be buzzed-out again. He told the elf to flush the drink and just bring a new, full bottle of rum so he could drink straight out of it. The dreams about the Dementors and abandoning James to die had haunted him fiercely again last night, and he needed this conversation to be over so he could get back to drinking and forgetting.

Sighing loudly like a spoiled brat who was told to clean his room for the hundredth time, Sirius
shrugged absently as he took the bottle and slurped from it like a wild dog. After chugging several ounces, he deigned to answer the impudent, indocile child. "Well, that was all old Albus Dumbledore's fault, just like a lot of things, back in those days. First he set the blood-wards around your aunt's house to repel any wizards that weren't himself or you. Then he added dark-repulsion against lycans to the set. So that meant that Remus would have had to meet you over a klick away from home to do anything. If he had ever gotten the bearded old goat's permission. In fact, Albus could have given him an amulet to go through the wards, if he wanted to permit him access. But as you can guess, he just didn't want anybody to get to you. Not me, not Remus, not anybody. So then, a few years back, he let some minging bint called Umbridge get hired in the Ministry where she pushed anti-creature laws, especially weres. So Remus had to leave merry old England about six years ago. Not just to find a job, but to survive since the bitch tried to have all lycans declared on par with grindylows or ettercaps; wild dark creature that must be exterminated when they are close to wizarding dwellings or businesses. So he left England, and took jobs here or there. When I got out of Jail and England, I was in a bad shape for a couple of years, getting weaned off Dumbledore's potions, and he joined me to help my recovery."

Harry nodded minutely at the information Sirius told him, as it fit with what his account team at Gringotts had dug up about both men. In fact, while Sirius was getting drunker than a barrel of ale, Remus was probably in the hotel's library or upper salon, reading some of the rarer books that his normal socioeconomic status would prevent him from accessing. Sirius was blasting the Black's hereditary fortune not just on frivolities or follies, but on wasteful bummery of the basest kind. And his supposed friend had decided to just let him busy himself at his vices whilst he took advantage of the tenuous emotional link to suck-off funds, status, access and a lifestyle while the money was still flowing good. And Sirius wanted him to feed his parasite now, but why? Harry had doubts, but he wanted proof before deciding his reaction.

Ignoring the mannerless slurping of yet more rum, Harry asked carefully "And what could he possibly do for me that I can't do myself? I have sat in assembly and voted in the Wizengamot as a titled Lord and Warlock of the Britannic Realms, colonies and Commonwealth, so I fail to see what he could do in my stead so much better than me." And there he was; that bait should be obvious enough that the slovenly drunkard would see it and react.

And indeed, Sirius didn't wait to react.

With an obviously affected frown that was more childish moue than adult disagreement, Sirius tried to use a louder, more frightening voice to cow the child to his lordly adult whims. "Well, it's a good thing that I've been a bloody lord for longer than you, then! I can tell you what Remus can do better than you, but I'll do better than that! I'll tell him directly what to do, and you'll just shut the fuck up and listen, like kids are supposed to do when adults speak! You were brought up wild by muggle animals when even magical savages in the African Savannah would have done better, so I can't really blame you. But now, now you know about your heritage! The Potter 'Blood Compact' has activated, so you have no excuses anymore! You'll do what I say and name Remus as Potter steward willingly or I'll use my magical authority as godfather to make him the Regent over you until you're 27, and then keep it that way until you're 39 years old!"

Sirius shook his entire body in a way that could be like a wet dog, or a sickness shiver from having drunk too much alcohol in the last decade. There was no way to know, but his voice and demeanor were still easy to read clearly; he was in a strop and not hiding it. "See if I don't do it, you little cunt-dropping! Your uppity mudblood of a mother always thought she was better and higher than everybody else, and you sure take after her! Well, I won't stand for it! Wizards take after their fathers like real men! Only girls and sissies and defectives take after women in this world! You'll honor my will as if I were James, cuz you sure ain't him! You'll never be him! My mate James wan't no damn bookworm or sissy mama's boy! He was a man! A real wizard! I saw him in
quidditch robes and in the locker showers after matches! I can swear on my magicks and life that he
was more of a man than you'll ever be, you worthless little turdcake!"

Closing his eyes in misery at the new rejection, with his heart clenching at what he knew he must
do to insure his survival and freedom from this drunken, violently destructive mongrel, Harry took
the one step that would immediately set him free of all binds or attachments, at the cost of any
relationship with the man or his allies. It was what Sirius would have called "A slimy snake, dark
wizard, Slytherin move" but it would do the job enough to count right away.

Laying his palms flat on each side of his magically warmed plate to keep them from shaking in fear
and raw, seething rage at having yet another drunken, aggressive traitor as uncle, Harry made the
poisonous suggestion in a softly challenging voice.

"Do it then," he baited clearly, "Do it where I can see it. Claim on your magicks and your life that
James Charleson Potter was a better wizard and man than I'll ever be in this life or the next." Harry
spelled out his terms at length, adding as many caveats as he could, but also to make it seem like
an emotional child wanting to be vindicated about his parent's love and his own worth, to entrap
the intoxicated fool into his own delusion of an epoch he would never live again. "If you do that
oath and still have your magicks intact inside you, I'll make Remus the Regent of all my Houses
and titles right there in front of you. I have a second mirror for priority calls with Gringotts or the
Wizengamot Services, so you'll be able to hear everything in person. No funny business."

Nodding violently like a demented bobble-head doll stuck in a tempest, the drunken, mentally ill
man fumbled his wand out of its holster and, looking at the child suspiciously through the magic
mirror, decided all on his own to make the oath even more binding, just to make the filthy little
mudblood's half-breed procreate know once and for all his place in life, Magyck and society. Cutting
his left palm open to the bones with a quick -unsanctified- cantrip, the deluded male put the tip of
his wand into the injury, thus making it a Blood-Oath upon his Identity and Blood-Law, as when
he had made the godfather's oath all those years ago.

"I Sirius Orion Black III, Head of House, the reigning Lord of the Most Ancient and Most Noble
House of Black, regent Duke of the Zezetshire Cairnhills, Peer of the Realms Britannic, do so
solemnly swear upon my Blood, Magicks and Life that my mate, my one true friend and chum,
James Charleson Potter, reigning Lord of the Most Ancient and Most Noble House of Potter, was
and forever will be more of a wizard and man than this filthy little cum-stain of a boy who is not
the son or wizard that he deserved to have, and sacrificed is life for. In Mystra Mother of all
Magycks do I attest, so mote it be!"

Sirius never realized the full depths of what errors, or evils, he had done.

Firstly, he had done a blood-oath in direct contrary to an already established blood-oath, so he was
now Oath-Breaker.

Secondly, he had reneged on his sacred duties as oath-bound godfather to protect and cherish the
young child he was attached to, turning instead against him with intentions of violence and
domination, no matter that it was the alcohol stripping away his filters and manners. In that
moment of drunkenness he had spoken the truth hidden in the depths of his heart; Harry was not
James and would never replace him.

Thirdly, the dog-like loyalty and pack mentality that Sirius suffered from was because he used to
stay as a dog for several days at a time in Azkaban to survive the dementors with a modicum of
sanity and health. Unfortunately, Sirius had never been very good at mind-magicks or occlumancy
as Dumbledore had poisoned and spelled him to destroy those innate Talents he may have had. That
meant that when Sirius transformed, he became a slight bit less human and stayed a bit more dog at
each switch.

Sirius was thusly imprinted upon James so strongly that he was essentially the other man's bitch, for lack of a more human or civilized phrase. This also meant that Sirius would never look at any other wizard or male of any species with respect or consideration, as his hard-wired canine mind would see this as betraying the pack leader and symbolically emasculating his best friend's memory.

Fourthly there was all the sexist, racist and blood-purist bigotry that had finally revealed itself from where Sirius usually kept it hidden from public scrutiny. He may have acted all chummy with Lily Evans in public, but in private he had always thought that James deserved better than a mudblood, especially given how close her, Snape and several snakes had been in the two first years at Hogwarts. If the stupid muggle-born didn't realize that these murderous bastards wanted her dead like Hitler killed jews, then she didn't deserve to live, to have magic inside her, and she certainly didn't deserve his best mate's true love. So, given a chance to speak in private that was fueled by more alcohol than his empty stomach and sickly dispositions could accept, he let out all that he really believed about the Order of Things in Nature, Magic and Society.

He broke his godfather's blood-oath.

He betrayed a sworn House-ally.

He betrayed the memory of his best mate.

He betrayed the trust of three houses together in one fell act.

He demonstrated to Nature and Magic that he was unworthy to be the child's godfather.

And Mystra, Mother of Magyck, judged him for his sins, regardless of alcohol or depression.

Sirius Orion Black III felt his magicks ebb out of his sickly, drunken body, his mind fighting against the sudden torpor that was invading it, showing him the lip of a yawning black Void that was absolute nothingness as far as magically boosted senses could perceive. He felt his core collapse on itself in his torso, then implode in his mind and soul, leaving him with the same feeling as when he wore magic-suppression cuffs to travel from the Ministry cells to Azkaban, or on the way back for his sham trial by the Unspeakables. Then he felt his eyes droop half closed, the sights losing color like when he transformed into a Grim, his animagus shape. Except this time, the vision wasn't sharp but blurry, and he didn't smell more or better, and his hearing seemed to be gone to the dogs too.

Eh eh eh! He made a funny, there. Gone to the dogs...

Sirius Orion Black III, the late Lord of House Black, was found dead in his lounge chair with a plethora of empty boozy drinks goblets in hand's reach on the side-table. The aurors had been called by the distraught house-elf who had wanted to call the hotel's medi-wizard but the young man had died too quickly for anybody to do anything to prevent the mess. The two first aurors on the scene had found the high quality Gringotts comms mirror on the table near the corpse and confirmed with the elf that the deceased had been speaking of Family Business with his godson in England for almost an hour, since dinner had started. They were each eating at the same time, or at least the 10 year old boy was, while his wastrel bum of an uncle got drunk faster than usual.

The French magical Gendarmerie Baguettière's medical examiner performed a local analysis and very quickly concluded to a blood-oath gone wrong, with an Oath-Breaking backlash occurring in the same instant, or near enough to not make a difference. The formal autopsy and divinations
would tell, but it wouldn't matter. By the absolute lack of any residual magicks in the cadaver, the man had been mugglified, not squibbed, but fully mugglified by the consequences of whatever he had done to himself. There were no signs of presence other than the hotel’s house-elf, and its testimony was offered freely, even to the point of accepting a field-dose of a light truth serum, as a preliminary. When they searched the body before transport to the morgue, they found that his wand had burned from the inside so badly that it was essentially fossilized by heat, and his Lord’s sigil ring was gone, leaving a gray-purple burn mark similar to bad frostbite on his finger. The mark of a Family heirloom judging the bearer unworthy and leaving to find a better, more worthy Heir to hold the reigning title of the House.

Tentatively, the French aurors wrote the case as a "suspected defilement of self, magicks, Family and House so bad that the Blood-Law and heirlooms had judged the deceased and punished him to the depths of his crimes, sins, seditions and treasons, as per the Decree of Mystra." It would not take much time for the news to hit the magical governments and institutions of the planet, and then Gringotts confirmed what had been suspected all along.

Harry Jamieson Potter, Lord of Peverell and Potter, was now the Lord Black-elect, and only had to reach the bank to perform the Heritage Blood-Tithe Ritual for it to be official. Less than three hours after Sirius Black had been dissected and divined by the French pathologist, and the cause of death confirmed, young Harold Potter became the reigning Lord of a third titled noble House.

In Mystra nomine sancti, id mote est.

{ HP } --- { Work is the best cure for wrecked vacations } --- { HP }

Harry spent the best part of the next week with his nose buried in new books that he had found in several small bookshops, kiosks or chapels around the British Realms. Thanks to his Tenebrous Pioneer employee, he was able to gate to a location when he wanted, then use a Hadean prayer to contact the Pioneer to open the way back home, straight into the trunk. This allowed the child to finally put some attention into the new level of studies as an acolyte of Hades that he had been granted last All Hallow's Eve by his divinity. Plus, he now had the Black 'Blood Compact' active inside his mind, integrating itself slowly into the crowded space of his intellect and memories.

Harry had been able to get his hands on a generic teaching bible that was normally employed in formal novitiate and acolyte training in monasteries. It may be a bit old, as in four centuries back, but it was in good repair, and written in perfectly legible Welsh, which he spoke and read fluently thanks to his mother’s excellent potions. The large book was two feet tall by a foot wide and about a foot thick. It was what experts considered an 'altar bible' because it wasn't meant to be moved out of the temple’s protected areas. It was heavily illuminated with lettrines, floral motifs and celestials creatures on each page, sometimes as visual aid, and sometimes just for the beauty of the craftsmanship. The actual Welsh text was hand-made penmanship as almost nobody could produce anymore. It truly was well worth the 35 Galleons he had paid the used books seller for this treasure.

This bible held the basic spells lists for the generic training of any priest or cleric of any church that was either 'good' or 'Neutral' aligned. For 'darkness' or 'evil' priests, a completely different bible was needed, and Harry was looking for it, to know his enemies and be prepared for them. The book held a lot of lore on the historic methods, functions and uses of priests in communities that depended on them for practically all leadership and succor. The spells lists that were part of the cleric bases were; Repulsions, Protections, Channels of Purity, Summons, Communal Ways, Life Mastery and Holy Champion. All these were in the Power Realm of Channeling and depended upon a God or Celestial to work. However, they were a lot easier to learn and practice than regular wizardry since the deity's influence tended to smooth out a lot of the problems.
Harry had also found an old Latin spell-book from the Renaissance era that had served to form the French Gendarmerie Baguettière before muskets and gunpowder became standard equipment, a practice that British Welsh Wiccan morons had always refused. The worn and damaged old book held the base lists for the Warrior-Mage training pattern, a half-brute and half-wizard mercenary who specialized in combat, warfare and general wild lands expeditions. The book had some interesting lore about how a merchant caravan works, how a corps of troops is managed and deployed in battle, how individual soldiers are trained and expected to behave for efficient strikes or long-haul traveling. The base spells lists were; Adventurous Dweomers, Warfaring Magicks, Battlestaff, Mind's Touch, Highriding and Elemental Ways. Once repaired by being tilled in Nightsoil by the Tenebrous Pioneer, the book proved to be a very well written and concise army manual for training magical troops at a steady rhythm, and making sure they had a well rounded education in both mundane and occult fighting methods.

While most of these sorceries would be far too damaging to use inside a building or formal duel ring, they did have a few things that were immediately usable, especially the Mind's Touch list. It would help Harry learn all the basics of organizing his mind, managing the flows of data and creating filters between the layers and zones to avoid being drowned in free-floating factum. It would also make him far more resistant to any mental intrusion while teaching him the basics of active empathy and telepathy so he could do his own mind-delving, when absolutely needed.

The second most useful would be Battlestaff, even though it meant he would have to undo his existing item to rebuild it with the dweomers embedded inside. The trade-off in functionality and defensive potential was well worth the mess and time that would be invested in the process. The staff would now be linked to his person as if it were another bonded familiar, and have a small amount of mobility because he would change the shape to add limbs to serve as legs and arms with humanoid extremities. Harry would also make a vaguely humanoid head underneath the bowl that held the flames, as the enchantments would make the staff able to move and pivot its joints and limbs almost like a normal humanoid. The funny thing was that while the device could extend its limbs to help Harry or Rehz, it would usually stay at its pure 'staff' form, indolently floating on invisible eddies of magick besides the boy. It would also now be able to serve as a sentry when he slept or concentrated on a priority project, like healing his injuries or brewing a potion. All in all, his Battlestaff upgrade was well worth the 11 Galleons he had paid for the old book at the flea market.

Because he still wasn't truly over what had happened with Sirius Black, Harry had used his prerogative as the Lord-Elect to have the reading of the testament pushed back to the first week-end of October. He told the goblins that he needed to get over all the changes that formal connection with Wizarding Britain had brought to his life, the pile of lordships, and what happened to Hogwarts on top of everything else. And now this. He needed time to process things emotionally and intellectually before the public will reading at the bank, and then meeting the rest of the Black relatives. Given the impression Sirius had given him, he wasn't expecting much from them, not anymore.

Hogwarts year I; 1991-92

(Harry Potter - theme)

1991-92
Hogwarts
Scottish Highlands
September 1 had finally arrived and it was time for Harry to make his way to King's Cross Station to embark the Hogwarts express to Scotland. While Harry could have just grabbed his trunk and passed the floo at the small country inn where he resided since the end of elementary school, it was deemed a rite of passage to ride the express. The obvious goal was to make contacts with new kids to establish whom were age and social peers, and start networking early to help along one's school career. Harry being already the reigning Lord of three titled noble Houses was well above and beyond such pedestrian necessities. He knew what his future career and jobs would be, he didn't need to network or get job placement advice, unlike others, especially those new-bloods that the Welsh Wiccan wizarding Ministry had tagged and brought in to help renew the bloodlines of their waning sectarian group.

Harry, well inured to the mundane side of England by now thanks to the summer camps, walked in the streets to King's Cross, entered the cavernous station with nary a doubt, and proceeded to find himself a small bistro to grab a sit-down breakfast while he did some people-watching to refresh his instincts and evaluations of muggle society. After an hour of easy to digest food, he strolled quietly to the mentioned pillars between quays 9 and 10, his magic senses guiding him easily to detect the muggle repelling wards and illusion that covered the portal as bricks. He passed through the portal without issue, entering into a zone of London that was a throwback to yesteryear, when steam trains, top hats, frock coats, crinoline skirts, parasols and private butlers were the staples of well bred, rich and educated persons of power in British society.

Sniffing the air that was heavy with wet water-based steam and coal ash from the mighty red engine standing in the only berth the quay served, Harry could distinguish the particular smell of magical fire, specifically a salamander's nest. Having practiced some basic summonings through August, the child was now aware of a few easy to control creatures that wizards and priests had used for centuries to boil water, fire kilns or smelt metals in crucibles. The humble lizards from the elemental plane of fire was about the size of a small adult human, not very aggressive as long as it was fed properly, and really enjoyed letting out flames. If you gave it plenty of food and stuff to incinerate, it would turn the blaze into a magical one that would impart special properties to whatever was reacting in the vessel over the pyre. Some wizards and alchemists kept salamanders as trained pets or even familiars for just that purpose.

So, the Express runs its boilers with a nest of salamanders. Cute. And a cheap way to keep the system's mobile manatites energized so that the bevvy of repulsion and non-detection wards don't give out along the way. Given the train was bright red and rather large, it wouldn't take the muggles long to see it and ask questions. The Statute of Secrecy wouldn't last long after that.

The train left at 11:00am but Harry had wanted to arrive at 9:30am to have his choice of position since the kitsch gold foil ticket didn't assign any fixed seating or cabin. So, he walked along the outside of the venerable train, from the caboose at the rear to the peacefully smoking engine at the front then came back towards a compartment he felt would be well situated, just three down from the locomotive. If ever he felt like having a conversation with the conductors, he wouldn't have long to walk, and he was right to the wagon's public restroom as well.

In his cabin, Harry set his floating Battlestaff in the corner near the window and Rehz Ib Fettach wasted no time in blinking from the trunk to the back of the seat, then climbed into the Spirit Flame torch atop the staff. The dark Faerie Drake enjoyed the energies and soothing massage of the ghostly flames against his scales and wings, and tended to curl up like a cat inside the sconce when he had nothing pressing to do. Harry cast a few charms at the seat immediately next to the window to insure a cushy, warm and bump-free ride so he could read or write at peace. He had registered for a remote muggle secondary course program by mail, and he may need to fill out a
few forms or preliminary work sheets to help with his placement in the program's competency qualification ladder. They would then allow him a choice of classes and specific tutors that would be appropriate to his level of erudition and autonomy according to their standards. His ultimate goal was to do like his mother, have diplomas in both mundane and magical worlds so that he could be recognized and valued in both.

Being titled nobility or having a hereditary fortune to sit on were no longer the panacea that they had been, up to about fifty years ago. The passage of World War II with the advent of industrialization had changed people's view of wealth, and the emergence of computers with the Internet Age starting made the ancient notions of social classes and educational hardships obsolete. There were teenaged kids starting businesses in the garage or basement of their parents that earned more than their father, despite that the man was a VP or Director after 25 plus years of service in the same company. Truly, Harry had to get with the times or he would be left behind like the nicely decorative but ultimately useless trinkets in the museums. And his Houses had suffered setbacks, betrayals and crimes enough without having to suffer through a dumb lazy bum as Lord, on top of everything else.

{ HP } --- { Family found at long last } --- { HP }

The young inheritor of the storied Peverell, Potter and Black (pending) fortunes was sitting in peaceful quietude with a massive tome of ritual lore of the Hadean cult on a small wooden lectern that he had brought from the trunk along with his pastime. There was nobody who would willingly keep that 25 pound beast on their lap if they could avoid it. On the funny side, it did put a great deal of truth in the expression "The weight of knowledge" that the ancient monks were so fond of.

At 10:25am, somebody knocked on his cabin door politely, making him speak aloud softly the parseltongue counter to the locking charm & redirection ward he had cast on it. Only people who were kin or House-allies could see through the wards to find the door, or else they were disinterested in all the stupid "Boy-Who-Lived" crap set up by Dumbledore so they might be worth giving them a chance at direct contact before arriving at school.

The door opened to reveal the form of a young girl with flaming red hair tied in twin pigtails who was wearing ordinary Wiccan summer robes, but of a higher cut and material than usual. She had the crest of her House embroidered on the left breast of the robes, indicating that she was the Heiress Presumptive of the Most Ancient and Most Noble House of Bones. She was laterally third-degree cousin to Harry via his great-grand-mother, Euphemia Bones.

Standing up as was proper for a gentleman greeting a Lady for the first time, Harry bowed at the waist with both hands on his hips near the sheaths for his permanent weapons, a hatchet on the left and dagger on the right. He always kept a small cal.22 pistol in an undetectable sheath at the small of his back and another on the left ankle, with his set of lock-picks on the right ankle. He gave the young girl the chance to present herself then replied in kind, politely as he wanted to make a good impression on what happened to be one of the few biological relatives he had still alive in the world.

Susan Bones was a young, bubbly, excited girl, but not in a way that aggravated Harry or made him regret welcoming her in his cabin. They quickly set to speak of the recent events that had happened in the Welsh Wiccan community, and Magical Britannia at large. Just before entering a conversation about Hogwarts proper, there was a discrete knock at the door, which Harry again unlocked just long enough to admit the newcomer.

He was a young, slightly rounded boy with blond hair and watery blue eyes, whose white skin was actually tanned by long hours spent outside of buildings in open air. As he bowed and shook
Harry's hand, he revealed that he also had the strong, calloused hands of a child who had begun to work in the fields and greenhouses for prolonged periods at an early age. Neville Franklin Longbottom, Heir of the Most Ancient and Most Noble House of Longbottom, had been supposed to be Harry's god-brother, until Albus Dumbledore tried to break their families to further his evil machinations. The young boy was shy, to the point of maladive timidity, but he warmed up quickly enough to the two other children, especially given how welcoming Harry was with both of them. Neville showed them his precious toad Trevor, with whom he had managed to establish Rapport. The amphibian wasn't his familiar yet, but it was a good first step for a child whose family had always believed he had been squibbed during the attack on his parents, a decade back.

It was near 10:42am that another knock disturbed the cabin, more imperious and assured than the two previous guests. When Harry slid the door open, he faced two very different persons, and yet there were similarities in their facial traits that spoke of close cousins. Letting them in, Harry learned that they were Draconnis Lucius Malfoy, Heir of the Ancient and Noble House of Malfoy, and Heir secondary of House Black via his mother, Narcissa Black Malfoy. The second person was a young woman entering her seventh year at school, Nymphadora Tonks, the sole daughter of Andromeda Black Tonks, disinherited from the Family Black, but not cast out by magic. It was glaringly obvious that Draco disdained Nymphadora for her mother getting kicked out (incompletely) of House, her muggle-born father, and their lesser financial status. The girl, however, didn't seem to put much stock in those things, replying snidely that money couldn't be eaten or cast out of a wand to keep you fed and warm, unlike magic, training and knowledge.

Harry put an end to the sibling-like nasty bickering before it got nastier, and more personal, than the initial posturing for status that seemed the usual method of Purebloods and Titled Nobles when engaging in social meetings with a crowd of witnesses. Since all four of his guests already knew each other from social events they had attended for Family affairs and read about their parents' businesses in the Daily Prophet often enough, Harry didn't have much to do in terms of official presentations.

Young Harry also established clearly that he had no intention to tolerate bigotry, racist and blood-purity nonsense in his presence. He knew for a proven fact that all these things were based only in ignorance, fear bred by ignorance, or rabid envy to dominate others like Dumbledore. The child Lord would tolerate no expression or action that would instate or legitimize such things, and would actively fight against them. They were all Family, and should bloody well act like it, especially in public like the train and school. With that mindset firmly settled, the five young persons were about to start talking about the changes committed to the school when a shy, tentative knock at the door interrupted them, just 5 minutes before the train rolled out.

Frowning, Harry stood to open the door politely, wondering if he had forgotten any relatives that should be visiting him on the trip. He was aware of only the four already inside, so who could it be? The panel slid aside to reveal a first year girl, crying hard, with a huge amount of curly, fritzed-out brown hair and several bruises showing through the tears in her thin summer muggle blouse. She was holding a damaged messenger bag in both arms and had a brand new student trunk by her side that was also damaged. Immediately putting on his Wizengamot face, Harry asked the young girl what had happened to her while helping her to sit on the last free chair, next to the door, besides Nymphadora. The older girl took the occasion to take out a shiny silver badge and pin it to her muggle leather jacket, to show she was a Hogwarts prefect this year.

The young girl was named Hermione Jean Granger, sole daughter of two career dentists, who were in fact world renowned maxillofacial surgeons with a small chain of cabinets across England, Ireland and Scotland. Her father had served in the British paratroopers as field medic before going into civil practice, following in the footsteps of his father and grand-father. Her mother had been born into a family of doctors, nurses and chemists, so she had studied for dentistry and surgery all
the way from high school. Hermione was thus from a well-off, very bourgeois setting, used to
nannies, governesses, live-in tutors, and never seeing her parents except for mandatory social
holidays. They traveled together all year long, going around their 17 clinics for the truly important
patients, some of which could require up to three weeks of intensive care before the Grangers felt it
safe to leave the recovery in the hands of local staff.

Hermione was in this sorry state of abuse because she had dared to ask some older girls loitering on
the quay for directions. She had been wondering if the first years were grouped together for some
introduction seminar, or end-of-summer celebration before school began. When they realized they
were facing a newbie, the teenaged girls, all snobby blood-purists from Slytherin and Ravenclaw,
had scorned the muggle-born and cast minor pain and injury hexes at her as a kind of disgusting
sports game. They went so far as to attribute each other scores for creativity and accuracy with their
aim while their victim tried to dodge the six randomized attacks. After about fifteen minutes, they
tired of her wailing for help and silenced her with a charm, sending her away after damaging her
properties enough to matter, but not enough that the school staff would have reacted when the old
administrators and teachers were in place. They were betting that the pain, shame and fear of worse
over the coming year would keep the firstie quiet.

Contrary to what all the children in the cabin had believed would happen (except Harry who was
still new to this), Draco Malfoy verbally declared himself offended by the way the girl was treated,
but left it at that. He didn't give his reasons, but he had them and they were logical.

Firstly; she was of good breeding and proper education, as only such families could afford
household staff and live-in tutors, let alone bother to hire them at all. Many rich people didn't
actually care for their kids much, and it often showed quite easily. Draco had lost count of the
number of teenagers he'd seen that drank and smoked like hardened hit-wizards by age 13.

Secondly; both parents had storied family traditions of service to the Crown and community
through medicine, something no High Traditionalist of the Darkes would ever scorn. Healers were
the first line of defense against parasites, or epidemics of Dragon Pox and Wizard Flu, so the
Welsh Wiccan community put a premium on those professions, especially since they had only one
truly well established hospital. And after Dumbledore had mind-raped and potioned several dozen
of their best brewers or healers for a century, they were fatally short on qualified medical staff, so
that harming one, or a future practitioner, was an overt attack on the entire congregation's survival.

Thirdly; the fact her parents had 17 clinics with clients that came from other countries for them
specifically meant reputation, influence and media exposure, thusly 'soft' power. Perhaps even
genuine political influence with the British Department of Health or the Professional Orders related
to their medicinal specialties, just like the magical guilds regulating potioneers, apothecaries and
medi-wizards. Not to mention the money involved, and that was 'hard' power.

All in all, this girl was a resource to be protected and helped along until she developed into an
active asset, and maybe even a friend, since she wasn't so much lower than their own standing in
society, except for ennobled titles. Besides, if Harry wanted to react, doing something in the same
vein could position Draco and his parents well for the near future. Harry would be the Lord Black
shortly, Draco had no illusions, so keeping him pleased was important for House Malfoy and his
own health.

Standing from his bench, Draco asked Harry to be excused so he could fetch the senior Slytherin
prefect to attend the uncouth behavior of the culprits. The teenager would then inform Ravenclaw
of the situation so they could settle in-House on their side too. Harry nodded, opening the door for
his exit, and asking the boy to bring the Head students if he encountered them on the way. He
wanted to meet them, and to give his own displeasure too. Plus, they needed to see what had
happened to Hermione for a report to the Heads of Houses, so that the parents were warned via letter. The school was supposed to have put back the policies against bullying, violence, bigotry, racism and blood-purism that Dumbledore had wrecked, and this would show if the job held or not.

It was a very relieved Draco Malfoy who trotted the Express corridor, congratulating himself on having read the room's players and moods correctly. Just last year, he might have been among those casting spells at the young girl for the same reasons. Now though, after their community had imploded so dramatically, he wouldn't be caught dead on those idiot's side of things. It didn't take him long to find the prefects as their carriage was right behind the locomotive, so two away from them. And most of the prefects were present, to review their patrol schedules for when the train was rolling, as well as practice enforcing the new behavior, decorum and etiquette required of the students and faculty. In a departure from the Dumbledorian mentality, prefects were now held to a higher standard of conduct, and would be punished more severely for infractions, which included writing their parents a detailed monthly report and a letter for each detention or those times the cane would be applied.

The prefects were trying to wrap their heads around the new rules booklet, which was a chore compared to the single-sided sheet that had been standard for the last 50 years under the traitor's rule over the castle. Whelp, needs must, and the benefits of having free will and clean bodies was well worth the trouble of memorizing a thirty-odd page manual. Given the size of the font and the images, it wasn't that much of a job either. One of the novelties was that each prefect or head student badge had been charmed to serve as a conditional homing & portkey beacon and as a communication device, by pressing small colored runes on the surface. An idea inspired by the mirrors Gringotts rented to its rich clients. This would make reports between the prefects, teachers, heads of houses and administrators much more rapid and efficient, especially for medical reasons or cases of violence.

The prefects were most certainly not amused that the damned train was barely sounding its whistle for departure that they already had a complaint for violence by a group against a new-blood witch. And the complaint came from the son of the Chairman of the Board of Governors, no less! "Somebody was gonna get their arse reamed the moment they reached school!", the head girl swore with creative vehemence, causing diverse reactions from the students in the room. It was the two head students and two 7th year prefects from the two houses involved that marched to the compartment to take the poor girl's complaint and then hunt the culprits. By the new rules, they would journey to school in shame, isolated one person per room in a new disciplinary wagon that the train was enchanted to generate as needed. The engineer was being warned to trigger the mechanism so that the wagon would come out of its dimensional storage, just before the caboose at the end of the convoy. The wagon had sixteen small cells, two rows of eight, so they wouldn't need another one any time soon, especially when the head boy announced on the PA system what had happened, and what consequences the girls faced once arrived.

Twelve strokes of the rattan cane on bare buttocks, before the assembled school, at dinner.

Corporal punishment was back in force, since most of the student populace wouldn't be getting doped or Imperiused into being blindly obedient slaves anymore. The Board and Ministry expected Hogwarts to get back to the same normal routines that all the other small village and parochial schools experienced with children or teens, so the Board had recommended going back to tried & true basics. However, the application would be severely monitored and never occur without parental approval at each event. Nobody would have the right to give the school blanket permissions. Nor could any teacher or staffer involve an 'exception of major force' to bypass the rules and protocols surrounding the punishment's safeguards. The children would be corrected, forcibly so, but not beaten, injured or damaged by brutes who couldn't control themselves.
That was seen as a bad news for most of the kids, but not all. Some saw it as the just rewards for bullies, bigots and those who tried to use their upper society status to violate the younger or less fortunate members of the school population. There had even been cases of students with rich or titled families trying to intimidate teachers into giving them better grades, or else they would make false complaints to their parents to have their career destroyed. No more would such things occur in Hogwarts, not without publicly seen and felt consequences at least.

Hermione was impressed far more, and far more positively, by the strong, quick reaction of the student prefecture than she had been by her assailants and their much vaunted Pureblood roots. She planned to speak of it with the head of whichever House she ended in tonight, at sorting. She was even more impressed that the very son of the Board's chairman had taken the lead in things, not a common event in her awareness of such matters.

The rest of the trip was passed in peace as the potential delinquents had seen first hand what awaited those who flaunted the rules like stubborn mules, or snobbish wannabees. Harry had invited Hermione to sit in the safety of his compartment for the voyage, to make certain nobody sought retaliation against her for her courage to denounce the attack. She spent the rest of the way in pensive quiet, as she got quite the upper-level education in the civics, politics, religion and Family affairs of the Magical World. When she heard that the so-called Wizarding Britain was only the Welsh Wiccan sect, a very small group of humans drowned amongst the vast rest of all other magical groups, sects and species, she didn't know what to think. That wasn't how things had been presented to her last year, when she had been approached by McGonagall.

Headmaster Daxit Jasper Deridex, a half-blood without named House, was most importuned by the report the Head Students had filed just as the Hogwarts Express was leaving the station. Already a muggle-born girl had been attacked by six girls, on grounds of blood-purism and being supposedly a poor bint without a Galleon to her name.

Well, that wouldn't do.

Looking at his deputy headmistress, Jacynthe Clemencia, another half-blood but from the wizarding House of Radner by alliance, he saw her pursed lips and dangerous glare as she read the notice. The small memorandum had appeared in the secured Gringotts mailbox that linked the school administrators' offices with the prefects' compartment on the train, an innovation suggested by Lord Peverell – Potter. The simplicity of the system and its reliability just showed how corrupt and criminal Dumbledore was to have resisted its implementation for decades.

The school's new financial comptroller and deputy to Gringotts affairs, Malcolm Sandhurst, a pureblood (second son) from the minor wizarding House of Sandhurst, read the letter with obvious disdain. He was from a 'Light' oriented house that had resisted the Darkness in both magicks and politics for nearly nine generations. The teenaged girls' behavior was abhorrent to him, and a symptom of what had gone wrong under Dumbledore's regime of endless chances and active sympathy for bullies, if they kissed the tip of his wand in the prescribed manner. Malcolm had no desire to see that felonious depravity repeated, not after all the harm that he had caused across their society, so this attack would have to get quashed hard.

The rules were clear enough, the kids would just have to live with them or ask their parents to get them educated elsewhere than Hogwarts.

The rest of the day was spent in preparing the badly damaged but still serviceable castle and grounds into shape for the coming students. The house-elves now numbered 140, up from 95 before the investigations began. The green-skinned servile beings were all a-twitter with glee at
having so much work and efforts to produce the results asked by the Board and Ministry, plus the new administrators, new teachers and new healers... All those many new people to help! Yes, the elves were in an Earthly version of Paradise, especially since now they would have the right to interact openly with the students or their visiting kin, unlike the previous policy that ordered them to be invisible at all times.

When the express arrived, the school was deemed functional and ready; not perfect and not even optimal, but workable for the purposes required. The more complex tasks like the wards would need several years just to plan properly, let alone implement, so the entire community had no choice but to have patience and faith that things would get better, some day in the near future.

The students were given the traditional welcome; the old ones traveled by small coaches pulled by thestrals while the first year students got to see the castle from the antique wooden dories as they crossed the Black Lake. The firsties were all placed in the foyer next to the great hall, waiting for their sorting feast as it had been done for ten centuries. As usual, the deputy headmistress came to fetch them and present them to the assembled school population. The Sorting Hat was resting on a small pouf upholstered in heavy brocade that represented all the House colors. It looked more inviting and comfortable than the rickety old three-legged stool from previous years.

The Sorting Hat amazed the new students by animating itself and singing an inspiring canticle about faith, community and mutual support, before announcing it was ready for the year to begin.

As Madam Clemencia read aloud their names, the children went to sit on the pouf to be sorted by House into Gryffindor, Hufflepuff, Ravenclaw or Slytherin. Then they were grouped by Ward of Hogwarts, scholarship, regular student, noble (scion, heir or lord), titled nobility (scion, heir or Lord), and finally the possible categories of guild membership; apprentice (acolyte), yeoman (journeyman) or mastery candidate. The old students were watching carefully as they too would be undergoing the Sorting Hat anew to gain their missing classifications to guide them towards formal study help or career paths.

Susan Bones was sorted into Hufflepuff, titled nobility heir, but no guild affiliation. She was however declared to be aimed towards combat & defense and divinations for a possible career in DMLE or the aurors like her aunt. Alternatively, an internship in the Wizarding Ministry of Magic could also be a fitting career for the voluble, well connected young girl.

Hermione Granger was sorted into Ravenclaw, status unclear as the Hat recommended she pass a Heritage Ritual before completing that part. She was offered apprenticeships in the guilds for arithmancers, rune crafters, scribes & accountants, scholars or educators. She could also petition for an internship at the Wizarding Ministry of Magic, for her legalistic outlook would help the community greatly to modernize in the coming decades, if she assisted the Wizengamot directly.

Neville Longbottom was sorted into Hufflepuff, titled nobility heir, apprenticeships available with the guilds of herbologists, apothecaries or landscapers, at his choice. The Sorting Hat also mentioned that Neville should look into druid conclaves for a possible novice or acolyte status.

Draco Malfoy was sorted into Slytherin, titled nobility heir, apprenticeships available with the guilds of apothecaries or potion brewers, at his choice. Alternatively, he could prefer to have yeoman training with the guild for scribes & accountants to work in the Ministry's fiscal department.

Harold Potter, Black & Peverell was sorted into Slytherin, titled nobility reigning Lord, and offered yeoman training in combat & defense, divinations, scriptworkes, herbology, potions, alchemy and healing. He was also offered special tutorship for his Parselmagic. The tutor would have to be found and paid separately from the rest of the school's tuition fees, since Harry would probably be
his only trainee this year.

All the sortings of Harry Potter's relatives and friend made the crowd react, even some of the staff at the long central table, on the raised platform. An uncouth lout of a first year boy with rust red hair and absolutely no manners jumped up after Harry's sorting, screaming so hard he was blue in the face from the effort. He was yelling at Harry that he was a Dark wizard, an apostle of evil, a demon worshiper, a slimy snake who spoke to other snakes about their slime, to stay away from his family and especially his sister Ginny, and much more until it descended into threats and pulling out his old, battered wand to aim at Harry's face. The boy had no chance to cast anything as his Head of House had descended upon him like a thunderstorm, grabbing his arm to aim the dangerous tool at the ceiling then yank the offending device out of his weak, indecisive grasp. Taking hold of the squirming boy's left ear in a merciless grip, the woman frog-marched the young delinquent to the front of the great hall where she forced him to kneel on the cold hard flagstone floor, with his nose against the riser of the platform.

A few minutes later, and the boy in question was made to sit on the pouf to be sorted. He was named Ronald Bilius Weasley, got placed into Gryffindor, scholarship student, with the Hat strongly recommending an apprenticeship in the guild of farmers and ranchers. Supposedly, they knew how to handle bucking and biting young colts, to break them into usable beasts. Upon which comment, he was sent to sit on a long wooden bench at the very front of the hall, next to the door to the teacher's antechamber where they sometimes held meetings, with students or each other, when they needed a private space. The six girls from the train were already there.

After the sorting closed, Headmaster Deridex stood at the podium of the golden owl to address the students. He gave them an overview of the important rules that had been implemented, and especially about bullying, violence, armed assault with wands, bigotry, racism and blood-purism that would no longer be tolerated as 'laddishness'. Upon which he motioned for the seven students sitting aside the rest to come stand before the platform for judgment.

The man elocuted the accusations, investigation method and proof against all the six teenaged girls, concluding with their sentence. It was hard to say if the girls paled so much because they feared the promised pain, the shame of being bared in front of the crowd, or the letter that would be going home immediately after the Feast. If their parents accepted the conclusions, the girls would be caned tomorrow just before dinner, but if they refused the punishment or the conclusion of the process, they would be suspended at home until matters were solved between adults. In which case, their victim may want to involve the aurors.

Ronald Weasley was not so lucky. He had insulted the person, blood-status, Family, titles, ranks and styles, mancies, occult practices, Faith and good name of a new student. That said student was a sitting Warlock of the Wizengamot seemed to have escaped the rabid child's delusions of what 'Good Gryffindor Light wizards' were supposed to be. And that was another problem; the boy was a hard-core devotee of Dumbledore who thought that Harry Potter had brought low the old Headmaster to be able to corrupt the 'Light' into going dark and evil. The child was thusly suspended at home immediately, and would be sent back via Floo network for a meeting with his parents to determine what happened next. If he came back, it would be to a severe public caning and multiple restrictions, especially on his right to have a wand or focus only under supervision.

The entire student body cringed in phantom pain at that idea. Canings were bad but pretty much ordinary in the Welsh Wiccan wizarding community. But ordering a wizard to only have his wand when somebody was there to control what he did with it was almost as bad as the potions or compulsions that Dumbledore had used. Clearly, the Board of Governors and the Wizengamot weren't playing the fools with their population's best school anymore.
The rest of the feast was done in peace, with the culprits being made to eat in isolation in the antechamber. They would also be kept apart from the general population in a disciplinary dormitory next to the infirmary until their parents made their decisions, including for the entire class day tomorrow. That policy of separating the trouble makers and delinquents from the good kids would now be applied to any case that involved caning, suspension, expulsion or the involvement of DMLE and aurors. And Mystra help the poor fool who got the Unspeakables to visit the school because of Anathema or Unspeakable Acts. They would be expelled, have their wand broken, and be tried before the full Wizengamot to see if Azkaban or the Veil were necessary to remedy the crimes committed.

The first day was rough for a lot of people. The new teachers were stiff as boards and almost afraid of their students at times. Given that several of them now had the full uses of their nobility and peerage privileges, and a few were actually reigning Lord of their Houses, it could be understood. Hogwarts had become a veritable political and social minefield, with some kids having more weight on their shoulders than the school's newly hired career administrators.

One of the first changes was that the Heads of Houses were no longer professors or teachers, but only administrators and resource personnel for the students and their families. They didn't teach anything, but had office hours in the evening and kept watch all through the night to enforce curfew and safety bounds firmly. Something that the Weasley twins found out at their pained expenses right in the first week, when they tried to go out to the Forbidden Forest to collect rare components for their experimental joke products. That caning was seen by all staff and most students as three years in the making, and well deserved by both delinquents. What wasn't expected was for their father to come to school three days later to put them over his knee one after the other, right in the middle of their common room because of the utter stupidity they showed in disregarding their own safety by wanting to gallivant in the forest at night. With two bare-bottom spankings in them before the second week of class was done, the twins got the message right quick that things were no longer in their favor. Their usual routine of being the playful freckled clowns wasn't an asset anymore, just a pain in their arses, so they stopped.

Fancy that notion? Peaceful Weasley twins that didn't bother anybody.

Miracles do happen, if you work for them hard enough; magic doesn't do everything on its own.

Besides that, the importance and resources for the classes had been changed.

Ancient Runes was changed into "scriptworkes and artistic medias" that would serve to teach the students the art of calligraphy, drawing figures or entities, writing a text in a logical fashion, and how to read or write runic sequences for basic temporary charms or wards. This would be done all of first year with ink on paper or scrap leather. Then the second years would progress to molding runes in wet clay or wood scraps, and try to produce standard sequences, like the silencing ward normally used on beds in the dorms. By third year, they would follow the ICW standards as the Ministry had acquiesced the Board's opinion to just use the international tests and scores to harmonize with everybody. This course was elaborated with help from the scribes & accountants' guild, as well as the rune-masters' guild

Arithmancy was merged with muggle mathematics and been brought back as a vital class taught from the first year up. It would show the students the bases of regular arithmetic, geometry, volumetry, weights, distances, chronology, algebra and statistics. This course was elaborated in concert with the scribes & accountants' guild to help groom future members properly.

With Trelawney gone and Dumbledore no longer influencing the decisions, the Divinations class
was back into being a primary and vital course. It concerned all the spells and techniques to acquire or produce information, triage it, manage it, and produce reports. This class covered basics like the 'Point-Me' charm, the 'Itemic Lore' charm, and harder spells like the lesser necromancy 'History of Death' charm used by aurors in investigations. Prophecies, Oracles and such wild Gifts were discussed as generic knowledge but the Sorting Hat hadn't pointed out anybody with Seer potential, so no tutor for the subject was sought out by the school.

The old Defense class was revamped into two distinct groups; the basic "Student Self-Defense" and the professional grade "Duel, Combat & Warfare". This was to help the Ministry pre-screen candidates for the DMLE, auror and hit-wizard training programs post-Hogwarts. A formal Duelling club was put in place, led by Professor Flitwick who had changed classes to lead the upper-strength fighting classes instead of charms as he used to.

Herbology and charms were merged to become a consolidated class of hedge-craft under the tutelage of Professor Sprout, who felt it was good to return to the traditional witchcraft of yore. This position was a bit hard to swallow for the male dominated Gamot, but had received the support from most of the Board and the majority of parents. Children would thusly learn about gardening for food, spices, medicinal herbs, and recreational herbs, farming & ranching, while also getting homestead charms with basic wards & enchanting too. The course included a lot of Do-it-yourself know-how to maintain and repair one's equipment for dwelling or work. The class would approach the ancestral Faiths of the Welsh Wiccan sect and other groups, as well as teach the bases of Ritual Magicks to steer kids away from dangerous things they shouldn't try without adult supervision.

The Potions class was completely revamped, to become a consolidated fermenting & distillery, potions brewing and alchemic sciences course, with modules of each at each year of progression. The class was to teach the best and most efficient way to use basic raw ingredients and prepare them for the maximal effect on a limited schedule. This would now also include spells to wash the equipments, portion components and shield the cauldron from contaminants. Basic spells like stasis, filtration, refining, purification and quality controller would be mandatory as of first year. It was a clear difference from preceding years, especially since the class was moved to the seventh floor to have skylights opened to vent out fumes or explosions, instead of spreading the mess through the dungeons.

The newly established class for basic homestead healing and apothecary arts would prove to be a wild success with the kids. It replaced the not-at-all lamented 'health module' in the potions class that had been taught by Professor Snape. The man had enjoyed it even less than his charges, but the new version was much more oriented towards practical applications of traditional remedies and techniques, as well as modern ones, but not so much theory as before since the hedge-craft and potions classes would take care of most of that. The healing course amusingly covered potential familiars and farm animals as much as humans, house-elves and other common species of the greater magical world. One of the basic and most important lessons of the first year was to teach students how to recognize the signs of mental manipulations in a being's attitude, then how to use spells to check for potions, compulsions or mind-rape. It also covered recreational potions and herbs, drunkenness and accidental overdoses of prescribed/self medication the same way.

Astronomy was now given in the day in a classroom converted to have the walls and ceilings show the segment of the night sky to examine. The equipment was just slightly modernized, but not much. It was still traditional for true astronomers to buy a very basic telescope or sextant and personally customize the devices to suit their particular needs and machinations. Nobody complained about it when it was explained correctly, for once in a century.

The old history of magic class was revamped entirely and was now consolidated into "History of
the Magical Worlds” to have all magical species of Earth, and certain chosen sectors of the
connective demi-planes covered properly. The class would also have frank examination of
religions, faiths, occult movances, sects and guilds, and several types of magical practices that had
disappeared or were still used only in forlorn corners of the planet.

The old muggle studies class was revoked and replaced entirely by the British national history
curriculum from Eton college. Once informed properly of what Eton was, and what the criteria for
a successful student career at the school were, none of the Gamot's Warlocks wanted to oppose the
idea, and neither did the Board members. The difference was that now that course would be
offered from first year on as a vital core class too.

The options from third year on were being slated as; estate & business management, generic
secretarial & clerkship, magical artistry, prospection & mining techniques, curse-breaking, ward-
laying, advanced crafting & embedding, scholarly research technician, aide-nurse (orderly),
restaurant chef (butchering, cooking, baking, etc...), and factory-scaled food transformation (dry-
packed, brined, canned, spell-frozen and fresh/stasis-packed).

Every student could see easily the overwhelming influence of the professional trades, and
mercantile guilds in the new setup of the courses and curriculum. The switch over to ICW tests and
scores across the school was welcome by the kids and their parents with a sigh of relief as it meant
that the pupils no longer had to take a second set of exams in Basel or another foreign testing
center to have their diplomas recognized as valid across all the ICW jurisdiction. British diplomas
had become so meaningless in the last 100 years that the OWL's were not even counted as worth
anything unless they were passed under ICW control, an infamous distinction that not even the
worse, least civilized countries of the organization had ever suffered from.

Yes, the work & business focus was a bit upsetting to certain fringe students who wanted to have a
generic, no frills schooling to have plenty of time for socializing and taking life easy before their
Family or House duties settled on them, but they were minority. Likewise, the other fringe that
liked having a very loose and airy schedule with weak teachers were upset because all the self-
studying and external tutoring they had wanted their parents to pay would no longer fit in the new,
much heavier calendar, with much stronger, standardized education methods throughout.

In the vast majority however, the changes in classes were satisfying. The changes of staff were also
well seen, despite a few outliers who would never be satisfied with anything, mostly because their
capacity to bully or snob others had been removed. Which might explain why the student body at
large viewed these novelties as appropriate and desirable in such a short time, no matter the uglier
sides like fewer personal liberty and public punishments in the great hall.

{ HP } --- { High & low points of the year } --- { HP }

For many students who were born or raised in wizarding households, the better parts were the
renewed history course, the use of High Traditional calendar days and markers for the festivities,
and the respect given to their Families who had endured for centuries to build this congregation.

Their low points were that new-bloods (muggle-born) were given just as much respect and rights if
their birthing and social status was 'comparable' in the muggle side of things. This also brought in
the reality that white skinned men no longer held sway over the British Empire as they did for four
hundred years, nor could they crush and demean women anymore. The addition of specism as yet
another punishable crime was really grinding on some nerves, but the history classes now showed
them just how deeply deluded their notions of superiority to goblins, dwarves or Fae had been for
so long. At least, they weren't being compared to Illithids, Githyanki, or Beholders for the purpose
of evaluating societies. Then again, almost nobody knew anything about those populations, and the
biological data were the scarce minimum obtained by visual encounters.

For those born or raised in the mundane side of England, the benefits were the clear effort put into matching and maintaining international standards as they had always thought in terms of being mobile to follow the jobs where they happened. The second best thing was that they were riding a wave of modernization that gave them access to magical subjects and teachings that were not even possible just a year before. Their education would be almost twice more dense and thrice more capable than their predecessors who had finished Hogwarts already. The best, most dramatic benefit was that each new-blood child was given the Awakening Rite in one of the ritual chambers of Hogwarts, thus augmenting and purifying their connection with their magic and lifeforce unlike their forebears ever had.

The downsides were that the anti-bullying rules and capacity to involve the authorities in cases of property or bodily damages resulting from racism or fanaticism meant that several rich or noble Purebloods tried to push the system to the breaking point. This was done by repeatedly attacking those students seen as the leading mudbloods, even when they were punished multiple times to the point of expulsion. Then they left for Durmstrang Institute where Headmaster Karkarof had put in place a blanket pardon policy for those that got kicked out of Hogwarts due to the "Repression of the innate nobility and superiority of Pureblood lines". Some twenty young men and nine young ladies had used that escape path after vicious, vindictive attacks on students who were not of their liking.

In three instances, half-blood or muggle-born teachers had been injured badly enough while defending the victims of bullying to warrant calling the aurors to apprehend the suspects as they were fleeing Britain, after leaving school without permission. This social movance was fueled by racial and religious fanatics with little to lose since they were geriatric, or so young they had no established life holding them back. They managed to cause a community-wide backlash against the modernization, and many tried to have the Wizengamot vote roll-backs of the rules and changes, to no avail yet.

Harry and his friends had a rather different view of events as they unfolded.

Firstly, Harry was in privately paid tutorship as much as he was in public classes, thus making for a very tight and loaded schedule six days per week. He had wisely chosen Saturday as his one day of the week that nothing short of an emergency Wizengamot meeting could encroach. Everything else was set back to Monday or Tuesday. Sunday was kept for religious and spiritual training in the Faith, Creed and Causes of the Hadean cult. Not because they valued that day, they weren't christians and had no use for one specific day of the week. No, Harry's reasoning was that his religious studies were mostly self-taught, at his own rhythm, and he could turn in early to be relatively healthy and good humored on the following Monday morning. Thankfully, the school had opted to keep a good number of snow days, holidays and seasonal festivals through the year to let the students and teachers blow off steam before things escalated to badly.

Harry still had to attend the Gamot once a month, and his Lordship duties towards his families were also sapping a lot of his time and reserves of patience on a daily basis. Thankfully, he had managed to change his mindset about a few things inside of September or he'd have had a burnout right quick. Firstly, he finally gave in to Rehz's opinion about finding a new house-elf to take care of the trunk, errand and couriering. While Harry now ate most of the time in the great hall, he did have a private Lord's suite where he constantly received guests for political or economic reasons, as well as old allies of the Houses Potter and Black that wanted to see where it would all go. That meant having refreshments and snacks at hand, depending on how long the meeting would last, and if the goblins had to come for crafting and signing contracts. So, the child had finally let himself finish his grief over Dryskholl's cruel death and chosen a new elf from a list proposed by
When the first week-end of October arrived, Harry and Hermione went to Gringotts together. She had booked a Heritage Blood-Tithe Ritual to figure out what the Sorting Hat had alluded at, while dreading what it could reveal about her ancestors. Harry needed to complete the procedures for the Most Ancient and Most Noble House of Black, to obtain Lordship over the living members and estates concerned before frauds or government bureaucrats tried something like Umbridge.

Hermione was revealed to be the Heiress Presumptive of the Ancient and Noble House of Dagworth-Granger, which had produced some of the most reputed potioners, apothecaries and healers that the Welsh Wiccan sect had seen. She was the 'Presumptive' Heiress instead of 'Lady-Elect' because she wasn't the only one alive in the House, adult members still existed around her, but she was the only one with active magicks that were confirmed. So the goblins had no qualms about processing her demand for the full Heritage Ritual to take on the title, rank and style of the dormant House. This implied that the girl now had to undergo the Awakening Rite like Harry had done, but much older, more mature, and with a vial of Given Blood put in stasis by Hector Dagworth-Granger at the height of his Powers and social preeminence. With Ancestral Blood confirming her origins and activating the sleeping 'Blood Compact' inside her genetic memory, the girl confirmed her position as 'Heiress Ascendant' then waited a few hours to complete the Heritage as Head of House, reigning Lady of Dagworth-Granger. It was a very changed, thoughtful girl that left Gringotts that evening.

Harry's business with the Lordship was quick and relatively simple, since none of the living Blacks or extended relations had any grounds to contest the elevation. Neither Narcissa, Lucius or Draco had deigned to protest or offer a Magical Heirship Challenge, much to the surprise of Andromeda Tonks and several watchers of British magical nobility and politics. In fact, the Malfoy Family was present at the ritual, to show openly their support and satisfaction with the new Master of the House.

The Welsh Wiccan Minister of Magic, Cornelius Fudge, pushed by who knows what defective instincts or foul advice, had tried to intercept Harry in person, on the steps of Gringotts no less, to stop the ritual on the grounds that Sirius Black had not yet been exonerated by the Wizengamot or Crown. He claimed that the Black title, rank and style were locked in abeyance, along with the estate and businesses, until the Warlocks could deliberate and adjudicate the case in serenity. This could, of course, be hastened if Harry submitted to the Gamot for inspection and validation by open vote, regardless of the rank or seniority of the houses. Including the Ministry Department Heads in that vote would go a long way in appeasing the disdains, fears and angers, expressed by several venerable men of great status in Nature, Magyck and society. These old men were upset that a mere child held three Lordships when they, themselves, were available to accomplish the powerful tasks of these positions in his stead, as was right and proper for children to let go unto men of import and might of wand. The minister strongly intimated that Harry could go a long way towards proving his good faith to the Ministry by naming three Regents and Stewards, one of each post for each House, until he turned 27 years old. Fudge had a list of older, mature and respectable men that would reliably fit these jobs, in the Ministry's formal opinion.

Harry replied that he would acknowledge the Minister's request as valid only if it were deposed his demands and list of names before king Ragnok on a blood-sealed Ministry form with the names of all the original plaintiffs signed in blood as well, to bind them all to the Gamot and Ministerial resolution. The Minister looked at Harry with something akin to genuine, gut-deep fear for a
second, before removing himself from the goblin territory, now that he remembered just who he was accosting, and where it was happening. The first thing Harry did inside the bank was ask for a copy of the two door sentries’ memories of the encounter so he could file a grievance against Cornelius Fudge at the DMLE and Wizengamot Services for conspiracy of attempted Blood-Line Theft. Plus, the man had tried to hijack the heredity rituals of three titled noble Houses, to put them in the hands of a structured cabal for the debasement of Peerage, entitlement, nobility and Chartered Families.

These heretical sacrileges would NEVER be tolerated in Magical Britain.

After that malicious piece of crapulence had been dealt with, the passing of the Black Lordship was mostly perfunctory. It was the second time that Harry used the ritual chambers under Gringotts, so he felt welcome and safe. Looking at king Ragnok to the side of the altar, he commented that the feeling he got was similar to the Van Uttebatten chamber, where the honored ancestors were close and watching upon them kindly. Unaware of the monarch's pleasure at the compliment, Harry processed the ritual with alacrity and stoicism as the Black Magicks wanted to test the boundaries and flexibility of his morality, looking for weaknesses or faults that would disqualify him, or give the Magick and heirlooms the right to kill him. However, after the scandal of the late Lord's manner of death, the Family's Magick seemed to understand the need to change and adapt if it wanted the Lineage to survive the coming hardships.

Harry left the bank late in the evening, accompanied by Hermione and the Malfoys, unaware of the two aurors and one Unspeakable who were disillusioned, watching from separate rooftops around Diagon Alley. The boy and his allies walked to the public Floo chimney without ever realizing the danger they were in. Dark forces were now moving in the shadows, and their time of safety and friendship was running out faster than they could imagine.

{ HP } --- { Halloween, and again this are bad } --- { HP }

Things were mostly peaceful or easily handled in Hogwarts itself until the night of All Hallow's Eve. Harry was trying to concentrate on preparing his usual prayers for his dead kindred when his female elf, Jippsy, came to him with a missive from Lord Malfoy that a surprise emergency Wizengamot meeting was being held with less than the required quorum in attempt to pass fraudulent laws. The goal was to bolster the Minister's own powers and authority over the ennobled houses, including those who had been created under Royal Warrant before the Gamot even existed, which was treason. The presence of as many Lords as possible was required to block this scurrilous attempt, and to have the felonious minister arrested for trial.

Warning his friends who had planned to be by his side during the evening of prayers, he cast a few quick spells to change into his battle kit as he had managed to assemble it, and used his suite's active Floo to pass through. As a measure of security, Harry had never used the Floo in his trunk to connect directly to the Ministry, afraid that the Unspeakables or bureaucrats could try to track his address and movements once the signal was established as his. He arrived in his private Lord Peverell office in the Wizengamot's floor, and carefully cast what few divination spells he knew to peruse the area around his door. Seeing nothing bad, he unlocked it and walked out, going towards the main amphitheater where the illegal meeting was being held.

On the way he found Lords Malfoy, Nott, Parkinson, Sandhurst, and Ladies Bones, Longbottom and even Madam Marchbanks, walking towards the same direction. Seeing the gravity of the attempted coup by the Ministry against the hereditary Families and Peerage, the Heads of Houses girded themselves for a fight. All were happy to see the others had worn dueling or combat robes for the seditious event they would be crashing.
A quartet of young Pureblood aurors without important names or affiliations other than their generic magical ancestry and white skin guarded the locked doors, trying desperately to look brave when they realized face-to-face just what kinds of Power and Arms they challenged. One male auror, barely twenty-five years old and puffed up like a turkey in mating season tried to bullshit the Lords into submitting to him.

"Halt! In the name of the Ministry DMLE!" he showed them a glowing new gold badge with the words 'DMLE - Head Auror' embossed on top. Which was weird since Rufus Scrimgeour was supposed to still be the top auror in their community, at last they knew. "I am the chief of criminal investigations and arrests, by order of Minister Fudge! You will surrender your wands and be escorted back out of the building. The Ministry is locked down for important business, and nobody is allowed in." Then, turning to the three fearfully shaking beginners, he commanded them loudly "Seize the fucking little plunker before he disappears! It'll save us a trip to Hogwarts tomorrow. And be careful of those knives, they ain't for show! My cousin saw him use one in school, a few weeks back, and he's good with 'em. Just cast some good expelliarmus at him and he'll cave in quick. He's a kid and doesn't even have a real wand, just a damned wooden spoon he carved a few years back."

Harry was in no mood to be insulted, let alone be arrested for no valid reason by some fraudsters participating in a botched coup d'état that couldn't even get off the pub napkin where it was drawn without setting the tavern on fire. He called his Battlestaff out of the shrunken trunk at his neck to let it float besides his left arm while taking out his hatchet in the left hand and the pistol from his back with the right hand. The four newbie aurors saw the very worse scenario unfold before their eyes as a fully empowered Lord of Magick marched unto war.

Before any of them had the chance to raise a wand to cast anything, it was over. Offended beyond belief and words, Madam Marchbanks had cast a mass-area disarming charm that had grabbed all the primary wands, secondary wands, shield rings and badges from the youths in one fell move that left them gap-mouthed at the sheer capacity of the old crone. They never got to say anything in protest or their own defense because Madam Bones had just used two wands to multi-cast four distinct stunners locked with an old German password to keep them asleep for the full 24 hours the spell could hold if not unlocked or dispelled. They found that the doors of the Gamot were locked physically but not magically as the quorum was not had, so the wards did not engage, a visible refusal by the ancient building to sanctify the outrages being committed inside.

With every hand carrying a weapon, and both Lord Malfoy and Harry having a phantom arm to carry a third melee item as well, Griselda Marchbanks used her authority as lawful Chief-Witch to force the activation of the Protocols & Procedures of Session to command the opening for the arriving Ladies, Lords and Regents. She could hear others that had been summoned to attend when the sacrilege had been discovered, and at least a dozen were marching up behind them, with another dozen after that before quorum was had and the session could proceed fully.

As the large oak panels moved ponderously, Harry enacted a small spell from 'Tricks of the Trade' to have a slow, pompous ceremonial dirge play aloud around the entire room and corridor as they entered and took strategic positions rather than their traditional seats. The first arrived stormed the surprised, fear-struck Ministry officials and Lords who were about to vote on some unlawful bill or project already tabled and read into docket. Cornelius Fudge was sitting in his pinstriped robes with his green bowler hat on the desk before him, not at all bothering with the decorum or rules of the Gamot since not a single plum colored uniform was in sight anywhere. Besides him were seated the hard-right fascist supporter Bartemius Crouch Senior, Head of the Department of International Cooperation, and the Darkness follower Walden MacNair, executioner of dangerous beasts for the Ministry's Department of Creature Regulation. The scribe in service was the junior that had been Imperiused by Dolores Umbridge, raising questions about his true mindset and
allegiances yet again. Maybe he had been spelled willingly as a ruse?

Madam Bones gestured towards the stunned young man that had been floated in by the Lady Zabini, while other Warlocks brought in the remaining three posers to expose their perfidy to the open public. To the consternation of the traitor Lords, the few friendly reporters they had invited to attend what they saw as a moment of Power and Glory would now be writing about their Fall from their seats of authority, right to imprisonment, and maybe even being Cast Out by their own Houses. It could only get worse if the muggle monarchy got involved. All of them would rather be killed, be transfigured to ash and then be flushed down the toilets than be judged by muggles.

Harry Potter stood in the middle of the larger, bulkier and better trained adults that he had walked in with, shamelessly using their mass and experience to shield his own weakness. He was proud of his accomplishments, but not stupid enough that he stood much of a chance against all of the assembled Gamot members and their bureaucrat allies if wands were drawn. His best chance at distance was his pistol, or some wandless spells he had learned for close range. He wanted to be heard at the moment of judgment, not attract attention in the middle of a fight when everybody, their dog and the dog's fleas could probably take him out with cantrips. Or at least, that was his evaluation of his strength versus the Welsh Wiccan adults. He had forgotten how badly Dumbledore had amputated the course programs for a century, and mangled what was left to suit his need for mindless, miseducated worshipers that followed his words without proofs.

Cornelius Fudge tried to blubber his way out of the very obvious open grave that was yawning at his feet when Barty Crouch spoke aloud, surprising everyone. "You have it here, before you, the proof that the boy is wild, delinquent, and out of control. Look at how he tries to command the adults around him, standing in their midst as a monarch." He said in his arrogant voice, tone regal and manners fitting the Head of an Ancient and Noble wizarding House. With a sneer of disdain common to all Purebloods when they look at mud-bloods and subhumans, the old man with the Hitler-like mustachio, dark black pinstripe robes and black short top hat pointed a rolled scroll at the child with glee. "You are too late, boy! The writ of arrest, containment and removal of your Lord rings by the Unspeakables has been voted already! Your spies were too late! We may have been betrayed tonight, but we, the Purebloods of Human Wizardry, will still have gain of cause this day! You, boy, will end in Azkaban for your absolute disrespect of our age, Power and almight before Mystra, Mother of All Magycks! Submit to the magicks of the Law of Britain!" he screamed rabidly in a spatz of self-induced delirium as he waved the scroll towards Harry.

Madam Marchbanks was not impressed, and not afraid to say so. "Oh yeah, Crouch? And if that piece of toilet paper is truly legal, then why did you have to pass it under quorum, without the chamber wards active, or any of the actual Most Ancient and Most Noble Houses? Why is it, boy, that you felt the need to scurry in the dark, behind every loyal Britannic wizard of our nation? Speak up, sneak-about! I'm not hard of hearing, but I can't hear you!" she railed at him in great glee at his sudden puce coloration when he realized who he was affronting tonight.

Lord Malfoy contributed his own venom, stating in chilling urbane tones that belied the true extent of his ire, "Cornelius, I had thought you had a modicum of common sense, but I stand corrected. You are clearly not able to whelm a single whit of brain matter under that hat! How did you think my voting block would react, tomorrow, when this law appeared in the papers? You just tried to commit the kidnapping of a seated Warlock via the aurors by unlawful warrant, Line-Defilement and Line-Theft via Unspeakables against all laws of the land, and threatened to shove a reigning Lord of three ennobled Houses into Azkaban without a lawful trial on sham charges, just like Dumbledore did with the last Lord Black. Congratulations for not learning the lesson of what happens to conspiracies the first time around, Fudge! Bagnold is dead and Crouch was already under investigation by Madam Bones for his involvement in Sirius Black's unlawful arrest, sending to prison, and then the illegal banishment, and here you are, sitting by his side to repeat his failed
plan anew. Good show, Cornelius, good show on seeing just how stupid this all is!"

Minister Fudge tried to faff around for an escape route, so he grasped at straws to save his elections, and possibly his freedom as well, if Bones and Marchbanks weren't neutered. "But Lucius! Think about the great boon I'm getting for your House and descendants! The title of Lord Black back into Pureblood hands, who also have the Black blood in their veins! Your son Draco could rule that House properly, unlike this half-blood mongrel who accaparates titles, ranks and styles he should never even say aloud, and certainly never put his filthy mud-blood hands on! The sight of those rings on those hands! For shame! Only a proper Pureblood should ever hold such almight and entitlements in our Welsh Wiccan community!"

Shaking his head in a desperate attempt to deny the full imbecility of the man he helped to elect in the position, Lucius replied "You cretin! I went to Gringotts with my wife and son to bear witness and accept publicly the new Lord Black! I gave my oath to the Black Blood-Law! What do you think would happen to me and my family if I did anything to accept or support this cabal of cur knaves that surround you? Would you see the House of Malfoy squibbed or dead? Is that the gratefulness that you demonstrate for that money and assistance at getting people to vote for you as Minister?"

Madam Zabini snorted in contempt, declaring in a soft but strong voice that carried all around the room on the force of her charms; "Of course, he wants to see you squibbed or dead. He wants to kill off all the old Families and titled nobles so that only elected and Ministry nominated minions could ever hold power and authority in Magical Britain again. It's not a favor to you or other Pureblood Lords, it's a genocide against all of our Hallowed Lineages! The use of the Potter boy's situation is just a transparent excuse to rail against the very privileges that him and Crouch have pined after for decades! I certainly remember little Horny-Corny from Hogwarts, always snooping around the rich and titled, trying to get scraps of attention or alms for his services at doing somebody's homework or term paper for them. I'm willing to bet he was elected because Dumbledore wanted a docile puppet, not because of anything you did, Lucius." she closed with toxic words that didn't in any ways reduce the truths she spoke.

Amelia Bones snorted, kicking lightly the stunned boor at her feet, mentioning "Not to mention that trying to make changes to the hierarchy of the aurors and hit-wizards is my jurisdiction alone. The Ministry's political and judicial wings are NEVER supposed to interfere in the DMLE's internal policies or promotion schedules. You crossed a line that only tyrants and Dark Lords have ever crossed willingly, Cornelius. History will not remember you kindly. But from a cell in Azkaban, you won't have to care for public opinion polls and voting basins anymore."

Puffing himself even more, like a balloon about to rupture, Minister Fudge shouted "NO! I won't go to prison! I am the Minister of Magic! I am the authority in this nation! I made these laws, I got them voted in session, and now they'll be applied! You've fired, Bones! From your job and from the aurors! Women have no place in such jobs! You should be so lucky to walk out with your wand and life intact, instead of heading to the Diagon Plaza for a public thrashing under an energy whip! And you, Marchbanks! You decrepit, obsolete old crone! How dare you challenge my authority inside my chamber of parliament! I am Minister of Magic! You will obey me, in the immediateness of the moment, or be broken by the aurors until you know your place in life!"

Harry shouted over the Minister's rant "Don't listen to his foul lies! He's trying to bullshit you into giving up your positions and badges willingly because he can't magically compel you, since Marchbanks activated the wards on full! Any attempt to seize our titles, ranks, styles, sigil rings or badges of office will be seen by the wards as committing High Crimes, Sedition and Treason, and be punished immediately by The Old Ways, without a trial. The only chance the conspirators have to win their putsch is if we're stupid, or scared enough, to give into the lies they spew! They have
no power at all! That's why they held a secret, low-attendance meeting on Halloween night, a family ritual night! To bypass not only the protocols & procedures, but also the chamber wards and their blood-oaths that were tightened after the Dumbledore debacle was aired out. As long as we hold fast our stations in Nature, Magyck and Society, they can't touch us without destroying themselves and their allies! They'll be the squibs in the end, not us!"

Barty Crouch Snarled in unfettered anger at the child's poisonous voice that was undoing all the careful word-smithing he had Fudge's cronies put in the law bill that would have killed-off this little maggot's attempts to rebuild Magical England in depth. No longer seeing straight, the elderly man subconsciously decided to go out in a blaze of magical glory as he raised his wand at the boy's face, incanting 'Avada Kedavra!' with seething bile that any confirmed Death Eater would have felt kinship for. A tight powerful beam of green energy ran from the wand towards the child who dropped his hatchet to let it dangle from his wrist by the lanyard as the hand moved to point-cast, silently and without foci, the childish spell 'Hole' to create a five foot wide disk of blackness that hung in the air in front of him, while a matching 'Hole' appeared automatically 5 feet to his right side. The killing curse from Crouch's wand went in a straight line, as it always did, entering the sudden dimensional aperture to do a 'U' turn in the Ether before disgorging from the paired 'Hole', going straight at Barty's own startled form.

Bartemius Crouch, Head of House, reigning Lord Crouch, dropped dead in his chair, without a sound or defensive move, killed by his own Avada in front of dozens of witnesses and the press who had recorded the acts as they happened.

Cornelius Fudge was scared so hard by the twin green flashes that occurred right besides him that he vomited, pissed and shat himself in the same second, then dropped unconscious on the floor, laying in his own stinking mess until he was picked up for transport to the cells.

Walden MacNair jumped from his chair, throwing a quick dagger towards the insolent child that had just killed their best chance to take over the country without an army of rabid fanatics and dumb, subhuman brutes like Fenrir Greyback and his he-bitches. The Death Eater wanted to have the Power his dead master, Lord Voldemort, had promised and Crouch's discrete paperwork approach had been promising. By the laws of the land, if they declared an emergency session and passed bills under quorum, the rest of the Warlocks had only 30 days to question or contest the laws for a full debate and regular vote with quorum in place. The strategy had been to make the laws, vote them silently, wait for thirty days without saying anything to anybody, then surprise the fucking little cunt-dropping with a team of aurors backed by Unspeakable Bode, a hidden sympathizer of their group. But then somebody couldn't keep the building sealed right, and everything went down the loo at championship casting speed.

Harry saw the six inch dagger coming at his chest and used a body booster from Warrior Law to quick-move backwards by four full yards, again scaring people by casting without any sounds or foci visible. He didn't have the chance to take a shot with either pistol or spell as MacNair's knife was stored in an invisible wrist sheath that also had a conditional portkey that triggered when the knife was out for more than one full second. The Death Eater disappeared before Madam Marchbanks could activate the chamber's siege wards to blockade magical transports.

With a scream of rage, Madam Bones turned towards the seated Warlocks, wand aloft in case some fool male tried to hit her in the back, but all the elderly men were sitting in stunned fear, the fullness of the misconceived, utterly feeble plan dawning on them now. They had been hoodwinked by honeyed words about easy Power and cost-less victory, with all the burdens and hardships being borne by the child who defiled the purity of their blood and community.

All lies.
Madam Marchbanks had never been temporarily suspended, so the bill didn’t pass legally.

Madam Bones had never been legally fired, so the young buck that replaced her was a sham.

Minister Fudge said he was in charge, but it was Crouch that managed everything, with Fudge just along for the ride because he too wanted easy Power without efforts or costs to himself.

And MacNair wasn’t just a friendly supporter of traditional Pureblood patriarchal authority, as he had purported, but a hardened killer and genuine Death Eater that had escaped prison by claiming to have been Imperiused by Voldemort to obey him. It was only now, after their bitter defeat at the hands of the true masters of the Wizengamot, that the geriatric traitors realized just how thoroughly they had been played like patsies, just like during the Blood Purity War.

Under the orders of Madam Marchbanks, the group of loyal Ladies, Lords and Proxies began to recover the wands of the traitors, searching them for foci, weapons, portkeys and potential suicide devices. Noisily, two full squads of aurors in red battle robes arrived in the chamber to assist in the arrests, doing scans and revelation dweomers to find any who might have hidden, or invisible devices that could go off and hurt people.

That was how they detected a small insect trying to fly out of the open doors, but had an animagus signature. The common shit-fly was the treasonous Unspeakable Bole! The aurors fired stunning and paralysis spells, until one woman who was more alert than the rest shot an explosive pellet that spread outwards hundreds of thin filaments of sticky glue. The human as a shit-fly was hit in the torso and wing, getting stuck beyond his insect body’s capacity to get free. He reverted to human, the ward glyphs embroidered in his robes unglueing him and deflecting the stunners just enough for his Unspeakable portkey to transport him through then open doors. He appeared in a secret safe-house under sorcerous Fidelius that had been decommissioned following the Blood Purity War, a decade ago. Operating solely on mundane means from now on, the traitor would remain at large for a long time to come, fomenting anarchy and sedition amongst wizarding white males wherever he went.

Whelp, it was official; the Wheel of Days had turned a full lunar year, and things had ended about the same as they had begun going down hill at the last Yuletide. Back then, Dumbledore's perfidies were exposed to the wide open public, precipitating the Fall of the Manipulator and his puppetized theocracy of his own effigy. The intermezzo had been all about bureaucracy trying to plod along the road that wasn't supposed to be taken, grading the land, setting rails and raising signals posts as they advanced, just like the pioneers of the railways had done before them. And now, another bevvy of treasons, investigations, public denunciations or allegations of the crassest level, with yet more societal upgrades and renovations ahead.

And Dumbledore's investigations, trials and sentencings weren't even half done!

It was taking King Ragnok Backsnapper several miracles of patience and tolerance every week to keep upholding his given pledge that all the nations, governments, churches, guilds and chartered or titled families that had suffered from Dumbledore's crimes would get a chance to interrogate the bastard to get answers to mysteries that have gone on for a century or more. As it was, the goblins estimated prudently that another two years would be needed to fulfill the decree of their king, and their obligations under British, ICW and UN laws.

Two more fucking years before Justice met with Albus too-many-titles Dumbledore.

At the very least, the Goblin Nation was over 97% done with him already, and the British were
strenuously nearing the 66% bar but had stalled due to all the seditious and treasonous activities that had happened in the country. The process was starting up again, but slowly. The ICW's other member states were mostly at 80%+ finished, with a few details remaining. It was the chartered and titled families of nine different countries that were the real problem. The families had been ordered by exaltation, Peerage, titles, ranks, styles, positions and closeness to the monarchs or governments in place. That meant that Harry's Peverell and Potter files had been processed amongst the first, especially as they had been the linchpin that made Albus fall from his pedestal. When Harry inherited the House of Black in October, it destroyed all of the magical and not-so-legal blockades put in the way, and also swept away all the diplomatic posturing that had been maintained by Bartemius Crouch to help his ally.

And wasn't that another bloody kick in the fucking teeth!

Bartemius Crouch Senior had died a traitor to Britain, so the Old Laws of Magical Britannia still applied. It automatically gave the DMLE and aurors an unfettered right to search & seize ANY and ALL things in his bank vaults in Magical or Mundane Britain, in his estates or businesses. No lawyer – client privilege applied anymore, so his notary, solicitor and barrister could be questioned and searched too.

The aurors who knocked down his manor door were greeted by a wailing, sobbing female house-elf who was incredibly grateful to see the red robes inside the property. She had been barred by her master from ever contacting any human or goblin outside the estate without Bartemius Senior's prior and constrictive orders. She took the aurors down to the official basement, then down to the hidden second sub-level, to show them yet another treason done by the elder Crouch.

His only son, who had been cast out of the Family's Blood-Law by magic, was imprisoned inside a very well crafted wrought iron cage with two inch thick bars. The cage dated back to when having muggle slaves for all sorts of reasons, or dark creatures like lycans or vampires, wasn't even something that you had to hide or pay a permit for. Back in the 1300's and 1400's even, all sorts of experimentations, spell practice, sacrificial rituals, household slavery, sexual perversions and such could be done on muggles or other non-wizard entities without shame or fear. So the cage was strong, built by professional architects and magical blacksmiths who had engraved scriptworkes to cancel Channeling, Essence, Mentalism, Primal Essaence, Psionics, animagus transformations and most forms of naturally produced venoms from happening inside. The cell was actually more like a small hall, with six separate two-bed cells at the back and a plethora of ancient torture devices covering the middle half of the common space. The two quarters of the common area on the left and right were long workbenches with floating shelves over them to hold the diverse handheld tools, weapons, or varied experimental devices being tested on slaves.

It was in cell number one, at the far left, that they found the young man, bound to his bed by a heavy iron chain just long enough for him to reach the stone bench that was the completely exposed privy and the sink besides it, also a block of carved stone. The beds were iron frames covered with a thick layer of straw but now sheets or pillows. The inmates had to burrow into the straw to stay warm as there were no fires or heat sources in this part of the floor. The only times a fire was made, it was in the massive monumental hearth to heat branding irons or similar items of pain and misery, or to cremate a dead slave to avoid contamination or discovery.

Seven years ago, young Bartemius Crouch Junior had been illegally removed from Azkaban prison by his father, despite that he was a publicly avowed Death Eater who had taken part in the raid on the Longbottom estate. He was caught at the site, injured badly enough to incapacitate, and brought in for trial and processing. He stayed in jail for three years, before his father had obeyed his dying wife's last wish, imposed upon him via a magical vow. Barty Senior gave his wife Polyjuice Potion to look like her son, while he Imperiused the young adult, barely 24 years old, to drink the same to
look like his mother. The Dementors can't recognize the original from a fake, no matter the Ministry's propaganda, something Barty Senior knew full well. So he did the switch and his wife's already taxed body gave out before the potion had run its hour. He called the auror guards, declared the boy dead from dementor exposure, as dozens do each year, and left with Barty Junior posing as his bereaved wife who just lost her only son.

Once back at the family manor, Bartemius Senior had wasted no time in chucking his felonious son in the second basement where he inflicted seven years of misery on him, as he truly believed that he should suffer like the terrorist and traitor he was. The public could have swallowed that part with efforts, but they could have. But Barty Sr was by that point a mite cracked in the kettle, as the saying goes. He decided that since his son had cost him his wife's happiness and life, then it was the young man's job to replace her in his life. Not up in the manor, despite the Imperius being applied every week like clockwork, but in his bed. On the extra-large wooden wrack that had been upholstered and enchanted with permanent cushioning charms, centuries ago by an old Lord Crouch who liked his sex toys to be awake and responsive but unable to resist without having to drug them out of their wits. It wasn't fun if they didn't know what was happening, and why he was imposing such violations upon them. Bartemius Senior felt the same way about his son, and since he had in fact cast him out by magic, he didn't see him as his son anymore, and not really as a human either, to be honest. Then again, Senior wasn't fully sane by then, so...

And that was what the aurors had to deal with, and make a report of to the DMLE and Gamot when they brought the delirious, partially handicapped young man to St-Mungo's for treatment against chronic pains and spasms from Cruciatus exposure, and severe mental illness due to serial mind-rapes via diverse spells and potions. That was yet another scandal to rock the establishment and destroy a bit more the already shredded reputation of the supposed 'Pure'-bloodlines of Britain.

The thirteen conspirators that followed Fudge and Crouch having been stupid enough to try their putsch inside the official amphitheater of the Wizengamot meant that the ancient Royal Wards had automatically sent urgent messages to the Queen's Archmage. He in turn alerted the armies and government of a state of open insurrection inside one of Her Majesty's territories, specifically the Homeland, in London proper.

The result was that the surviving conspirators of that Halloween night were forcibly seized by the Royal War-Wizards, to be judged and condemned by Her Britannic Majesty in person. All of them were immediately taken to The Tower of London for detention and trial, and it is where they met their inhumane end. Each conspirator was interrogated with human Veritaserum and the Goblin version that causes great pain to those who lie or refuse to answer. Upon full confessions that opened many more investigations into other people and organizations, they were given potions to nourish their bodies and keep them awake to endure the many punishments to come, spaced over several days.

Each traitor to the Crown and Throne was branded with the Traitor's Sigil using scalding-red irons on their forehead, hands, feet and torso. They were flogged on bare back with a barbed scourge, dipped in boiling salted vinegar between blows, until no more skin remained between the nape and waistline. To prevent them from lying ever again, their tongues and teeth were pulled out with pliers, and their vocal chords were severed with a small scalpel through a hole in the side of the throat. To make certain their lies were not propagated by written texts, their hands were crushed with iron war-hammers. Then they were put to the wrack until their long limbs had dislocated and broken, but their pelvis and spine were protected to endure the rest. Once properly crippled, they were slowly hung by iron hooks in their shoulders, elbows and wrists to keep them aloft in a floating cross shape. At that point, their stomach was opened with a fishmonger's knife and they were gutted with the old disemboweling crank-winch. When their abdomen was empty and only then, even if they died before, were they made to kneel before the block to be beheaded with a
crude, heavy iron war-ax, their head mounted to an iron spike on the tower battlements.

Upon death, each traitor was further punished by having the judgment of their chosen God denied as the Queen's Archmage stood by to intercept their soul, converting them into Lorne spheres, the money of the Outer Planes and Divine Temples. Each fool would forever end evermore be refused forgiveness as they were passed from hand to hand across aeons untold, being nothing more than spare change for Entities of Powers Unspeakable by mere mortals.

The entire process of execution was recorded in mundane and magical methods, then consigned to the British Realm's secret archives of the Royal Throne so that it never be forgotten what the dangers, and the price, of being Anointed Monarch means. The Wizengamot archives received fully notarized copies of each recording, and the full assembly was made to view them, as soon as all the heredity rituals had been finished and all seats that could be filled were. That meant that 11 year old Harry Potter and Hermione Dagworth-Granger saw the unfiltered truth of what it costs to be in Power, to maintain that Power, and also what happens to those that try and fail in the race to usurp or conquer Power from others.

The two kids weren't the only ones to need therapy after that, and Hermione got a lot less strident about Harry's bad habits with alcohol or recreational herbs. She even thanked him quite honestly when he offered her an antique nargileh that he had found for her in Hedgerow Terrace. Then again, Neville had just gifted the tight-knit group with dubious herbs aplenty and Draco had distilled some great tasting wine over the year, so everybody was happy that February, for a change.

\{ HP \} --- \{ End of Hogwarts year I, at last \} --- \{ HP \}

Thanking Hades Profusely and repeatedly, Harry Potter watched his house-elf Jippsy as she did one last run around the Lord's suite to recover every last bit of property and sanitize all traces or effluves from her Lord and his kin. It wouldn't do for the bad Ministry men to have physical parts of her Master in their hands. They would use all sorts of evil mojoju and idols to remotely force the boy into felonies and treasons to destroy his reputation or steal his heritages.

Harry cracked his back and neck, silently glad he had relented, a year ago, and bonded with Jippsy to handle his household affairs in the trunk and suite. His schedule over the year had been a horrendous montage that left him barely a few hours here or there to relax and purge his mind. With the constant crimes, depravities and treasons strolling out of the Wizengamot chamber like a New Year's parade at each new moon of each month, things had gotten dicey right quick.

And now the muggle Queen was involved, up to her eyeballs in it, too.

Man, had that gotten stuck in people's craw, what she did to those thirteen traitors! All the old Pureblood Lords were a-twitter with worries and bile, claiming into empty air that the Crown had betrayed Wizarding Britain and that they MUST rise up to recover their wand-rights and manly Powers before Mystra. Strangely enough, that handful of geriatric fools had bitched and whined in public for a good month before they suddenly disappeared and Gringotts processed their successions promptly. Nobody was ever told what actually happened to them, but their heads now lined the battlements of The Tower of London, right next to Fudge and his other fools.

The Welsh Wiccan sect was in full self-despise and self-mortification mode, trying to find someone to blame, and some sort of savior that would rebuild their sense of worth as humans, and superiority as wizarding men who stood above all inferior species and primitive magicks. Yes, there were several articles written in the Daily Prophet exactly in that tone of voice, with that choice of words. Demagoguery, populism, theocratism and messianic rhetoric were in full swing as the higher nobles, bourgeois merchants, middle class professionals and low-class plebes all asked
the same questions at the same time. The human population of Magical Britain was sinking in a
torment of despair, led down the whirlpool by geriatric old crones who still thought that white men
were better than everything else under the sun, moon and stars. They spoke, prayed and harangued
the crowds as if the epoch of England's Christian missionaries conquering the planet back in the
1700's had never ended, just paused for a little while.

And the stupid, delirious and desperate crowds wanted to hear more.

The thronging horde of plebes wanted a damned savior, like Dumbledore had promised them.

Five dozen fake Seers had been convicted to varying sentences in Azkaban for trying to promote
false prophecies or oracular pronouncements, the same way that Sybill Trelawney had done, and
the criminals were targeting the exact same demographics for patsies, thus the situation explained
before. The DMLE had its hands full with trying to corral the fake preachers of doomsday and their
agitated followers out of the public roads and plazas. Aurors had to intervene a few times,
especially when a mentally ill squib vagrant claimed to have learned the arts of the Haruspex from
a traveling Fae priestess. The defective retard managed to emotion and harangue the crowd of
deluded old crones he was preaching at so much that they obeyed his command to bring him a
young mother, so that he could cut her belly open to extract the child to perform an augury on it.
The miserably confounded old men, agog with belief and envy for such a are Gift of the Celestials
bestowed upon such a simpleton, made quick work of forcibly procuring a pregnant girl for him.
The felon had soon ripped the girl's abdomen open and brought out the baby girl, butchering her
under the pretense of seeing the future inside her bowels and organs. The aurors arrived too late to
save the young girl or her daughter, but they didn't let a single perpetrator escape, bringing in some
19 geriatric men who swore by their superstitions, four elderly women of the same mindset, and
the very clearly mentally ill squib who was laughing as if he were on potions in preparation for a
surgery. All 24 people were investigated and condemned by the Wizengamot to the Dementors'
Kiss within one week of arrest.

And that wasn't all the criminality that happened.

Harry's Peverell properties were nonexistent since the House had been in stasis for so long that
everything had been sold off or destroyed centuries ago. All that was left were the books, artifacts
and monies in the vault under Gringotts, so that was safe. The Potter properties had been
undergoing renovations to shore-up their value and get better kinds of tenants with less problems
when a slew of attacks struck nearly half of the rental spaces, all motivated by envy, bigotry against
his age, and superstitions fanned by old crones in search of a messiah or sacrificial goat. The Black
properties were in worse shape since Sirius had never followed the advice of his account managers,
preferring to spend the money on his vices to numb his ill mind. The foul mingrel had acted like a
slum lord, letting good buildings fall into decrepitude so that they were only used as whorehouses,
drug dens or worse. Despite saying that Remus Lupin was such a competent, over-educated man,
and trying to push him unto Harry as Steward or Regent, Sirius had never formally hired him for
anything, thus letting his own personal affairs slide into a quagmire over the decade since he had
left Azkaban damaged. And then practically all of the already not-so-good Black rental properties
were attacked by an organized gang of vandals throwing canisters of raw Promethium oil to sap the
wards as the buildings burned. Thankfully, most edifices had two layers of wards and several had
added muggle water sprinklers in the last thirty years, so only a handful were totally lost, but a
dozen would need to be gutted and rebuilt.

Harry descended into an unholy fury so bad that he summoned some of the less dangerous
creatures that he normally dealt with to see if one of them could track the bastards to their hideout
or homes. He promptly got several names and addresses that the aurors then investigated at high
speed, to corral this intolerable rioting and serial demolition of living spaces and shops. They
managed to capture three young adults in their late twenties, but four others had managed to flee the country entirely. It averred that all seven men were a cabal formed by the grand-children of several of those geriatric felons that had been arrested and executed since last Samhain, following the Halloween 1991 attempted putsch by Fudge and Crouch. The men had simply used the ongoing civil unrest and attacks by superstitious fools to enact their vengeance against Harry, in the vain effort of getting away Scott-free. Instead, three were captured, the names of the four others were known, and the Dementors' Kiss would be their reward to all of them, as they got caught.

Looking in the mirror of his suite, Harry snarked mentally that he may be a devoted follower of Hades, God of death, but the body-count piling up at his doorstep was getting exaggerated. If it continued, Jippsy would start wondering if she had enough Power to blink through the dense mass of corpses whenever she had to leave the house for errands or leisure. Metaphorically speaking, of course! He wasn't so uncouth as to let bodies pile on the porch when he had a perfectly good (neutral, really) Tenebrous Pioneer to dig him a graveyard in the rear garden.

The ride back to London and 'civilization' was rather bland, all things considered. Happily, nobody was stupid enough to bully anybody this time, the message having been painfully received a year ago. The sight of all six girls and one boy being thrashed in front of the great hall just before dinner, counting as a school event demanding mandatory presence of all students and faculty, had left none of the castle residents unchanged. The good part was that bullying had been dramatically reduced. The bad part was that those who did continue bullying did so with the firm intent of leaving as many gravely injured victims as they could before being expelled. But, it still did the job, as inter-student violence or harassment had dropped to a fraction of what it was under Dumbledore's rules. Even those dunderhead 14 year old Weasley Twins had learned their place after just one tag-team punishment at the very beginning of September, then been silent and unseen, giving an impression of cooperativeness all year.

So, Harry and Rehz were able to freely enjoy the train ride with the same five people as the trip going up to Scotland; Susan Bones, Neville Longbottom, Draco Malfoy, Nymphadora Tonks, and Hermione Dagworth-Granger.

Susan was expecting to be alone and lonely a lot this summer since her aunt was working overtime at the Ministry building due to all the investigations that just kept piling up, on top of all the crud from Dumbledore & Crouch that hadn't finished being processed in front of the Goblin courts and ICW members. The fallout from Fudge and part of the Ministry being judged traitorous to England and forcing the Queen to get involved was another kettle of fish that would be monopolizing the time of the seated Warlocks this summer too.

Neville had planned a slow but productive season in his greenhouses or visiting Hedgerow Terrace, to try and find himself a druid conclave, or even a witch coven. He wasn't picky and would probably accept an invite from the Green Sisterhood if they talked to him honestly. It didn't take long for the boy to reveal that his grand-mother was born a 'Rosier' and her late sister had married Saul Croaker, the man who became Head of the Unspeakables. While Saul was usually too busy to visit and wasn't really much of a bother, his older brother Algernon Croaker, Head of House and Lord Croaker, was a right bastard who had always pined after Augusta since they had met in Hogwarts, over fifty years ago. He had taken her marriage to Lord Longbottom very badly, and tried twice to drum-up spurious fake charges of having committed Anathema acts to try and get rid of her husband. He failed both times, getting kicked out of the Ministry for it and losing the Croaker seat in the process, which was then sold by the Bagnold administration at public auction, going to a newblood witch. Algernon never forgave the Longbottoms for these crimes, even though they were his own, and it is rumored that he actively helped to kill Augusta's husband to get her on the rebound. He was also thought to have paid Bartemius Crouch Jr to ask Voldemort to target the Longbottom males to End the Line, so he could get Augusta clear and free for himself. The
problem was that for all these rumors, and big signs they weren't far-fetched, the rabid old gribbitch Augusta had never barred either men access to Longbottom manor, even when they hit or cursed her last living descendant.

Harry promised to look into it with Amelia Bones, sometime soon. He also invited Neville to come live with him over the summer, if he needed a safe refuge.

Draco was looking forward to being home because his parents had decided to let him build his own small laboratory in one of the older tool sheds in the estate gardens. He would be allowed to start distilling, fermenting and brewing basic things to get some practice, to develop his taste buds and nose as primary tools of his future trade. He would also get in some flying on his broom, since he hadn't been able to have one at Hogwarts this year. That old Dumbledorian rule hadn't yet been changed, but was due for revision next year.

Nymphadora glared at Harry when he used her full name unpunished, because he's the Lord Black and he scared the bejeezus out of her. She'd seen the security recording of his intercepting & sending back Crouch's Avada, killing the cruel man in a cold second. With that under his belt, the boy was already heads & shoulders above her in combat practice, despite that she was getting fast tracked into the auror cadets without an extra preparatory year as had been the custom for several decades, due to Hogwarts' defense curriculum being unstable and diluted like rat piss. Her summer would be spent with her girlfriends in Diagon District, enjoying a small bit of her hard-earned freedom now that she was a legal adult. She would go to sleep-overs at her friends' places a few times. Come September, she'd be neck deep in auror boot-camp, so she wanted to enjoy herself first.

Hermione was uncertain about everything. Her parents had of course been informed about the family's past genealogy and honorable service to the Crown and Nation on the magical side of Britain. But that meant they were also aware of her status as the new Lady of the House, and officially emancipated by the Will of Magyck. She didn't have to live with them or follow their rules anymore, if she wanted out. Furthermore, she now had the money and properties to live on her own with the finances to pay her own staffers. With the way her parents gauged success and maturity, there was a good chance that they would in fact say "Well done! Good showing! Now, when are you moving out to concentrate on your chosen career?" The good side about professional parents was that she had a lot of freedom. The bad side was that there was precious little emotional attachment between them to hold the family together under these circumstances.

Harry, Susan and Nymphadora immediately offered her a place to stay until her affairs were settled enough to be safe and comfortable in her new home. Draco offered her politely to ask his mother to assist her, as a boy and girl of their ages, alone and out of view, could create a scandal that would fuel the already blazing social unrest of the plebes. Neville agreed with Draco, adding that his grand-mother tolerates his existence barely, she wouldn't accept any friend of his.

The young girl understood their situations and thanked them each, touched by their effort to help.

The House of Black goes Dark

(Harry Potter - theme)

July 1992
12 Grimmauld Place
London, England
Harry walked slowly through the mundane side of the vast train station at King's Cross, taking the
time to breathe in the air of civilization and modernity. Hermione walked besides him, looking
around fretfully as she tried to find either her parents or one of the valets from their home. She
didn't see her name raised above the heads of the crowd gathered at the waiting area, like so many
people did to guide their loved ones to them. Biting her lower lip in anxiety, the 12 year old girl
scanned the crowd fearfully until Harry whispered to her "You are emancipated and the Lady of
House, you can use a 'Point Me' or 'Blood Compass' to find them. The laws for underage sorcery
no longer apply to you. Take a breath and feed magic to the earrings I gave you at Yule, they will
show you the way."

Hermione did as he suggested, casting the Blood Compass first, then the Point Me to a servant of
my parents when she did find her family in the station. The pull from the small foci dangling from
her ears brought her to a young man, barely twenty years old, caucasian white, with green eyes and
brown hair cut in a prudent style. He was dressed in black trousers, a white button shirt and blue
waistcoat with a briefcase in hand. He didn't look aggressive or angry to have waited for the person
he was meeting. As Hermione and Harry came near him, he seemed to recognize the young woman
as he gave a formal bow from the neck towards her.

"Madam Dagworth-Granger? I'm Roland Xavier Holtzberth. I was sent by your parents." He spoke
in a slight rural accent from the Midlands. He put the briefcase on a visitor's bench to open it and
take out a thin folder, which he handed to Hermione.

The girl read through the file with her right eyebrow raising on its own the further she got into the
papers. After passing through the two dozen sheets at high speed, she closed the file and gave it
back, looking the young male from feet to head intently. Putting on her Wizengamot face, she
asked for clarification "So, my parents reacted to the situation by hiring you to be my personal
secretary to cover for me when I'm at school? And you'll be my driver when I walk the Mundane
Side of the world?"

Nodding happily, the young man replied "Yes ma'am! I'm what the Welsh Wiccan call a 'muggle in
the know' because my parents were both squibs who descended from other squibs. So, I went to a
special school that has half-magic and half-muggle courses. I can't use an external focus like a
wand or ring unless it was crafted with stored charges or permanent charms. I can however read,
count, write and speak a half dozen magical languages, engrave scriptworkes correctly and I've
been told I'm a deft hand with tools in either a workshop, garden or apothecary. My entire personal
file is at your parents' house, with my school reports and the commendation from my last employer.
He was the only one I worked for to date, after ending high school."

Hermione blinked both eyes once at the information, asking for clarification "Did you leave the
other posting because you wanted better conditions, or a higher profile employer? Or were you no
loner satisfied of the situation? It can't have been a bad thing since they gave you a formal letter to
recommend you."

Smiling sadly, Roland shook his head with a distant look in his eyes as he replied "No, it wasn't
bad, just time to move on. My first boss was a good woman who hired me right out of school for
pretty much the same job. She was a witch with the Green Sisterhood, born into the sect nearly two
centuries ago. She died three months ago, in late April at the age of 197. Spry old gal, she was!
And a temper gentle like a brook in spring. But she told me when she hired me that her time was
nigh. She felt Mother Gaia calling her. She passed at peace in her sleep. T'was a quiet funeral with
only other sisters present. She had no family left to mourn her, not at that age. So, she wrote the
letter around Valentine's Day, telling me she would be around to bother me much anymore. She's
the one who did the divination to find my next job. I only sent the one letter to your parents, before they even thought of putting an ad somewhere to find you the extra help. I reckon I scared the living lights out of both with that bit. Still, they met with my Boss about a week before she died, and that was the deal done. I started moving my stuff and working at their house in mid-May, after the funeral and will reading. Been there since."

Harry looked at the forlorn young man, softly praying to Hades in his mind for Sight and Truth, to be certain this wasn't a trap to kidnap or hurt Hermione. The spell returned a wave of positive and protective feelings, telling all would be right for his friend. He took hold of her hand to give it a light, supportive squeeze as signal to go with it.

Hermione took strength form her friend, asking "Have my parents decided that should live apart or do I still have a room over there? I haven't had time to visit any of the properties I inherited yet, and I need to find new house-elves since the old ones died much after the House was put in stasis. My ancestor Hector died three hundred years ago and I'm the only fully magical descendant since, so everything has to be reactivated, cleaned and stocked to be livable."

Nodding as he gestured towards the station's passenger exit, Roland responded easily "I gotta say your parents looked mighty pleased by the news about your inheritance. And their ancestry too, by what I saw of them. They haven't said a word of putting you out, but you shouldn't expect them home any more than usual, if you tag me meaning..."

"Ha," Hermione replied in understanding. She had brought reputation, honor and money to the family, but that was simply their expectations from her, regardless of magic, gender or age. As long as she behaved as fitted the rank and appearances of the household amongst their professional associates, they wouldn't feel the need to be present to mitigate her bad manners. It was nothing more or less than regular service inside the Granger home.

Smiling sadly at Harry, the young girl whispered "Maybe I'll be looking at the old manor sooner than later, then. I don't plan to live somewhere that I feel like an uncouth guest that overstayed their welcome at distant relatives' place instead of getting a hotel room. Plus, as soon as I get at least one elf, most of the mess will sort itself out... like magic..." she finished lamely in a poor attempt to lighten her own mood from the depression that was threatening.

Nodding, Harry escorted her to the old car that had been borrowed from the Granger's garage for the day, waving the two goodbye as the rolled away. The boy cast a discrete tracking charm on the car's rear bumper to find it on the country's map, later in the day. He would go and pay a silent visit to insure everything was going well, or at least peacefully in her family's house.

{ HP } --- { Home, sweet poisonous home } --- { HP }

Harry walked from King's Cross to as small alley where he could be hidden from the pedestrians and cars on the street. He slowly walked some twenty minutes northward, over to the location of his new home, at the rather shabby looking #12 Grimmauld Place, Borough of Islington, London, in a Muggle neighborhood that hid the decrepit wizarding house. It had been called Black Manor in some past life, but never truly deserved such an appellation. It was a townhouse built over two basements and four storeys plus attic in the style common in the 1800's all over the British colonies and influenced countries. The thing's floor plan was a nightmare to understand, especially when you took in the bevy of permanent space expansion charms to create secret passages and rooms.

Still, it was -a- home and much better than paying for a small room in a backwater country inn, just to store his trunk in peace, as that was his true home and pretty much the only one he needed to be happy. For now anyways. Sighing loudly in true pre-adolescent fashion, Harry shoved his hands in his pants pockets as he stood in the miserably maintained, decrepit public park that was supposed
to bring greenery and happiness to the small circular enclave. Instead, it gave a feel vaguely reminiscent of a funeral urn filled with faded, wilted flowers that stunk of decay. Looking over at the dreary, weathered façade of Grimmauld Place, the boy couldn't help the sarcastic thought thought that at least the buildings and park matched together harmoniously.

Taking a deep breath to steady himself, Harry crossed the narrow avenue to climb up the small stairs up to the front door, noticing the pair of small, ugly stone flower beds on each side of the masonry stairs and banisters. Those would need clearing out and replanting with things that would be able to endure London's climate without too much maintenance. Either an elf or the Pioneer could do that quickly enough. Sighing again as he noticed the large bronze door knocker in the shape of a basilisk head, he grumbled nastily about the Black ancestors in Parseltongue as he fished the overly decorative cast iron key from the man-purse at his belt. It was a useful little thing given to him by Neville at Yule, and practical for storing things that didn't fit in pockets but were too small to need a briefcase or rucksack.

As he was about to slot the key, the bronze basilisk blinked its genuine emerald eyes, asking in a sibilant voice "Who daressss enter the den of the sssserpent kingsss? Tell me or I will bite you! You will ssssufffffer from my venom mossssst horrriibly!"

Whelp, that was it. The Black Family were cliché Darkness followers barely fit for a cable movie. On a Wednesday night after the eleven o'clock news. And the infomercials.

Using his most noble, and snobby, Parseltongue accent, Harry replied that he was the Head of House, the Lord Black, regent Duke of the Zezetshire Cairnhills in the English Midlands. He presented his Sigil rings to the animated guardian, offering his three Houses for inspection.

The metal basilisk coiled itself vigorously in deep pride at belonging to such a powerful master that had so many nest under his fangs. The construct's feelings swelled even worse when Rehz Ib Fettach appeared on the boy's shoulder, glaring at the impudent door ornament for barring the march of his Master into his new home. All gleeful with hope and venomous thoughts of glory and almighty, the basilisk tasted the child's soul-aura to confirm, then immediately triggered the door to open without needing the key. It bowed as low as its position on the panel allowed it to as Harry walked by, giving him a feeling of murderous malevolence as he passed in front of its glowing green eyes.

The moment he was fully inside the vestibule, the door slammed behind him and the antique gas lamps mounted to sconces on the walls came alight, giving off a lugubrious glow that lit barely anything except dust, cobwebs, and furniture covered by dusty green sheets. Harry cleared his throat and called out "Jippsy! I have need of you."

The elf popped into being next to her master, looking around the new home with a mixture of growing horror at the dilapidated condition, but also tremulous joy at all the work and cleaning that she would be doing in the coming weeks. Truly Jippsy's master was kind to her, giving her such a monumental task to accomplish!

An obnoxiously loud pop was heard in the foyer just passed the inner door, declaring the arrival of another elf. He was male, very old, wrinkled and more brown than green, showing clearly he was in ill health after years of neglect and abuse. Seeing the boy with the Faerie Drake on his shoulder, the elf bowed until his nose touched the dirty, moth-eaten carpet, standing back up with a stern but not aggressive expression on his face. "I bees Kreacher, elf of the Black Manor for London. I bees in charge of this household. Are yous the new master Black?"

Harry answered by showing all his rings and calling notarized copies the official Heritage Blood-Tithe Rituals he had done at Gringotts to assume all titles, ranks, styles and positions correctly. The
elf read the thin folio quickly, handing it back with a shallow bow. He gestured the boy towards the inside of the house and up the stairs until the first landing, where a wizarding portrait of the last Lady of the House, Walburga Black. The elf announced politely "Mistress! Here be the new Lord Black. He comes to take House in hand. He has the goblin papers, too. He be the Lord of Potter and Peverell, too. And door-snake says he ssspeakssss!"

The decrepit, disheveled and sickly woman in the portrait animated, leaning forward against the lower part of the frame like a windowsill, thus showing the long, broken, nails that emerged from crooked fingers. Her hands and face were stained with liver spots and deep purple bags hung under her eyes. When she attempted a feeble smile, it only served to open the seeping cracks in her lips and display her rotting, blackened teeth. Harry nodded and tried to smile, wincing in sympathy for the old woman, wondering how long she could have suffered like this, that her magical portrait ended reflecting this awful image after her death?

"Yes, child. I know. I look frightful, and my temper is actually worse, on most days. Poor Kreacher had to suffer it long enough to attest. It was a cursed illnesses inflicted upon my body that ended rotting my brain, thus affecting my mind in the end. I died in 1985, alone and isolated except for loyal, worthy Kreacher who was by my side at my Passing. Sirius was out of England due to Dumbledore's machination, but he wouldn't have come to me even if he could have done so safely. I had not been a good mother, not even an acceptable one. And Orion was my cousin to the second degree by birth before he was my husband. I never knew how Sirius and Regulus got to be so healthy and stable, given how inbred and sickly our whole Family was."

Harry nodded, in sad admission to her words. "Yes, grand-mother by adoption. I knew this when I accepted the 'Blood Compact' inside my soul. There is a deep sickness buried in the bosom of the Black Lineage, dating back far behind us by several centuries. I don't know if we can even find the original sin or guilty person anymore. Professional diviners and Seers would be hard pressed to find anything accurate, let alone actionable. All we can do anymore is try to repair the damages and clean the Family enough to prevent further degradation for future generations."

Walburga's image gazed upon her only grand-child, the result of Sirius giving the Blood-Oath of godfatherhood and granting Harry three drops of blood during the ritual. The boy already had native Black blood from James' mother Dorea Black, but this Tithe confirmed his primacy in the heritage list. Since there were doubts about Lucius and Narcissa, poor Bellatrix was insane beyond even Family standards without any known children, and Andromeda was disinherited legally but not by magic, the burden of Lordship fell to Sirius, and now his godson.

"Tell me truthfully, child, how did my oldest son die? What was the cause?"

Harry closed his eyes, the old pain of abandonment and betrayal coming to the surface, but he took hold of it, strangled it and put it back in its coffin, in the crypt at the back of his soul. Opening his emerald green eyes, he locked gaze with the animate image and told her the raw, unvarnished truth of why and how her oldest child by birth had died in shame and pain.

Closing her eyes in pain as if she were really a living being, the image of Walburga Black seemed to be grieving for her lost child, judged by Magyck. Bowing low in her frame, she declared "I may be insane by birth and by curse, but you have my loyalty and that of the remaining House, my Lord Black. Thy will be done, in society, magick and Nature. Id mote est."

Nodding in acceptance, Harry turned to Kreacher who had watched, listened and learned the Power and strength of mind of his new Lord. He may be just 12 years old, but he was a true Lord in spirit, mind, skills and determination to be the only master of his life and destiny, except for the divinities he had chosen as patrons and guides. The elf bowed low, then stood at attention as much as his
sickly, elderly boy allowed him.

Harry declared in a strong voice, bearing the Power an authority of the Head of House and Lord of Black Blood-Law; "I forbid and recuse all rights of entry to the lands, properties, edifices and vaults that fall under the purview of Black blood, or were delegated to business management, to Albus Dumbledore, his blood-kin, his allies, his hirelings, his elves, and any follower or supporter of his sectarian creed and cause. Id mote est."

Taking a steadying breath, Harry pursued "Furthermore, I forbid and recuse all rights of entry to the lands, properties, edifices and vaults that fall under the purview of Black blood, or were delegated to business management, to Remus John Lupin, his blood-kin, his allies, his hirelings, his elves, and any follower or supporter of his creed or cause, regardless of any debts that my Failed late-godfather, Sirius Orion Black III, may have incurred or not finished paying before his justified death by Line-Defilement and Oath-Breaking. Id mote est.

{ HP } --- { Potenteste in domus nigra cruore est } --- { HP }

Pursing his lips in memory of the attacks against the Potter and Black properties that were publicly known, Harry gave one last command with venom dripping from his words. "Kreacher, my faithful servant, raise the estate's wards to siege-time strength and severity. Let any who challenge the sanctity and quietude of the Black Manor know pain before Death takes them. By the Blackness of my Blood, so did I declare. Id mote est."

Kreacher bowed low before his master, basking in the aura of a fully empowered Lord Black such as had not occurred in more than a century. He had been a wee elfling the last time that any with the strength of body, mind, magic and soul to command the formidable Black Blood-Law had set foot in this house. Truly, it was a day of joy, celebration and prayers to the Divines!

Without a single word of reply, Kreacher put the finger of his right hand in position, jut under his right eye to visualize the magick and effect properly, then snapped the mightiest, proudest snap of his two-hundred and eight years of life. Receiving the command from their Lord through his bonded servant, the tremendously potent, dark and cruel blood-wards of House Black answered the call that hadn't been issued since the building was erected and their functions tested. Invisible to the naked eye yet felt by all for two full city blocks around and under the streets into the bowels beneath London, the many layers of energy barriers coalesced into something that warding professionals and curse-breakers hold as a legendary crafting rather than an accomplished fact. Within seconds, the House of Black disappeared from public awareness, the edifice and surrounding gardens turning unplottable, invisible, undetectable, odorless, soundless, heat-less and all vibrations dampened. A twin-layered Fidelius ward composed of a blood-magic sorcery and a religious faith consecration plexed together into something that Dumbledore could not conceive of existing, let alone find or break in this life.

The outer protective layers locked into place; repulsions against muggles, squibs, wizards, priests, psionicists, house-elves from other Houses or groups, multiple types of creatures, any who spied for enemies, any who wished harm to the Black Family, any with violent intent, any with intent to betray or sell information to outsiders, and a Forbiddance against those named by Harry as Anathema to the Black Blood-Law.

The inner defenses were last to manifest; a powerful ward called 'Living Building' activated for the first time in two centuries, cleaning and repairing the structure of the house from decades of filth, debris, insalubrity and vermins. A permanent set of 'Unseen Staff' appeared, translucent but solid enough to move objects with strength and care, to arrange furniture, storage, consumables and prepare all the living quarters. In the basement, once the level was cleaned and repaired, an empty
bunker opened its walls to reveal hidden closets, cabinets and cupboards full of potions, components and medical equipments, then generated an 'Illusionary Infirmary Staff' to receive injured people for treatment. Powerful 'Storm Shield' and 'Projectile Repel' enchantments all around the estate's perimeter lit up, as similar localized versions on the doors and windows became four times stringer than before. Several small stone figurines throughout the house activated fully, actively purifying the air, water, food and medications in their vicinity from any poisons, maladies, drugs or impurities from being expired, preventing sabotage and treason from having effect on the defenders of the Manor.

Outside and inside the building, golems carved out of stone, iron or wood animated and began to patrol the estate. Covered in deeply engraved scriptworkes anchored to the constructs by the two refined Ember plugs that served as the golems' eyes, each statue was fully invisible, soundless, odorless, heat-less, and made no vibration in either the air, ground or furniture as it attacked. These monstrous creations were of differing shapes and sizes to keep enemies guessing wildly, and also wrapped in the foul dark aura caused by the permanent Cruciatius embedded in their cruel talons, fangs, horns and tail spikes. Each construct could also breathe out a cloud of gaseous curse that emulated Mummy Rot every ten minutes, or spit a brace of five 'Venomous Bullets' reaching up to 500 feet away every minute, due to their internal Ember crystal matrix.

In siege mode, he magical portraits of the House gained the ability to have wands and other foci appear in their image, according to what scene or people were painted. These could channel the magicks of the building with the same strength and ability as was programmed into the memorial matrix of the entities depicted, thus creating yet another layer for the Lord to depend on.

Harry stood in the main staircase of his House, feeling the wards awaken and raise around his person, caressing his soul-aura as they flared to full Power, eagerly awaiting the test of their faith and resolve in the newly installed Lord of the Black Blood. Any who dared would suffer beyond all compare before being released into the hands of Hades, if there was anything left to have.

Summer vacations 1992; a rude beginning

(Harry Potter - theme)

July 1992
Multiple locations
The British Isles & Europa

Young Harry Potter sat forlornly in the settee besides his bed, in the master suite of #12 Grimmauld Place, with Rehz curled on his lap like a scaly, ornery kitten with poisonous breath and delirious schemes. Gods but he loved that drake! It was in times like these that he realized just how much he had come to depend on his familiar for what remained intact of his sanity.

And, to his body and soul defending, he would never admit aloud just how much good it had done him to meet and befriend the people he had at Hogwarts. With only the small Faerie Drake and Tenebrous Pioneer for company over a few years, the kids at primary school or summer camps hadn't been enough to sustain his emotional growth and stability. He could see now that it was a bad kind of stubbornness on his part that had kept everybody at arms' length in those days.

Having the added company of Jippsy had helped heal his wounded soul and heart so much that most wizards in the magical communities would be ashamed of his weakness. He now understood
just how stupid and limited that mindset was. Dryskholl and Jippsy had done for his welfare things that no human ever could, or would even offer. It looked like Kreacher was on the fast track towards doing the same too. Harry smirked at the memory of the elderly elf being agog when Harry had spoken in the secret elven tongue with Jippsy, when he asked her to prepare the suite for him. It was hard to say which between Parseltongue and the elf dialect impressed the old servant more.

Harry verified the seal on the potion he took from the side table, then quaffed the vial in one go. It was time for his old ritual of learning a pair of languages again. This time he was going to do a complement to his potion from last august, Cyrillic – Greek, by absorbing the Cyrillic – Russian derived languages. For the month of August he would add to his Latinate knowledge with French, going from ancient to modern with a few of the important dialects like Provençal, Louisiannais or Québécois.

Harry had just put the empty vial back in the small service tray on the table when the wards of the estate informed him that an elf belonging to the Black Blood from a cadet branch wanted audience with the master of the House. Dobby, elf of Narcissa Malfoy. Frowning, the child released his Battlestaff to float in the corner by the bed, out of immediate sight, and called both Kreacher and Jippsy to attend the meeting. Once escorted, he made sure that his tool belt was invisible under his luxurious purple velvet housecoat, and that he looked relaxed, without worries despite carrying hard steel and destructive spells. Snort! The elf would have sensed the siege wards activate all the way across the planet because of his link to the Black Blood, or would have clued-in when he was magically forced to 'knock' and present himself instead of just popping into wherever he wanted to appear.

Nasty stuff, those Black Blood-Wards, but then again, the family knew full well how exactly it was that house-elves traveled such long distances unhindered, so they had prepared adequately.

Smirking in a superior way, Harry signaled Kreacher to accept the related elf into the suite, to give his message to the Lord Black in person. Coming from the Malfoys, this could be interesting or truly bothersome. Time would tell.

The elf appeared before Harry with a small 'pouf!' that was just loud enough to politely announce his arrival but not so rash as to disturb ongoing conversations in the room. That was another thing about the wards; they opened a transit window to the authorized spot for arrival but prevented any divinations or Sight from perceiving anything until the entity was inside the ward sphere and the layers had closed back over the minuscule hole that had passed the energy beam.

Dobby was old, much, much older than Kreacher could ever hope to live, but it wasn't visible on his skinny frame or facial features. He looked like he had been abused and damaged many times in his long life, bearing the marks of injuries and disease alike on his green skin. He may have managed to fool the weak senses of ordinary humans, but this was the Black Manor and he stood before the Lord Black himself. The almighty siege wards, built into the original fieldstone foundations in the late 1100's, could pass through the elf's disguises and faked attitude with laughable ease. If the sensors were calibrated right, there may not have been organized human societies on the Britannic Islands when this elf was born to the world. In fact, Harry was starting to feel that he was looking at a very early edition of the house-elf sub-race.

Addressing the unexpected visitor straight in the native tongue of his kind, Harry asked what he wanted in the House of Black. While he tried hard to not let it show, the information about the elf's true age and experience had shaken him badly. If the being learned and grew as normal living entities did, having been born some four millenia ago would account for an immense level of education, lived experience and magical power, even if he borrowed it from others to enact his
effects. This had to be approached with caution.

Dobby however bowed low, then slowly stood up, looking upon Harry with an odd sort of gleam in his eyes, the sort that the child had seen only in religious fanatics or the mentally ill who were completely disjuncted from reality by their superstitions and phantasms.

"I be Dobby of House Peverell, passed to House Potter by legal inheritance, then illegally sold to House Black by Albus Dumbledore, when he usurped the guardianship of Heir Peverell, Potter and Black. I could not show my true allegiance or power until this day, nearly six hundred years after the last living Lord Peverell passed into the arms of his patron god, Hades. Dobby has been waiting for a new Peverell to care for, awaiting and waiting, passing from menial jobs to worse menial jobs, until today. The false bond be broken, the lies of Bad master whiskers be burned and House Peverell can live again."

Harry blinked both eyes a few times as he processed the words from the poor maligned being, coming quickly to understand the situation. And his rage against the bearded wanker grew anew in such way that the small mythalar pillar under the house began to spin on its axis, gathering power to send a magnificently cruel dark curse across the country at the feckless procreate of diseased vermin that had pillaged his heritage to the point of injuring those loyal to him and his ancestors.

Taking a deep, carefully controlled breath, the child instinctively sent a thought to the power sink beneath the house, thanking its loyalty and readiness to serve, but asking that it be at peace for now. The time was scheming and tactics, striking would come later, at the proper time.

Harry was temporarily stunned to receive an actual answer from the ward-core, passing through the Black Blood-Law to reach him, assuring him of understanding and willingness to assist on creating those plots and machinations to destroy the enemies of the House. Jippsy had both hands to her mouth in astonishment at the deep connection her master had with his Families. Kreacher was smirking in a dark, fearsomely satisfied way that only a birthed Black could truly comprehend. And Dobby's eyes were ex-orbited, grown to the size of glowing soup bowls as he beheld the full strength of a true lord of magic roused from sleep, then gone quiescent again, knowing the time wasn't yet right to act in public.

But it would come.

Oh, it would come! And rotting blood would rain from the heavens unto the knaves!

"Tell me, faithful servant of my first House, how is it that you come to me this night? And why have you waited so long? I can sense your true and deep loyalty thrumming through the Peverell Blood-Law now that we are formally introduced. Why could I not feel you before?"

Dobby smirked nastily, explaining happily "It was dumb Dumbly-dorey's doings, master Harry Potter, sir. He tinker with what he knows not. He never bother to learn about house-elves, just like average wizards. Thinks elves serve by obligation to have magicks and nothing else. Stupid, short sighted magi, they all are. The House Peverell had other ideas! Yes, it did! No, the most masterful art of Peverell was that they undid the bastardy of the house-elf race. They undid the botched Key of Life that our originator had inflicted upon us, giving a few of our kind the chance to have full lives, even though we had to be slaves due to the laws in vigor. We were freed of birth and magic shackles, but not from the laws the tyrants made. So the Peverell founders had a brilliant idea; they helped us to mate with other, original elves, to produce elflings that were freer than their forebears. And thus, the race was freed, but at the same time, it was wholly bound to the House and Blood-Law of Peverell, for all times and realities they would exist."

Harry sat gobsmacked, well mouth agape like a gold fish out of its bowl, looking at the elf as if he had just declared that the species should trade in its traditional linen tea-towel togas for modern
plastic trash bag tunics. It took the boy a good few minutes to reboot his mind into functioning order, and the combined efforts of Rehz smacking his arm with his tail and Jippsy bringing a full tea set for five persons before he was amongst the cognizant. Thanking Jippsy for her service, he offhandedly explained to Dobby that he had always felt a deeper connection to house-elves than humans since he met Dryskholl, so he systematically insisted that all elves be treated at least as well as human employees or contractors when in his presence. The goblin account managers at Gringotts found this atavism hilarious, but never questioned it, not even in his absence. Harry thought that he now understood why that was.

Studiously ignoring the smirking elves and dragonnet, he fixed his night tea with cream, honey and a generous dose of excellent Dwarven brandy from the upper Scottish Isles. Only to taste the cuppa and spit it out, swearing aloud he'd just poured a quarter ounce of fine hard booze in it, so where in Hallowed Nepenthe's catacombs had the liquor gone to? A smidgen of bratty humor from the mythalar pillar under the basement echoed around the wards, embalming the child and his friends like a mother's laughter. If said mother was an old, wrinkly, gray-skinned witch with warts and crooked teeth that enjoyed cursing the neighbors with living nightmares for fun.

Egads, but he loved the Blackness of his Blood and all it entailed!

It was a taste acquired harshly, yes, but so what? It was well worth it all.

Sending an answering pulse of mixed amusement and warning, he tasted the tea again, finding it to his proper liking. The wards had only suppressed the taste, not the active ingredients. A small advantage more for the Lord, if he needed to discretely potion the food or drink of recalcitrant guests bent on defrauding or attacking him inside his home. His ancestors really were paranoid, but then again, the existence of Dumbledore and the current state of the Family meant that they hadn't pushed the arts of prevention and scheming enough. That would be remedied soon.

Taking a good mouthful of his doctored tea, the 12 year old gazed amusedly at Rehz who sat on his haunches with a human teacup clutched between both fore-paws to have his own boozy treat before bed. Then again, with his psychedelic breath weapon gas, mundane alcohol wouldn't be a threat or hindrance to him, more of a simple spice, just like cinnamon or nutmeg for Harry.

Dobby waited for his master to be seated at rest and ready mentally before adding a few more little juicy tidbits from the distant past to make him understand events.

"You see master Harry Potter, sir, back in the deep antiquity, the Peverell founders had managed to break the fell powers of the evil necromancer who had created our race, but knew to keep it hush-hush or the clans and first churches of the Living Gods would have wanted them dead, after thy had taken their secret sciences from them. So they agreed to keep it silent, and only those elves who descend from those Blood-Law-Elves, or a first generation mixed birth, would ever know about the facts, but never discuss them outside the estates of Peverell. And they could never speak of it without a living, or undead, human member of the House by their side to anchor the Fidelius that covers the secrets and faith of the Family and its servants. That is why even when some elves - know- things or have a very old age, they can never speak of it, even in the hobbitons or elf glades where most of our race keeps the children and elderly, safely away from the evils and servitude of the human worlds."

Since Harry was again to stunned to comment, Dobby pursued his laundry-list of revelations that unraveled the already complex structure of wizarding history.

"The three good brothers who were the sons of the first Lord and Lady Peverell saw what their parents had wrought, how holy it was, and were in such awe that they immediately understood the grave peril, if it were found out by the villager elders. They would report to the clans and churches
the danger to their prestige and Power, for that was what house-elves meant back then. So, the sons each created a powerful artifact of the necromancer's art, to obfuscate the true masterpiece of the Family; the so called Three Deathly Hallows. Nothing but decoys to bother the plebes. Strong yes, especially compared to the pitiful sticks and runestones that were all anybody had to fight with back then, but still just decoys."

Snorting in amusement as his eyes looked to a past only he could see, Dobby continued softly; "The fabled Death Stick, Wand of Destiny, Penultimate Focus... Bah! Nothing more than a piece of alder wood with a simple braided thestral hair core and some ash from cremating the bodies of curse-bitten vampires and werewolves, glued together with Nightsoil tilled by a Tenebrous Pioneer under a Black Moon. You could do the same, master Harry, if you's wanted to try. You's Battlestaff has more Power and abilities than the old Backscratching Twig, as Antioch called his creation."

Huffing in further amusement, Dobby said "Cadmus was ashamed of his Nut of Human Dumbness, because it worked in the inverse of any logic or magic. Inside a True Noble Dragon, in the brain, between the lobes, is a perfectly round, white gland called Pearl of Wisdom that acts for their species the way that the 'Blood Compact' or Blood-Adoption acts for humans. But, the necromancer had studied the way this Pearl worked, so he made a small, round, black stone that does the opposite. Legends call it The Resurrection Stone, but it doesn't touch the Realm of the Dead at all. It just scans the user's soul-aura to find factum about his deepest desires and who they tie to, then projects a fake phantom of them next to the unlucky fool. It worked so well as a decoy that even some of the Peverell Family fell for its lure, over time. Imbeciles, the lot of them. The Grimoire, and later the 'Blood Compact' warns of these items being useless. But children never listen until they burn their fingers on the hot stove, don't they?"

Dobby looked into empty air as he reminisced his own master, the man first human to ask him to serve his Family; "But the one who crafted the most useful item was Ignotus, a good man and husband, a better father and great friend. He was my master, but he never dominated my kind nor asked us to commit indignities in his service. He wrought the very first Cloak of Invisibility, the one that all others are made to emulate, but never achieve fully. Recent alchemists have tried to use the shed hairs of animals that are naturally invisible to weave cloth then fashion a cloak. What a stupid idea! And long and painful for no reason. Ignotus did it simply and efficiently, in a way that endures to this day, after almost four millenia. He took thestral skin and tanned it thinner than vellum, then used spells to cut it as thin as wool thread after spinning on the wheel. He buried the bobbins in a patch of Nightsoil in the garden for a year, letting the Tenebrous Pioneer till the patch each time he passed the zone during his duties. At the end of the year, the magical but mortal skin filaments had been manipulated by the Minor God so many times that they had been transmogrified into Funeste Relics of Hadean Power. It was then left to his good mother to weave the bolt of cloth, and his wife cut and fashioned the cloak's basic shape, giving it the look of what the Tenebrous Pioneers wear. Then, he steeped the formed garment into a vat of enchanting oil to which he added holy oils of the cult of Hades and Living Blood of his own hands in Willing Tithe. This blessed the cloak with a permanent religious Fidelius ward that was anchored to the filaments and the blood-oil at the same time. Only those who see the wearer under the cloak at least once in their life will ever be able to use spells to detect its presence, but not see what's under unless it is the person they first saw with it. Easy process, if a mite long."

Dobby suddenly tilted his head to the side, as if listening to something in the distance, before excusing himself to answer mistress Narcissa. It was important to act as if they were still his owners, at least until master Harry Peverell – Potter – Black was ready to reveal himself openly.

The excited, truly venerable house-elf... No! Blood-Law-Elf... Popped out of reality, traveling through the Neverland dimension to respond his mistress' demands.
In disappearing so suddenly, the elf had left the human child and Faerie Drake with so many damned questions that it wasn't even funny anymore. Until Harry saw the expression of pure, unadulterated glee residing on Kreacher's face. Every Black instinct inside Harry was screaming to get out of the room to preserve his sanity and health. Nothing good could come of elves who had such mien on their visage.

Except that Harry's experiences with house-elves have always been much better, and much more fruitful, than those with any human to date. Maybe it would change later, but now that was the state of things. So he stayed, and listened to the elderly elf plot dastardly things with his younger housekeeper. It was after that last discussion that he withdrew into his trunk, his true home, with a migraine, spinning head, whirling eyes and nausea enough that even the stomach soothing potion just didn't want to work on him.

Bherk!

At least he wasn't actually sick or anything. So why did he have the damnable feeling that he and Rehz had just heard the Unspeakable uttered aloud inside the sanctity of the Black Blood-Wards?

Well, Dobby wasn't finished with his stories, so he'd be back. Not like he had much of a choice, since Harry was the only Peverell who was alive and magical at the same time. And he was also blessed by Hades, which seemed to be an important feature, in a House full of necromancers and their support staff.

Gods but his life was getting weirder than a drug dream! Momma! Come help your boy!

Preview of chapter 3;

Harry's trying to swallow and digest everything that Dobby has told him, but there's more coming, and then things get really wonky.

After a few meetings and July passed by at duel-casting speed, Dobby arrives in early August with a dire warning. A cruel, evil plot against Harry Potter awaits at Hogwarts, and the boy won't be able to defeat or bypass it, not with the Croaker Brothers and treasonous Unspeakables behind everything.

This places Harry before a hard, gut-wrenching decision; as September 1st arrives, will he go to Hogwarts at all, and if he doesn't, what happens to his relatives and friends who do?

So many plots, schemes and machinations abound, but all have forgotten two capital facts in all this convoluted Minotaur's dream of a labyrinth: Harry's Blood is truly Darker than Black, and Dobby has almost 5,000 years of secrets in his Bag of Holding that nobody except a few liches or Noble Dragons are still aware of.

And nobody asked the goblins what they think, but that's coming too, as sure as taxes and death.

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