## Potters Stand United

**by** [fairywm](http://archiveofourown.org/users/fairywm) *(orphan_account)*

### Summary

A fierce Lily protects her twins from the manipulations of the Headmaster. But who is that crazy lady that only the boys can see and hear?
Disclaimer: I don’t own Harry Potter that pleasure belongs to J.K. Rowling and all the people she pays to have it make money for her.

AN: A quick thank you to my betas Raxicoricofallipitorius and alix33, any mistakes left are my own.

AN’s (for future chapters): Okay so it was pointed out to me that Satellite Internet wasn’t around then, and I know, I was around then. I’ve also brought computers up to modern speed; Internet searches, web pages and such so they have a concrete way to showing pure-bloods what Muggles do. I did do the research, so I am waving my artistic license and making it a reality. Sorry if that puts you off, but it is needed for the plot.

Also I’ve been informed that Sally, my OC, can be taken as a Deus Ex Machina and she sorta can. The Potters and their friends will fight their own battles and solve most of their problems with logic, but they will be given advice from Sally. If that puts you off then please don’t read any further.

One last thing, I am a passive/aggressive person by nature, it shows in my writing. I am attempting to show what a good family and teamwork can do so most things will turn out for the better. If you don’t like it don’t read.

Hphphp

Sometime in 1980, a quick narration.

“The one with the power to vanquish the Dark Lord approaches... born to those who have thrice defied him, born as the seventh month dies... and the Dark Lord will mark him as his equal, but he will have power the Dark Lord knows not... and either must die at the hand of the other for neither can live while the other survives... the one with the power to vanquish the Dark Lord will be born as the seventh month dies ” (Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix by J.K. Rowling)

This prophecy was made to Albus Dumbledore the Headmaster of Hogwarts when he was interviewing Sybill Trelawney for the divination position in his brother’s tavern the Hog’s Head. Voldemort was told the first two lines by Severus Snape who was a new recruit in the ranks of the Dark Lords Death Eaters, and wanted to secure a better position, not knowing that this prophecy could condemn his childhood friend.

Though he had a pretty good idea who the prophecy might be about, Dumbledore didn’t tell anyone any more than what Voldemort knew. He didn’t want them to go against him and raise a child that was powerful without his help, he felt only he would be able to guide a child strong enough to vanquish a Dark Lord.

Lily and James Potter, however, were not stupid; they knew Dumbledore had a problem with keeping things close to his vest and knew there was more to the prophecy than what he was telling them. So they went to the Department of Mysteries and listened to the prophecy. The only reason they could is because the person that was the prophecy spoke about was not identified and would not be until the children were born. They took the Longbottoms for the same reason as their child was due around the same time as Lily’s twins were, if Lily were to carry until term. When they heard it each family started planning.
“Hello Headmaster, what can I do for you today?” James said as he opened the door one summer morning. His wife, Lily, was not feeling well, as one can imagine, since she was due in two months. The twins she was carrying could be born at any minute. “I don’t think now is a good time for a visit, Lily isn’t very chipper this morning.”

“Ah, James, it is such a beautiful morning that I thought now would be a wonderful time to pay a visit. To the matter at hand, as you know Lily will be giving birth any time now, this has me concerned and I was wondering what your family was planning to do to keep the young ones safe?” The elderly man said as he gently shouldered his way into the house, ignoring the last part of James’ statement.

The living room was quaint: only a couch, two chairs and a coffee table littered the medium sized room. They were all done in mute browns and gold. A nice large floral rug was seen peeking out from under the couch and coffee table; two matching smaller ones were thrown under the chairs. Scenic pictures of the ocean side lined the walls, with the brass, gas light fixtures, that were common in all wizarding households.

Lily was perched on the sofa with her swollen bare feet up on the table in front of her resting on a pillow. She did not look like she would be moving anytime in the near future. “How are you today, my dear?” Albus said, taking the chair across from her.

“How do you think I’m doing?” Lily snapped rudely, it wasn’t her fault that the man hadn’t listened to James. He was warned. “I feel like I’ve swallowed a house, my feet are swollen and it seems like I’m forever peeing or eating. I just want this to all be over, the quicker the better,” she bemoaned like mothers all over the world tend to do this late in pregnancy.

“You’ll have to forgive Lily, Headmaster,” James said, joining his wife. He grabbed her ankles and swung her feet around and put them on his lap so he could rub them. “She is not feeling well right now. Perhaps you can come back at a better time, maybe after the boys are born and we get better settled here. Then she might not be so crabby,” James chuckled, earning a dark look from his wife.

“Don’t talk about me as if I wasn’t here, James. Unless you want to spend the next two months sleeping on the couch,” the pregnant woman snapped. “Besides I like this little house, it’s comfy.”

They had just moved to the cottage in Godric’s Hollow, because James’ family home was still being repaired after the Death Eater attack, just a month before, which had killed his parents. The couple still mourned over their loss. Had it not been for the fact that Lily was to deliver soon, they would be more sorrowful. They had been at the healers at that time, and were sorry that they couldn’t be there for his family. But since Lily was carrying twins the closer she got to her due date the more often she had to go to the healer.

Since the manor was old, it needed to be repaired carefully, so that it would be just the way it was before the attack. James wanted his boys to have an ancestral home to grow up in. Until that time, they were staying in the cottage, which had been purchased for their honeymoon the year before. The cottage was two stories high and had three bedrooms. They were making the largest bedroom into a nursery for the twins. They would have the babies sleep in the same room, until they were older.

Magical twins often remain together so that a bond could grow between them, making them magically stronger. Right now, the Potters were working with Sirius, Remus and Peter to put up wards on the cottage. However, wards took time to erect, since you can only put up one at a time, and only one per week. That way the ones you cast first would mesh with the new one.
“Alas, I was hoping that you would have time for me,” Dumbledore said with that grandfatherly tone of voice he took when he wanted people to not disappoint him. “I will try to come again at a later date to discuss what you will be doing to protect your boys from Voldemort,” ignoring the flinch, Lily never saw the need to get scared when the name was mentioned. “As you are aware, he will be coming after whichever child is born as the seventh month dies. And since both you and the Longbottoms have faced him three times and survived, it is probable that one of your children is in danger. As you know there was a spy in the tavern when I heard the prophecy. Regrettably, I know not how much was heard, I do believe it was only the first two lines. I would tell you the rest but I don’t want to endanger your family any more than they already are. I only want to insure that your families are safe.”

“I understand that, Headmaster, I just don’t think now it the time. She’ll only get worse has the pregnancy progresses.” James said as he continued to rub Lily’s feet, ignoring her when she kicked him. “We’re almost there, aren’t we Lily-flower?” he said consoling his wife, trying to keep her temper at bay. “You’re doing so well. Do you need anything to help make you more comfortable? You know Alice is due soon too. Maybe we can get Frank to bring her by and you two can compare what you are going through and talk about what horrible husbands you have for getting you this way in the first place. Will that make you feel better?” James said in a gentle teasing tone of voice, as he watched Lily lower her feet and tried to get up from the sofa, and then he helped her stand, always the supportive daddy-to-be.

“Yes, I think a good session of husband bashing might be just what we need this close to the due date. You should ask him after you see the Headmaster out,” Lily said as she gave a glare to the headmaster. She then waddled out of the room to either use the loo for the hundredth time that day or to get something to eat. You can never tell with her anymore.

“As you can see, Headmaster, we’re not up for talking about depressing things right now. Like I said, you should probably come back after the boys are born. Take heart in knowing that we are putting up as many wards as we think we can get away with here. The last one we’re putting up is the Fidelius, I’m not going to tell you who the secret keeper is going to be, but Sirius, Remus and Peter are helping. I’ll see you when the next Order meeting is called,” James said as he guided the headmaster gently but firmly out the door.

“I will endeavor to gain an audience with you when that time comes. Congratulations once again, my dear man. Please, let me know if there is anything I can do for you and your family” the Headmaster said as he let himself be guided away, knowing he would not be able to talk to this couple anymore today. Maybe, he would attend the Longbottoms.

In the end James did call Frank Longbottom on the Floo and asked him to bring his wife Alice over to the cottage in the next day or so. He let them know of the meeting with the headmaster and wanted them over so they could go over their plans. He hoped that between them and each family’s Grimoire, they could find something to protect the children.

He didn’t really trust the headmaster completely, as the old man was prone to playing with other people’s lives. They knew there was a spy in the Order, but Dumbledore refused to make everyone take a vow stating they hadn’t turned nor wouldn’t turn to Voldemort. So they had to do their best with what they had.

Hphphp

AN: I really dislike MOST of the WBWL stories that make Harry either grows up neglected or with Petunia. I feel that if Lily were the fierce person that she is portrayed as in canon then there is no way that she would abandon her child. So here is my take on that genre.
The Prophecy Children Born

AN: there is no sixth floor of St. Mungo’s, but I need somewhere magical for the kids to be born. I’d like to thank alix33 for going through this for me, but any mistakes are my own. But, hey if you see a mistake or something comes to question feel free to let me know, I’m pretty mellow about stuff like that.

Disclaimer: I don’t own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belong to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her.

Hphphp

July 30, 1980 around 10 p.m. St Mungo's Hospital for Magical Maladies and Injuries, maternity ward sixth floor

“Oh Alice,” a very pregnant Lily gushed. “He’s such a handsome young man. What are you going to name him? I know you two were stuck on a few different ones, which did you decide on?” she asked, her long red hair falling past her shoulders, as she tried to lean over her rather large belly, to see over the new mother, to take a peek at the newborn boy.

“We decided on Neville, so his name is Neville Franklin Longbottom,” Alice said with pride, as she looked fondly at her baby boy. It had been an easy delivery, not like poor Lily who had been here for days now. “How are you, Lily? Aren’t you due any minute?” the new mom asked, holding the newly named Neville up so that Lily could see him better. Lily could make out wisp of curly blonde hair, peeking from under the sleeping cap they put on all newborns. “Maybe you should sit down,” Alice suggested then remembering what her nurse had told her added. “Or better yet, take a short walk, you’ve been standing there for hours, your feet have got to be hurting. Not that I don’t want you here, you are Neville’s godmother, after all. But you need to move around. Go on, Lily, take a short walk — you need to get the circulation going.” She suggested to the other woman then glanced at James to support her.

“Thank sounds like a good idea, Alice. Come on, Lily-flower, let’s see if we can’t get these two to be born soon. A walk will be just the thing the mediwizard ordered,” James said taking her gently by the elbow and trying to guide her away from the baby. “Come on, sweetie, don’t you want to have these two born soon? You know what the mediwizard said: some walking will do you good.” And with that he led her out the door.

“But I want to see my godson, James,” Lily complained trying to get back into the room. “Why do I have to go for a walk, my feet are swollen, and shouldn’t I be sitting?” she grumped, but reluctantly followed her husband down the hall, knowing what they were telling her was fact.

“Come on, Lily-flower, you’ll feel better, I promise,” James cooed and with her elbow still gently in his grip he guided her further down the hall and towards the room set up for them. They had been in the hospital for two days now, waiting for Lily to go into labor. She was one of the rare mothers who carried her twins to full term and they wanted to make sure they were not caught unaware when the boys were ready to be born. She had been having Braxton-Hicks contractions for weeks now, and after being sent home three times, the hospital decided it was close enough to the due date to have them stay here. It wasn’t busy this time of year and it was the Potters' money paying for it, so who were they to complain.
The next night Lily went into labor as well. At 11:55 p.m. Harry James Potter was born. At 12:03 a.m. Gary Charles Potter was born. When the mediwizard put down the time for Gary and both parents were shocked that the time marked on Gary certificate read 11:59 a.m.

“Lily, did you see that?” James whispered to his wife after the mediwizard left the new parents alone to bond with their children. “I wonder what that was all about. Do you think it might be fate changing the time like that? Do you think we should tell anyone?” his voice showed his concern. His face took on a firmer look, as if reaching some important decision. “I think we should leave it alone,” he said with a decisive nod, “that way Albus will not have any reason to pick one over the other. Our boys and Alice’s boy could be said to be born as the seventh month dies. I don’t want any of them singled out.”

“You’re right. I think we should leave it alone,” the new mother said, just as unwavering as her husband. “We’ll raise both boys exactly the same. What one gets so does the other, plus we’ll make sure Neville is treated just as fairly. Well, other than what Harry receives when you die, after all he is your heir and all. Although, Sirius said if he doesn’t have children, then he wants Gary to be his heir. So that should balance it out. Not that I don’t want Sirius to have kids,” she said hastily, not wanting bad luck to fall on a friend just so her son gained. “Just that, you know, if he doesn’t, then Gary will inherit something too. And we know Neville will be Frank’s heir, so all the boys will be on even ground, so to speak. We’ll talk more about that later. For now get your friends and let’s celebrate the boys’ birthday,” Lily demanded as she cuddled her boys close, the feeling of doom was closely approaching and she wanted to love her boys as long and as hard as she could.

James did as he was told and soon brought Sirius and Remus into the room. Peter had yet to show up, something about taking care of his mother. They all loved Peter—he was such a good friend and good son to his mother. So, they forgave him for not being there. “Remus, I’d like you to meet your godson, Harry James Potter. He’s the one with the purple band around his wrist,” the proud father said pointing to the child in Lily’s right arm.

You couldn’t tell the boys apart, they both had dark curly hair and both were looking around the room with bright unfocused green eyes. “Sirius, I’d like you to meet your godson, Gary Charles Potter, the one with the green. Now,” his voice took on a serious lilt, “as you know you’ll be sharing responsibility with the Longbottoms as Alice will be godmother to both boys.” James said proudly showing off his first born children as they lay in Lily’s arms.

As a pure-blood, having an heir was very important, most were very lucky to have one child let alone twins. He only knew of two other set of twins born around this time and one wasn’t from this country. It was too bad they had lost the Prewitt twins earlier that year thereby ending that line. They would have had a great time helping raise their sister’s twin sons and the other four boys, of course. Molly was a miracle among pure-bloods as she had had six children so far and it didn’t look like she was going to stop any time soon.

James sighed and continued, “I just wish we had one more child for Peter to be godfather to, but Peter said he understood. Maybe our next baby.” He was looking forward to having a large family, maybe a girl for the next one, which would suit the shy friend better.

“Look at my godson, Remus. He’s better looking than yours,” Sirius said as he gazed fondly at Gary, not really meaning it, but wanting to brag anyway. “Look, he has his mother’s eyes, let’s hope he has her eyesight as well, eh James,” he said with a smirk and ribbed James in good humor.

“Sirius, you moron, they look exactly alike. The only way we know the difference is the colored band on their wrist,” Lily complained, she wasn’t in the mood for Sirius right now. The man was never serious, no pun intended. She had been up for hours with Alice and then with her own labor
and it seemed like days since she slept. Now all she wanted to do was sleep, which is why she had James bring them in now so they could get it over with. “Remus, if something happens to us, you have to make sure that the boys stay together and stay sane. I’m counting on you to keep a leash on this mutt,” she said as pointing to Sirius after she handed Gary to his godfather. Then she handed Harry to his godfather and sunk down into the pillows. Now that she knew that the boys were healthy and fed, she really needed to sleep. She only shut her eyes for a minute and out she went.

“Shhh,” James whispered to the clucking godfathers, he put a finger to his lips, “it looks like it has all finally caught up with her. Let’s take the boys over here and see if we can’t get them to sleep as well. I know I’m tired,” he said after kissing his wife on the forehead, he guided his friends to the nursery part of the room, where there were two rocking chairs and one solid comfortable armchair.

“Don’t you two look so proud;” James said with a grin, “like you did all the work in bringing the into the world.” He took the armchair since he didn’t have a baby to rock. It was comfortable enough to sleep in, he should know he used it for the last few nights.

“Well, I guess, I’ll let you be proud. Remember, what we talked about we don’t want the boys spoiled” James said firmly, gaining the attention of the two distracted godfathers. “We want them to learn how to be responsible. However, if they’re so inclined, we can teach them all about the pranking we did in school. But I don’t want them to be bullies like we were. It was too close a call that night with Snape. He or Remus could’ve been killed and I don’t want them to ever experience that. That was a horrible feeling,” He grimaced in remembrance when Sirius told Snape how to get to the tunnel under the Whomping Willow. Snape almost died when he found Remus in his werewolf form. If James had not rescued him, both men probably would have died. Snape from the werewolf and Remus from the Ministry.

“It’s okay Prongs, I’ll do as Lily says and make sure that we don’t spoil these two angels. I’ll try and keep Padfoot on a leash,” Remus promised with a whisper —ignoring the indignant “Oi,”— as he looked at Harry with fond and gentle eyes, he gently rocked the baby to sleep. He had never believed that anyone would trust him with their child, yet here he was holding a precious boy not even a day old. “You know you were in the wrong that day, Sirius. If Snape had been killed or worse, turned. I’d be dead right now. And we’d not be here enjoying this time with our godsons. So I’ll make sure that that never happens to them if I can help it.”

“I know” Sirius said his head dropped in shame, “and I tried to apologize to Snape, but my owls returned unanswered. When you asked me to be godfather to your youngest, I was so completely blown away that I wanted to make sure that all my guilt was extinguished. So I had nothing that could be held over my head,” he said cuddling Gary close to his chest, vowing to do whatever it took to make sure these boys lived long, happy and healthy lives.

“You know,” Sirius said after a pause, “no matter what my mother says, if my parents die I’ll be the Lord Black. Grandfather passed away about a month ago and he named me heir when my father passes. It was a magical will so my mother can’t overturn it. For some reason he didn’t want Regulus to be the Lord of the Black family. I think he wanted the Black to become the Grey family they once were. I’m not sure; I didn’t get a chance to talk to him before he died. I want Gary to be my heir unless I have children of my own. So far that hasn’t happened and I’m not holding my breath that it will. As many women as I’ve been with, I should’ve had at least one bastard child out there,” he concluded, also rocking his godson to sleep. And wouldn’t that put his parents’ nose out of joint naming a bastard his heir, or even someone not in the immediate family. And Sirius so loved making his family angry at him.

“I know, Sirius, we talked about this already and I have no problem with you taking Gary as heir,” James said closing his eyes and leaning his head back onto his chair. “I’ll have Harry here as mine.
It’ll be good that they both have something to look forward to, so they have a secure future. We’re going to want to make sure they understand the responsibility that comes with these titles.” He was so tired; maybe, he would just take a nap for a little while. The guys would take care of the boys he was sure of it. He trusted them above all else. “I’m going to take a nap you guys. When the boys go to sleep there are the cribs over by Lily, or you can continue holding them. If they start crying wake either me or Lily up. Or you can call the nurse and she’ll help you. I hope you’ve been practicing changing nappies because you won’t get out of that duty.”

“Go to sleep, daddy,” Sirius teased, seeing how tired his friend was. “We’ll take care of the boys. No one will hurt them while we are here. We might just head down the hall and see if Frank and Alice are awake and introduce all the kids together. They’ll be growing up together after all; they should meet as soon as possible.”

“Ummmhmm, whatever you think is best, Padfoot. Make sure the boys…,” James trailed off as he fell asleep, his head lolling back on the chair in what looked to be an uncomfortable position.

“Come on, Moony,” Sirius whispered getting up and cradling his sleeping godson to his chest. “Let’s go see the Longbottoms and show off our godsons to them.” He gently swayed Gary to make sure he stayed asleep.

“Good idea, Padfoot, let’s do that and we should see if we can get in touch with Peter so he doesn’t miss all of this joyfulness, I’m sure his mother can do without him for an hour or so,” Remus said as he followed Sirius out the door, making sure Harry was secure in his arms.

“Yeah, I didn’t know she was so sick. He always seems to be helping her nowadays. He is such a mama’s boy. But I guess that makes him a good guy. Tell you what, I’ll try and call him after I hand this little guy off to Frank.” And with the two friends went to introduce the Potters to the Longbottoms.

Hphphp

AN: Just a quick note so you guys don’t think I’m a moron or something, I know that babies are usually born with blue eyes, however for the sake of this fic; magical babies are born with the eye color they will have when they get older. Also the Black timeline of deaths is mixed to fit my timeline. See I have an artistic license, shows blank piece of paper. Well it still works, it’s magical.
The Prophecy Begins

AN: I'd like to thank my beta alix33 for going over this; however, any mistakes are of course my own. I do read over the chapter's three times, sometimes more, but I know I don't catch everything. If you see something that doesn't make sense or is a plot hole, feel free to tell me.

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Hphphp

October 31, 1981

They felt the wards fall and the children started crying, knowing something bad was going to happen. The older Potters now knew Peter had betrayed them. Peter Pettigrew, who they thought was a devoted friend, had been the Secret Keeper for the Potters. He had been trusted to keep the secret of where the house was hidden. If he didn’t tell you, or write it down, you wouldn’t be able to find the Potter’s house in Godric’s Hollow. Either Peter was the spy or he was tortured to reveal the Secret. James was going with spy, because everyone thought Sirius was the Secret Keeper, so there had been no reason for Voldemort to target Peter. It was the way they planned it, so if Voldemort was here than they had been betrayed.

“Lily, he is here. Take the boys and run, I’ll try and hold him off,” James yelled over the scared and crying boys. He pulled his wand and stood in front of the stairs, hoping that his wife and children made it to the nursery where they should be able to Portkey out. They had set it up so that the emergency Portkey would go through the wards from a certain spot in the nursery, as long as no one had set up additional wards.

Lily ran up the stairs one child on each hip, just as the front door blew open. She sprinted to the nursery and tried the emergency voice activated Portkey, but it didn’t work. Peter must have informed Voldemort of their plans, confirming he was indeed a spy. Damn him. Lily put the children down in one crib, away from the door, so they were both behind her when she would confront Voldemort. She would face death before she abandoned her children. She knew if she died protecting them, they would hopefully be safe.

They had set the spell up in the nursery just in case this had happened. Frank and Alice found it in their Family Grimoire. It was a chancy spell, that only had a forty percent chance of working, but if it would save the children, then they would do it. The Longbottoms had the same setup for Neville. Neither family had let anyone know this part of the plan. She stood in front of her children and waited wand in hand, couldn’t let the Dark Idiot know she wasn’t going to fight.

James was fighting Voldemort, he knew he wasn’t as powerful as this so called Lord, but he’d try and hold him as long as he could to give Lily time to activate either the Portkey or set up the spell. He and Voldemort had been exchanging spells for five minutes now, the living room was marred with scorch marks, and James had been backed half way up the stairs. Cursing Peter for his treachery, he stood his ground. He would die before he would let this mad man kill his family.

Voldemort sent a blasting curse at James and it missed, but it did hit the wall beside him. James tried to get out of the way, but knocked his head into the railing when he ducked and fell unconscious to
the floor. Voldemort, not caring whether the man was dead or knocked out, walked right past him—he was here for the child. He went up the stairs to where he could hear the children crying. He had a prophecy to stop.

Lily stood her ground when the so-called Dark Lord entered the room. “Not my children, please take me let my children live,” she begged. It was part of the spell you had to ask for your child’s life and offer yours instead to activate the spell.

“Stand aside, you stupid girl, I only want your children. Stand aside.” Voldemort motioned for Lily to move aside so he would have a clear shot at the twins.

“No, not my children, I’ll do anything, but spare my children.” Of course, Lily didn’t move. She would never abandon her kids.

“You foolish woman, I would have spared you, Avada Kedavra,” yelled the Dark Lord and Lily fell to the floor. “Severus asked that you be spared. He knew that I would not spare the children, but he asked, more like begged, for your and your husband’s life. He said it was so he could get his revenge on your husband, but I knew he was lying. No one lies to the Dark Lord; his screams were well worth it. I was going to spare you and then kill you in front of him. But, you had to interfere and now your whole family will pay the price,” Voldemort said to Lily’s corpse, as her soul watch with mournful eyes, knowing there was nothing she could do now, but hoping the spell worked.

Voldemort then turned to the suddenly silent toddlers. “Which one was to be my downfall, hmmm? Well no matter, I will just kill you both and then I will kill the Longbottom child. Avada Kedavra,” he stated, pointing his wand at Harry, since he was closest.

As soon as Lily’s body hit the floor large green dome formed, yet in his confidence Voldemort paid no attention to it. It surrounded the boys, protecting them from the worst of the curse and the debris caused by the backlash of the two magics meeting.

Harry received a lightning bolt wound on right side of his forehead from the diverted curse and Gary received a V shaped one on the left from parts of the crib. The spell had gone through the shield and then, after causing Harry’s wound, reflected back and hit Voldemort causing his body to turn to ash, leaving only a robe and a wand. Had the boys not been together Harry would have died, the twin bond fed the dome and helped with the protection spell. Both boys passed out from magical exhaustion. And the dome dissipated.

A small girl-like figure, who was dressed in a frilly pink dress, with shiny black dress shoes and white knee socks, had watched the whole thing. Her name was Death, or Sally depending on the day, and she knew that without their mom these boys would have a horrible life. She had seen that there would be many trials for the boys and they needed a fierce protector to stand up for them. Not that James was a bad sort, but without his wife to beat down his arrogance, he would be too good of a provider to his boys and they would grow up spoiled and arrogant and they didn’t need that. They needed their mother.

Sally asked Lily’s soul if she was willing to pay a price to keep her boys safe. Lily agreed immediately. So she took Lily’s soul and put it back in her body. She then modified her memory to show that Voldemort cast a cutting curse on her abdomen and then Sally cast the curse to make it real. Lily will never have more children, putting her soul back had to have a price.

The little deity then turned to the twins and gently stroked their foreheads. “Don’t worry, boys, I’ll be here to help you in this life. Fate dealt you a bad hand and I’m going to teach you all I can to make it better. While there are some things I can’t change, this is not one of them. If it had not been for the prophecy, you both would have lived happy lives and never would have faced ole Voldyshorts. So it
is okay for me to step in and make sure you die when you are supposed to and not when the prophecy decides. We will stand together until you don’t need me anymore and hopefully that will be enough for you to win.”

Downstairs James was groggily getting off the floor. He leveled himself up on the remains of the railing and tried to remember what was going on and why he was on the stairs. It took him a few seconds then he remembered Voldemort attacking. Getting up from the floor, he ran up the stairs to see how his family faired.

“Lily,” he yelled desperately, not hearing any movement in the nursery, “Lily, answer me, please.” He made it to the room and saw that his whole family was lying down as if dead. He hastily ran to Lily since she was covered in blood and waved his wand over her prone body. The diagnostic spell showed she was still alive, so he cast a healing spell, Episkey, on her and tried to stop the bleeding. It took three times before the bleeding stopped, so he cast a spell to wake her. “Rennervate,” he incanted and with that Lily woke.

“My babies! How are my babies?” she screamed hysterically as she scrambled up off the floor. She quickly turned to the crib. “Please, Please, let the spell have worked, please let my babies be alive,” she begged to Gods unknown, as she cast the diagnostic spell on the crib hoping to see both babies alive. “Oh, thank all that is holy, they are alive. Rennervate,” she cast on Harry, who then woke crying. Then she cast it on Gary and he also woke crying.

“I’m so glad you are safe, James. What happened to you? I heard you fall and feared the worst. Please, take Harry, go call St. Mungo’s, see if we can get a healer. See what you can do to heal his wound. Their wounds seemed to have stopped bleeding, but I want them looked at anyway. We won’t be able to leave until the Aurors come. I’ll bring Gary down in a minute. I need to heal his wound and he needs his nappy changed,” She babbled saddened and happy at the same time, emotions overwhelming her logic, her desperate need to make sure her family was okay. She turned to hand the crying Harry to her husband.

“Okay, sweetie, shhh, calm down. It’s over. Here, I’ll take Harry; it won’t take long to call St. Mungo’s. I hit my head on the railing trying to avoid a blasting curse. Please, come down as soon as you can I want my family where I can see that they are safe,” James said trying to calm his hysterical wife, while taking Harry, rocking him in his arms to try and stop the crying.

Lily nodded at her husband’s words, took a deep breath and pick up her youngest child, and carried him to the changing table. Seeing that his wife was calming down James left the room. He carried Harry on his hip and went downstairs. He put the now quiet child down in the playpen they had set up for the boys by the window, so they could see the trick-or-treaters in costume walk by the house. It was their way of celebrating this year while they were cooped up in the cottage. He dragged it closer to the fireplace, threw some Floo powder in and called for St. Mungo’s.

“Hello, I need a healer here. We were attacked,” the desperate father called into the green fire. “We’re mostly fine, but my wife was hit with a cutting curse, my children have been hit with an unknown curse. They both have wounds on their heads. Please, send someone as soon as you can. We’re at Honeymoon Cottage in Godric’s Hollow. The house is under a Fidelius and the healer needs to read that paper before he comes.” He handed a piece of parchment that had the address written by Peter through the Floo to the receptionist so they could get past the charm. He then he removed his head, stood, checked on his son, seeing Harry was still fine, he grabbed more Floo powder.

He then called the Auror department. “Hello we have been attacked by You-Know-Who. All the adults were knocked out and we have no idea what happened. You-Know-Who’s robe and wand are
in the nursery, there is no sign of him. We need someone to come and investigate. We’re at Honeymoon Cottage in Godric’s Hollow. The house is under a Fidelius and the Auror needs to read that paper before he comes,” Again giving them the address written by Peter. He then moved away from the fireplace giving room in case someone came through. He picked up Harry and rocked back and forth to keep him calm. It also settled James’ nerves to have one of his sons in his arms, mostly safe.

James heard a noise in the front of the house and held up his wand just as Sirius came running through the broken door, panting. He saw James comforting one of the twins, he couldn’t tell them apart yet, and Lily coming down the stairs with the other twin. “Oh thank Merlin, you’re alright. I was so worried when I couldn’t find Peter. He was supposed to meet me tonight and he never showed. I went to is flat and most of his stuff is missing. What happened? Where is You-Know-Who?” the frightened young dark haired said, his wand raised in the air, as if he was going to fight to the death for who he considered his only family, even if they weren’t blood related. James had been his brother since he was sixteen and had run away from home to the Potters. James mother was a Black and was more than happy to take in Sirius.

“We’re not sure. We were both knocked out. The boys seem to be fine, but for the wounds on their head. There’s a robe and a wand in the nursery, but we don’t know what happened,” James said still rocking Harry.

“We’re waiting for the Aurors to come and do some testing so we’ll know what happened,” Lily said in a calming manner as to not alarm the children. It had taken a few minutes of normal mother duties to calm her down, but now that she knew her family was all alive, if not well, she was doing better. “I’m hoping that when the Aurors are done you and James, would go rat hunting, the little bastard of a coward. I can’t believe we trusted him. I hope he fries in the deepest pits of Hell. If I find him I’m going to cut off his bits and make him eat them.” Her bright green eyes lost focus on the revenge she was plotting for the man they all trusted.

“Lily, I never knew you had it in you to hurt someone like that,” Sirius said not noticing the disbelieving look on James’ face. James knew just how vicious his wife could be. “Of course, we’ll go rat hunting. It will be my extreme pleasure to hand you that sniveling idiot, just so you can cut his bollocks off. Just don’t make me watch, okay?” he said with a vicious, yet thoughtful, gleam in his eyes. Revenge would be sweet.

“That man put my children’s lives in danger, if I get my hands on him he will wish for death. And I’ll make it last a very long time. You wouldn’t believe all the non-magical ways to torture someone. I’ve read many a novel, which have given me great ideas and if I catch that rat, he’ll feel my wrath,” Lily bit out through her gritted jaw, clutching her child as close as she could without harming him.

A noise came from the front of the house and all the adults put the children down and pulled their wands. Taking a stand in front of the playpen. The children started crying again, now that their parents weren’t holding them.

Hagrid the half-giant, who worked at Hogwarts, came through the front door with tears on his face. All of the Order knew where the Potter hid, just in case something like this happened. He had been told by the Headmaster that Lily and James were dead. This was why he now looked on in shock, at the three adults standing together, wands pointing straight at his head. He could see both boys were also alive, if not completely well.

“Lily, James, I’m so ‘appy to see yer alive. Dumbledore told me yeh was dead. I was to take Gary to ‘ogwarts and ‘arry to your sisters, Lily. Now, ‘m not sure what ter do. Why are yeh standing next to that traitor? I would’ve thought yeh would hexing ‘im not standing next to ‘im,” the confused man
said as he scratching his rather bushy beard. While Hagrid was a good man, he was very simple. Give him an order and he would move mountains to see it through, some negated that order and he took a minute to come up with a different plan.

“Why would Dumbledore think we were dead? How did he even know we were attacked? And why in the name of all that is Holy would he want Harry with Petunia? She hates magic and she hates me. What the hell is he playing at?” Lily fired her questions to the poor half-giant, keeping her wand on him. She loved the man, you couldn’t find a gentler soul than Hagrid, but she would be damned if he was taking her children anywhere.

“Sirius was a decoy. We traded with Peter so that Sirius would be the target of the Death Eaters. We let everyone think that he was the Secret Keeper so Peter would be safe. That rat betrayed us and I’m sure he is the spy and not Remus,” James looked shamefaced to Sirius. “We’re going to have to apologize to Moony for thinking he had gone dark,” he told him. Sirius looked mortified and only nodded his head in agreement.

“Dumbledore wanted the children to go to a safe place. ‘e wanted me ter collect them and get them ter safety. ‘e figured yeh all to be dead. Not sure why ‘e thought that, great man Dumbledore, but now seeing as to ‘ow your alive, I’ll just be going back to report the good news. ‘e can come and see for ‘imself that I’m not needin’ to take the little ‘uns anywhere,” the gentle giant said keeping his hands in the air as to not anger Lily any more than she already was. You could see he was genuinely happy that his friends weren’t dead, albeit very confused as to why Dumbledore thought they were.

“Yes, you go and tell Dumbledore that we are alive and he is not taking my children anywhere,” Lily spat as she lowered her wand. She didn’t put it away, just lowered it to her side. She knew Hagrid was mostly immune to magic, but she could Accio a knife to her hands and cut him if she had to. The men lowered their wands as well and stayed ready in case they were needed to protect the family.

Just then the fire blazed, causing the wands to come up again, and a healer came through. “I am Healer Wrights. We got a call that you needed a healer. Who needs me the most?” the healer asked pulling a bag from his robes that contain an emergency kit full of potions. Then he noticed the wands pointed at him and raised his hands.

The adults lowered their wands and Lily took over, “Check the children first, I’m not sure what they were hit with, but they are both wounded on their heads. Then when you are done I need to be checked, James closed the wound, but I don’t know how much damage was done. Then James hit his head earlier this evening so you might want to check him as well,” she said as she watched Hagrid move towards the door.

“I’ll just be goin’ then. I’ll tell Dumbledore that all it well ‘ere. Yer take care now,” Hagrid said as he left. “Good to see yer alive an’ all,” he finished lamely as he walked out the ruins of the door.

The fireplace blared again and a man in red robes came through. “I’m Auror Roberts. We got a report that there was a fight with You-Know-Who. Can anyone tell me what happened?”

“We were sitting down enjoying the night. I felt the wards being attacked so I told Lily to take the boys and go upstairs where we had set up an area for an emergency Portkey to work. You-Know-Who blasted the door in and we fought. I hit my head and passed out,” James explained and then waved to Lily to take up the explanation.

“I took the boys to the nursery to try and escape, but the Portkey didn’t work. So I put them the crib and activated a spell we had set up to keep them safe. You-Know-Who came in and told me to step aside, not sure why,” she said suddenly thoughtful. She shook her head and got back to the
explanation, “He then cast a cutting curse,” she waved to her cut-up and bloody shirt, “and I think I passed out due to the pain. When James woke me up, the boys were unconscious and there was a robe and wand on the floor. No sign of Voldemort anywhere. I don’t know what happened after I was knocked out,” Lily finished keeping her wand ready with all these new people in the house.

“Okay, I’ll go upstairs and check out the nursery. I would like to know what the healer finds though,” Auror Roberts said as he made his way to the stairs, observing where James fell. James and Sirius followed to make sure they could answer any questions.

Both men came back down the stairs, after being kicked out by the Auror. The healer gave his report after examining everyone. “I don’t know which boy was hit. But one of these little guys was hit with a Killing Curse. The residue is on both of them, but other than that they seem in good health. I have the wounds all sealed. Unfortunately they will have curse scars. (Sally changed Gary’s scar to be a curse scar) Other than that they are both in good health,” he said trying to make the frightened young couple feel better with some good news. “The bond between them is growing at a good rate. It is what more than likely kept them alive, this night made it much stronger.”

The healer continued as he turned to James, “Mr. Potter, you’re fine. That bump on the head didn’t do anything but render you unconscious. Mrs. Potter,” he said bringing his attention to the only woman in the room, “I cleaned up the area of the cutting curse, however, there was damage to your uterus and you will not be able to have any more children. I’m sorry, I can only hope that you will be happy with the two you have,” he said as he put a consolatory hand on Lily’s arm.

Lily somehow knew this was going to happen. (Sally had twisted her emotions so that she would not too be upset over it) “It’s okay; I’ll just have to spoil these little guys more than I was going to. I’m just glad they’re okay. I’d pay any price for the safety of my family. Thank you Healer Wright, I know you’re probably very busy right now. So thank you for coming as soon as you did,” she said, as she escorted the healer to the Floo, pleased that her family was safe and alive with no real lasting damage, well except for her uterus, but she could live with that.

“Not a problem, I am just glad everyone here is alive. It is not always the case as you know,” The healers said as he was leaving. And with those parting words he Floo’d away.

The Auror was upstairs looking at the remains of Voldemort and trying to find out what had happened after Lily was knocked out. She went upstairs to let him know what the healer had found, hoping that it would help explain things to him. Once that was explained the Auror figured he had a better idea of what happened. “There’s a lot of magical residue in here. There’s the spell you and your husband set up to protect the children, there’s the cutting curse that you were inflicted with and there are signs of the Killing Curse being cast twice. I think the curse missed the twin that was on the left hand side, and hit the one on the right. Do you remember which child was where?”

“Yes. Gary was on the right and Harry was on the left. They both have head wounds that will scar so the healer doesn’t know which one was hit,” Lily replied. She had a feeling that he was wrong, but she wasn’t going to correct him. She and James made a vow that no matter which one the prophecy spoke of the boys would grow up the same. They didn’t want one boy targeted over the other so they were going to have to do some damage control to keep the boys out of the spotlight. If it came to the press they were going to have to give a statement that they didn’t know which boy had been hit, they were just happy that both were alive.

They, as parents, would do everything they could to prepare their children for what was coming.

“Thank you for your time, Auror Roberts, like I told the healer, I know you’re really busy at this time. Hopefully, now that Voldemort,” she said ignoring the flinch “is gone we’ll have some peace.”

“I hope you are right, Mrs. Potter. I’ll see myself out, I’m done here. I took everything that was You-
Know-Who's, so the room should be safe. I know if it were me though, I’d be looking for a new place to stay,” Said Auror Roberts as he shook Lily’s hand, turned and then left the room and started down the stairs.

Lily followed him out. “Oh, we’ll be moving as soon as possible. I won’t tell you where, there are Death Eaters still at large so it will have to be a secret. You can owl us if you need any more information, as long as there is not spells on the parchment or the owl, then it will find us.”

“Thanks for that, Mrs. Potter. I’m glad to see your family is okay, Mr. and Mrs. Potter. You did the right things calling for us. You have a pleasant rest of the evening.” The Auror tipped his hat and left via the Floo.

After everyone, but Sirius had left, Lily fell to the sofa, hoping that this long evening was over. She was about to suggest to James that they go to a hotel for the night, when there was a loud pop. Lily turned in her seat, wand at the ready. When she saw who it was she groaned.

Dumbledore was here.
Dumbledore came through the broken door. When he was in the room he waved his wand and repaired it, good as new. He then took a chair across from Lily. “Lily, James, I'm most joyful to see you are alive and well. When I learned of the attack, I had feared the worst. Can you please, tell me what happened tonight? I see the boys are also unharmed.” He indicated the boys sleeping in the playpen. The healer had put the boys to sleep to recover from the shock. Lily had put up a silencing charm so they would not be disturbed with all the people coming and going.

“Is there any cause to show which boy is the one spoken of in the prophecy?” the Headmaster asked as he glanced over his half-moon spectacles with that grandfatherly look on his face, the one that he used when he wanted people to tell him everything. He was sure it was young Gary, by way of the boy being born at just before midnight when the seventh month died, or so he believed.

“You know, Dumbledore, I have a few questions myself before I answer yours,” Lily snarled at the headmaster, ignoring the persuasive look. “Why did you send Hagrid here to collect the boys? Why were you going to put Harry with Petunia? How did you even know we were attacked?” she rapidly fired questions at the old man, wanting to know everything this man had been hiding from them. She never understood why the Headmaster thought he had the right to control everyone’s life. Even when she was in school, she thought he held far too much power. She knew without a shadow of a doubt that Dumbledore was a good man; there wasn’t an evil bone in his body. He was just too far in denial that he wasn’t a god. Well he wasn’t going to tell her or her family what to do; she’d make damn sure of it. This was too emotional of a night for her to be calm, he had better watch his step or she was going to burn his beard right off his face.

“Alas, I had put a sensor on your house,” Dumbledore said disregarding the affronted looks on the Potters’ faces, “so that if dark magic was used I would be notified. I was sure you would not mind. I only wanted to protect you and your sons. When I had been alerted that the Killing Curse had been used. I assumed that you and James were dead. I had Hagrid come to ensure the boys were taken somewhere safe. When he reported to me that you both were still in the land of the living I was most happy,” he said in a gentle voice that made you want to believe that he had only kindness in his heart and that you should not question him. He blatantly ignored the questions about the boys.

Lily wasn’t falling for it. “That does not explain why you would want to split up the twins, knowing there was a bond between them and that that would be detrimental to the boys had succeeded. It also doesn’t explain why you’d put one of my sons with my magic hating sister,” she spat, by now all the adults were glaring at the Headmaster. “Why didn’t you come if you knew we were under attack? Why send Hagrid for the kids and not come yourself to help? I thought we were valued members of your precious Order?” she questioned, and really she was centimeters from hexing the man and his benevolent ways.

“Lily, my dear, you must understand the boys must grow up humble,” Dumbledore said all-
knowingly. “The public will hear about what happened here tonight and one of the boys will be famous. They need a hero figure to see them through these desperate times so they have something to show them that there is hope. You don’t want the other boy to grow up in the shadow of his brother, do you?” he said with a small command in his voice. Then his voice turned gentle, again, “Alas, I was not in my office when the alarm went off. I feared I was already too late to help your family. You know I have many responsibilities and am not in my office at all times. You and James are very dear to me, you must know that,” the old man said sincerely. He did truly care for all his Order members, however, there was the larger picture to look at and some things must be left to fate.

“You, oh great leader of the light, whose only real claim to fame, the fame you want my son not to have, is one fight where you incarcerated one man? You want to make my son humble, when you yourself are not?” she all but yelled, she knew he had done more than that, but all his other successes paled in comparison to that one fight that ended the last war.

Then the fiery red head stood with tightened fists, her knuckles were white around her wand, showing how angry she was, “You mean to tell me, that you want to put one of the boys on a pedestal, but hide the other away so they don’t know each other? What kind of fool thinking is that? They’re just children. Do you honestly think that I would approve of such a stupid plan? And just how would the public know what went on here tonight? We,” indicating herself and the two men at her side, “aren’t going to tell them. The Healers and the Aurors have to take vows not to talk to the press. You,” she pointed her wand at the Headmaster, “will not be using my boys to give the public an idol. I will fight you every step of the way,” she said, her mind already going through everything she could think of to protect the boys from this man’s plans. “Why separate them? What were you going to do with Gary?” she said ignoring the rest in her anger, she might look back and be mortified later, but right now her boys’ future was at stake and she wasn’t letting anyone control her family.

James and Sirius were gripping their wands ready to protect the boys. Since, Lily was handling it well on her own they stood by at the ready and let her tear into the old man.

“Gary was going to stay at Hogwarts as he is obviously the one in the prophecy, I had thought as much and now seeing the mark upon his head, I am surer than ever,” the Headmaster said, waving his hand to the playpen signifying the sleeping child with the V visible on his forehead. “I would have raised him to be able to face Voldemort when the time comes. You see, I also have a monitor on Tom, of sorts, and I know he is not dead, merely disembodied and weakened. Gary must be able to stand up to him. I would have given him that. As for Harry, well, he is not the prophecy child so he would have been fine with your sister’s. She is your blood after all. I was going to set up blood wards to protect him and your sister’s family and leave a letter to that affect. I would have brought him back into the community when he received his Hogwarts letter,” he said in a conciliatory tone, hoping that this distraught woman would listen to his wise words.

“So you are playing guessing games with my children’s lives. And to you one child is more important than the other. How can you live with yourself wanting to casually cast aside a child, because he is not important to your eyes? I think you should leave now and stay away until you can realize that all lives are precious. Until you do, I don’t think I want you around my family,” Lily demanded as she angrily pointed to the door to make her point. She wanted to hex the old man and the men were not far behind. Only the fact that they didn’t want to make an enemy of him stayed their hands.

“Lily, you are going to need my help,” Dumbledore begged, needing the nearly hysterical woman to understand that he was only thinking of the entire wizarding world. “You do not have the knowledge on how to raise a powerful child. When Gary comes into his power, you will not be able to keep your family safe. I, alone, can help you. I am the most powerful wizard in Britain, not to be bragging. It is however, the truth. Please, you must listen to me. The boys need to be separated so that Gary
receives the attention he needs to learn. Harry will only interfere with his training. You must look at the bigger picture. It is for the Greater Good,” he pleaded. He knew that Gary was needed, but Harry was not. Dumbledore didn’t truly understand twin bonds and felt that if it grew stronger then Gary would be sharing his power with his brother, thereby lessening his own. That could not happen if the magical community of Britain was to survive.

“GET. OUT. You leave my family alone. Get out of my house or I will call the Aurors and have you arrested you for trespassing. Oh, I know it wouldn’t stick, but by the time you left the Ministry we would be gone. If you ever want to see this family again you will leave this house NOW,” Lily yelled right into the Headmaster’s face. If he wanted to have anything to do with the boys in the future he had better heed this warning.

“I will leave; however, I think you are making a terrible mistake. I know that you are tired and short-tempered with the close call you all faced this night. When you have calmed down perhaps we can discuss this again,” Dumbledore said getting up from his chair and starting for the door.

“I will never separate my children. I don’t care about your Greater Good,” she bit out at his retreating back. “When you realize that then we’ll talk,” Lily said standing firm with the men standing at her side.

“We will talk again when nerves are not this frayed. I wish you a good evening and once again express my happiness that you all are alive.” And with that he left.

Lily fell to the sofa, it had been a stressful evening and all she wanted to do is cuddle her children and go to sleep. “James, we need somewhere to stay tonight. I think we’ll need Sirius and Remus, if you can find him, to stay with us. There are still Death Eaters out there and they’ll be wondering what happened to their master. We need to warn the Longbottoms and maybe have them live with us as well. The more wands the better. How much longer until the manor is complete?”

“There is a hotel near my flat,” Sirius said rubbing his hands down his face and sitting in the chair that Dumbledore vacated. “We can go there, it is a nice place and not too expensive. I’ll try and contact Remus through the mirror when we get you guys settled. I don’t want to be anywhere near the wizarding world until Auror Roberts makes his report that I’m not guilty of anything,” Sirius and James had spoken to the Auror when he was examining the nursery. They made sure he knew that Peter was the one to sell the Potters out to Voldemort. They also made sure that the Auror knew Peter’s Animagus form. Though trying to find a rat in London would be hard.

“The manor should be done in a few weeks,” James said sitting next to his wife taking her hand and rubbing it. “I’m sure we can survive in Muggle London till then. I’ll call Frank before we leave and explain what happened tonight and see if they want to stay with us or if they feel they are better off where they are. I agree that the more wands the better. I don’t know about you, but I am dead tired,” he said cuddling his wife closely to try and settle her nerves. He could tell she was still twitchy about her confrontation with Dumbledore and what had happened earlier with He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named.

It’s a good thing that the Potters were an Ancient and Noble house or Dumbledore would try and take their kids from them for the ‘Greater Good’, but the Wizengamot would never approve of that. Sometimes the pure-blood politics worked for them.

“Okay, let’s get some stuff for us and the kids and we can get going. James, if you would call one of the house elves to pack this cottage and put it in the manor that would be helpful. I don’t think we’re going to come back here for a while,” Lily said sadly as she got up from the sofa and headed up the stairs to get the things they needed for a short stay in the hotel.
The men got up to do what was needed. James went to the Floo to contact Frank, Sirius dug through his pockets to find the two way mirror so he could call Remus. He was headed to the kitchen so James would have privacy. The twins slept on, not knowing what was happening in the waking world. Everyone was just glad it was over and wanted nothing more than to put this night behind them and plan for the future.
A Bad Day in the Alley

AN: Thanks to my beta alix33 for going over this for me. All mistakes are my own.

Disclaimer: I don’t own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belong to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her.

Hphphp

August 3, 1982

It had been just over a year since that frightening night, and the Potters were now at the manor. The old wards on the house were reset. They had had to put up a mail redirect ward so the owls only went into one room of the house. The house elves were screening the mail after there was one incident where Lily’s hands were burned by a cursed letter. They had also set up a vault at Gringotts for everything Gary was receiving. They kept the useful stuff and split it between the twins. They also donated a large portion to Muggle orphanages, anything that could be uncharmed was sent there.

They were enjoying their lunch at the table in the kitchen. The kitchen in the manor was large, yet homey. The appliances were on one side, with counters around them, open shelves above them and a pantry on the side. The pans hung over the stove that created an island between the breakfast nook and the rest of the room. They were sitting at the comfortable table, when Harry held out his hand and demanded a sweet, like any other two year old. “Mummy want ‘isket.”

Lily looked at her child and said, “No, Harry, you need to eat your lunch first. If you eat all of it, then mummy will give you a treat.”

“No, want ‘isket now,” Harry said then he made a grabbing motion to the biscuit jar and pulled his arm back like he was pulling it down. The jar came flying towards the boys and narrowly missed hitting Gary on the head. Harry was devastated. He reached for his brother, not really knowing what he had done, all he knew is his sibling was scared and it was his fault. The older twin was inconsolable until they let him hug his twin. Lily took the boys out of their highchairs and put them on the floor so they could reach each other.

She was trying to calm the boys down, she pet their hair, rocked them and hugged them as they desperately held each other. It took twenty minutes of crooning, rocking and petting to ease their worry. The bond causing the emotions to loop back on one another, so if Gary was scared, Harry cried and if Harry was crying then Gary was scared, one of the fallbacks to such a bond in small children.

James looked on with a thoughtful face, after he cleaned up the mess Harry had created. He knew what he had to do, but he didn’t know how to explain it to Lily. After everyone was quieter and the boys back in their chairs with a reheated lunch, James ventured the subject. “Lily, I think we need to bind Harry’s powers. Not all the way mind you,” he said quickly at her shocked face, “just about fifty percent. There’s a binding that will slowly disintegrate as he gets older. If we do this right then when he gets to Hogwarts he will have better control and he will be able to dim his aura so no one will know just how powerful he is. If Dumbledore knows his true strength, then he will never give Harry any peace. We can work with him, do some meditation and try and control the accidental magic. I wouldn’t have suggested it, but as you saw that kind of accidental magic could hurt
someone or even himself."

“Can you show me the spell in a book? If we are going to do this then I want to know everything about it. I don’t want it to harm Harry in anyway,” Lily looked worried, what had just happened was enough to scare her into considering this and she trusted James, but she didn’t like casting unknown spells on her children.

If Harry was this powerful now, how powerful would he be in the future? And if people learn about her oldest child, what lengths would they go to control him? What confused her the most is why Gary wasn’t as powerful. She knew that Harry was the one spoken of in the prophecy and wondered if fate caused the difference in the twins. But didn’t the twins share a bond and didn’t that mean they would share their magic? She was going to have to research that as well. Maybe, she could talk to Molly Weasley about her twins and get a better understanding.

Molly had had twin brothers and now she had twin sons, so she would know more that Lily did. As a mother Lily was leery about the other mother, because the Weasleys were firm supporters of Dumbledore. And while weren’t technically against the headmaster, they were still butting heads with him over separating the twins.

In the end they did wind up binding Harry’s magic with the spell James suggested. Lily had done the research and it was recommended for powerful children. The books even gave suggestions on how to teach the child to touch and calm their magic. Lily figured it wouldn’t hurt if they all did these meditations and they became part of the Potters’ nightly ritual. The parents would take a twin each and while whispering about safe places and touching their magic, they would gently massage the boys to a trance like state, until the boys fell asleep.

August 30, 1983

Lily was deep in research. She had started the research after that fateful Halloween night. She was trying to find out just what was keeping Voldemort here. Dumbledore had said that Voldemort was in wraith form and weakened. This triggered a vague memory of something she had come across in the restricted section at the Hogwarts library, but she couldn’t quite remember what it was. So she had James purchase many books from Diagon Alley, but they were proving pretty much useless. The Potter library had also given her no clue.

She was beginning to think she would not find what she needed in the so-called Light books. You would think they had defensive magic to prevent or destroy dark magic, but they mostly had shielding and some spells that incapacitated people. She might just have to go to Knockturn Alley. Or maybe she could ask Remus. She should probably bring Sirius in on this so he could look in the Black library. There were bound to Dark books in there. She just didn’t know if Sirius would take it seriously.

After not finding what she needed, Lily gave up and called Sirius on the mirror, “Padfoot.”

Sirius’ face came on the mirror, “What’s up, Lily?”

“Sirius, I need you to look in the Black library to see if you can find why Voldemort is still around. I figured that if any library would have books on immortality it would be your family’s. Is there any way you can get in to your old house, and look for me?”

“Sorry, Lily, as you know my mom hates me and I would rather not confront her at this…” he paused and got a mischievous look in his grey eyes. “On the other hand, I might go and talk to my father because as you know my grandfather didn’t approve of her kicking me out. I’ll write to him and try and demand that I get access to the library as Heir to the Black family,” he said running his
hand through is hair. He hated his family; they were the epitome of pure-blood supremacy. But, he really wanted to help if it was for the boys. He would face anything for them, even his family. Plus, the look on that old hag’s face when he demanded what was his by right, well that would be the best prank he played in a long time.

“Thanks, Sirius. Sorry, I forgot that your mother was still there,” she said looking contrite. “I just want to find a way to keep that bastard away from my kids. The Potter library is a bust and I don’t know where else to look. I’m thinking of sending Remus to Knockturn Alley, but I don’t want everyone thinking he’s turned Dark.”

Lily felt bad for bringing up his horrid childhood memories. She knew what a terrible person Sirius’ mother was, she needed to get it together or she was going to ask all her friends to do things she shouldn’t be asking them to do. She was just so frustrated. Her and the boys were pretty much housebound. Even James couldn’t go anywhere in the wizarding world without morons coming up to him and hounding her poor husband. Hence, her asking for favors.

“It’s okay, Lily. If I can get back into the family manor that will put that old bat's nose out of joint. It’ll be a great prank,” Sirius laughed it off. “I’ll see what I can do. Padfoot out.” And the mirror went blank.

Well that was going to put her research behind. But, she was determined she will find a way to help her boys.

July 31, 1984

It was the boys’ fourth birthday and this was going to be the first time they stepped into Diagon Alley since that fateful October night. Only James had ventured out and that was only to go to the bank to set up the twins’ trust fund and to get a few books for the house. They had put it off, because every time the twins went into Godric’s Hollow they were accosted.

Because James had come from a wealthy family the Potter adults didn’t need to work. They wanted to, but they were needed at home so they had quit their jobs when they had gone into hiding.

The Longbottoms had also had to put their Auror careers on hold, but unlike the Potters they actually went back to their jobs. They returned to work after the Lestranges and Crouch Jr. had been caught trespassing at the Longbottom estate, and found to be Death Eaters. It had been a close call and if James and Sirius had not been there, the Longbottoms might have been badly hurt or dead.

Now there were only a few Death Eaters that were roaming free and they were keeping a low profile. Except Malfoy who had made himself useful, via bribes, to the Minister. James didn’t think much of Minister Millicent Bagnold, even after the Aurors report she still tried to have Sirius arrested, he of course dissuaded her of that notion, but she sure liked Malfoy’s money.

The press had had a field day and they were calling Gary the Boy-Who-Lived. No matter how many times the Potters wrote the paper telling their side of the story, the public wouldn’t listen. They tried to tell them that healer couldn’t tell which boy had survived the Killing Curse.

Lily had no idea how the report became public, but she was fighting a losing battle with the press. Somehow the papers had learned that both parents were knocked out before the Killing Curse was fired. The public took the word of the Auror report and Dumbledore’s confirmation that it was Gary. The Daily Prophet had even described what the boys looked like and the only difference was the shape and location of their scars.

It had been two and a half years and they were hoping that the fervor had died down so they could
Since the mail had tapered off it was a good sign that it had. The first year they were bombarded with mail each day. The daily thank you notes they wrote took hours alone. They had to have the house elves take the letters to the Diagon Alley post office as they didn’t have enough owls to reply to everyone. They even tried to explain to the senders their side of the story, still no one believed them. After all Dumbledore’s word was law, Lily was really starting to dislike that man.

James wanted to buy training brooms for the boys since they had been pretty much locked in the manor since a few weeks after the attack. The only people they had seen were the Longbottoms, Sirius and Remus and sometimes Dumbledore, who came by to try and change their minds about separating the twins. He, of course, was promptly kicked out. At least they had someone their age to play with and the boys really liked Neville.

Lily was thinking of finding more wizarding children for the twins to play with. Maybe if the other kids saw that Harry and Gary were just little boys, who wanted to play and not some super savior then the boys will have an easier time at Hogwarts when they attended. The beginning of a plan started to form in her mind; she’d talk to James tonight about it.

Everyone gathered by the Floo ready to go. “Alright James, you take Harry and I’ll follow you with Gary. Let’s try and keep a low profile,” Lily said gathering a bag with what she would need to tend to two rambunctious boys.

James picked up Harry and grabbed the Floo powder. He threw the powder in the fire and called “Leaky Cauldron” and with a flash of green they disappeared. Lily picked up Gary and followed.

When they stepped out of the fireplace at the Leaky Cauldron, Lily could tell right away this was going to be a big mistake. She stepped behind James hoping to hide Gary from the crowd.

Then someone spotted Gary’s scar and shouted, “Look, it is Gary Potter, the Boy-Who-Lived.” The crowd started surging forward and the boys got scared and started crying. Lily tried to get back to the Floo, but it was blocked by the crowd.

“Good to see you, Mr. Potter…”

“Thank you very much, Mr. Potter…”

“Bless you, Mr. Potter…”

The crowd started shouting and trying to get to Gary to shake their hands (like he would know what they were doing, he is only four). Gary and Harry were crying harder and trying to hide in their parents' arms.

Lily handed Gary to James and stepped in front her family to face the crowd. She cast a Sonorus so she could be heard over the shouting. “Back the Hell off,” she yelled at the top of her lungs, making her words echo in the tavern. “What is wrong with you people? Can’t you see you are scaring the children? Haven’t we told you time and again that we don’t know which child survived that night? What the hell do we have to do to make you listen to us? And even if it was Gary why would you crowd him and scare him like that? He is only four years old, he doesn’t understand why you are crowding him,” she questioned continuing on as loudly as she could. How dare these people frighten her children.

The crowd quieted a little, until a voice from the back said “The paper said that you were knocked out and the Auror report stated it was little Gary. Dumbledore confirmed this. If you were knocked out then we have to take what was reported. We only want to show the little guy that we are thankful that he ended the war. With You-Know-Who gone we can now live in peace and it is all thanks to
him. I don’t understand why you would deny us the chance to thank our savior.”

“These are my children,” Lily stated firmly, calmer now that the crowd had moved back. “I won’t have you scaring them like this. If you feel the need to express your thanks then write a letter to the Daily Prophet editor and then everyone will know how you feel. We read the paper and we’ll welcome your thanks that way. We do not welcome you scaring our children.” She canceled the charm and took back Gary and stormed to the entrance of Diagon Alley, pushing her way through the crowd.

James glared at the crowd and followed his steaming wife to the Alley. Hopefully it would be better there, since people would be busy with their shopping. There might be some pointing and whispering, but people tended to leave you alone if you looked busy. They only needed to go to Quality Quidditch to get the brooms. He was not going to let these people spoil the boys’ birthday.

They entered the Alley and thankfully they were not crowded. Lily was kind of disappointed that they couldn’t spend more time here. There was no way she was waiting around to see if the reports caught wind of them. She had wanted to go to Flourish and Blotts to get more books. She already read most of the books at the manor due to the time they had been hiding there. Sirius had come up empty on any books from the Black family library.

She was also working on a charm to nullify magic in a designated area. If she could get this charm to work then she could block off a few rooms in the manor and put electricity in there and maybe get a TV and a few computers. It had to be tweaked so that magical people were not affected.

She and James had already discussed this and he thought it was a wonderful idea. But her children were more important than her entertainment and research. She would have to pick up a mail order form on their way out of the Alley.

The Potters had also hoped to take the boys to Florean Fortescue's Ice Cream Parlour for a special treat. Maybe if they came to Alley more often than they would start to be old news and not something to be gawked at. She would have to think about that.

The Potters quickly finished their business and went back to the manor. Lily set Gary down after she exited the Floo. “Mummy, why were people being loud and pushy? They scareded me. Why dided they yelled at me? Did I do somethink wrong?” Gary asked with moist eyes, those people were frightening. Sally had already told him why, but she said he needed to ask his mummy so if he talked about it in the future then his mummy would think that he got the information from her. And his mummy had never lied to them.

Sally had been hanging around the boys since the night Harry had almost died. She told them what had happened and why people kept sending them mail. It was explained to them that they couldn’t tell their parents that she was there, because she wasn’t ready to reveal herself, and the boys probably wouldn’t be believed, but consoled them by telling them if she ever told them to do bad things, then they were to tell their mummy right away.

The deity also helped them learn to make their toys fly, change color and shape. The ghost of a girl said that they shouldn’t let their mummy know about that either, because their parents wanted them to grow up slowly. But, Sally wanted them to learn all they could so they could help each other when the bad man came back.

James and Harry exited the Floo and Lily waved them off wanting to explain to her son privately, she would talk to James later. She watched her husband take Harry out of the room and then knelt down to her youngest child thinking about how to tell him in a way he would understand.
“No, sweetie, you did nothing wrong,” Lily said petting down his unruly hair. “You see a few years ago a bad man, named Voldemort, came to our old house. He did some bad things and tried to hurt everyone there. When the bad man tried to hurt you boys, the bad curse hurt him instead. Then the bad man was sent away. The newspaper is telling everyone that you did great magic that day and hurt the bad man. But, honey, you didn’t do anything to the bad man. Mummy and Daddy set up a spell to protect you and your brother and that is what hurt the bad man. Mummy has tried to tell the people that is was an accident, but they won’t listen to mummy. So when we went shopping the people want to thank you for what they think you did. Understand?” she said giving her baby a hug after wiping his tears.

“I tink so, but mummy I don’t likeded the scary people. Will they hurted me?” Gary asked hugging his mummy back.

“Mummy will never let those people hurt you. If they ever try; you run away and try to find mummy or daddy or someone in robes like your Uncle Frank’s. Okay?” she said holding her son tighter. Damn those people. And damn Dumbledore and the press.

“Okay, Mummy,” Gary broke the hug and went to find his brother to make sure that Harry wasn’t scared anymore and to make sure that the loud people hadn’t hurt him.

The Potters enjoyed the rest of the day. The Longbottoms were there so the kids could celebrate their birthdays together. They switched off every year, one year they would celebrate on the thirtieth and the next year on the thirty-first. The twins got to give Neville his birthday present that they had made all by themselves. Sirius and Remus came by with presents and helped James teach the boys how to ride the training brooms. Frank even got a broom for Neville. Harry almost killed the cat but pulled up before he hit her. The small gathering lasted until bedtime and Neville was staying the night so they could play with the brooms in the morning.

Sally wished the boys a Happy Birthday as they faded off to sleep.
The Plan Starts

AN: Thanks to my beta alix33 for going over this for me. All mistakes left are my own.

AN: someone pointed out that Snape is a bit OOC in this fic, and I admit that is true, but he and Lily were friends along time, so I don’t think he would be quite a bitter knowing she survived. That and I need him more lenient on the students to make my future chapters work. I also made it so he asked for both the Potters adult to be spared, because if he were really Lily’s friend he would do whatever he could to make her happy and he knew Voldemort would not spare the children. Snape will pretty much be in the background, because as much as I like the character, I can’t write Snape well.

AN: Okay so it was pointed out to me that Satellite Internet wasn’t around then, and I know, I was around then. I’ve also brought computers up to modern speed; Internet searches, web pages and such so they have a concrete way to showing pure-bloods what Muggles do. I did do the research, so I am waving my artistic license and making it a reality. Sorry if that puts you off, but it is needed for the plot.

Sorry for the long AN, but sometimes needs must.

Disclaimer: I don’t own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belong to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her.

Hphphp

July 31, 1985

It was the boys’ fifth birthday and they were throwing their first large birthday party. They had celebrated their birthdays with Neville the day before with just the two families. They wanted to throw a party with a few kids the boys’ age. So they invited the Weasleys, the Abbots and the Bones to come over for a few hours. Everyone that was invited was told that it was a party for Neville as well.

They were going to try and brave Diagon Alley again to get the supplies they needed for the party. The few times they had gone since the boys’ last birthday were only slightly better.

“Okay, I know the last time we went to the Alley was scary for you boys and you were very brave. I think we’ll try again. I want you to remember that Mummy and Daddy are with you and we won’t let anyone harm you. If you get separated; you find an Auror or go to the nearest store and tell the shopkeeper. Don’t go wandering around Diagon Alley, stay where you are until we come and get you. Okay?” Lily said to the boys that morning, again.

“Okay, Mummy, we will ‘member,” The twins said together.

When they arrived at the Leaky Cauldron there were only a few people and they only pointed and whispered. Most of them remembered Lily’s temper from the last couple of times and didn’t want to make her angry again.

They had only made it a few feet into the Alley when the bane of their existence was suddenly in front them. Reporters.

“Mr. Potter, how does it feel…?”
“Mrs. Potter, do you remember…?”

“Mr. Potter, today is your birthday what…?”

They all started shouting questions at the same time. Lily grabbed up her children and virtually flew back to the Leaky Cauldron. She wasn’t giving those vultures anything to work with. She was done trying to explain things to them, they never listened. She made it back to the manor in no time.

It took a while to calm down the twins though. James stayed behind to get the supplies they needed. It was a good thing the press wasn’t really interested in the parents. He probably had to answer the same questions they always asked of him. He would give the same answers and they wouldn’t listen, like always.

Gary was the most distraught, he just didn’t understand why everyone made such loud noises whenever he left the house. He knew he didn’t do anything those people said he did. Sally and his mummy made sure he understood that. He was starting to get depressed that he couldn’t leave the house without people shouting at him. He didn’t want to be the Boy-Who-Lived if it made people this scary.

Harry, feeling his brother’s depression and hugged him. “It'll be okay Gary. I’ll always be with you. Together we’ll be okay. I will ‘tect you from the loud people,” he murmured in Gary’s ear while he rubbed his back trying to send his love through the bond.

Eventually Gary calmed down and they went to get ready for the party.

**August 4, 1985**

The boys were enrolled in the Muggle primary school close to the manor. James had taken his position on the Wizengamot and was trying to get as many kids as he could to join the same school the boys would be attending. He wanted the boys to know as many of their future schoolmates as possible. Lily and he had talked about it and she thought that it was a good idea.

Lily had found the charm that nullified magic in a Runes text. The charm had Runes that had to be put on all the surfaces outside the room you wanted to nullify magic in. Then you would cast the charm to charge them. The original purpose of the charm was to create a safe room where spells couldn’t reach you. Lily tweaked the charm so that electricity would work in the nullified rooms. She was disappointed that she wasn’t the one to discover it, but happy enough now that they had solar powered electricity, at the manor.

They had sectioned off two rooms on the bottom floor of the west wing of the manor. They had purchased a TV and two computers to be shared between the four of them. They had satellite for the TV and Internet. They also ran safety drills with the boys so if bad people came to the house they were to get to these rooms as fast as they could and hide. There were a few secret passages to the rooms, which is why they chose them in the first place.

What James was trying to accomplish now, was to get as many of the kids in the same school as the boys so they would all be friends and would share what each other’s home was like. He figured if he could get other kids to attend the school then they could be invited back to the house and have sleepovers and the other children could explore the Internet and learn about the world. They were going to try and nip the bigotry that plagued their world in the bud and it had to start with the children. They would also teach the children theoretical magic and meditation while they waited for their guardians to come and get them. They had made a good start with the party they had thrown a few days ago.
James remembered growing up all alone. He had had no idea how other than a few families worked. He was raised a pure-blood without the bigotry. He was also homeschooled like many other pure-bloods. If he could get the other parents to remember this as well then maybe his plan might work.

Lily had pointed out that Muggle schools only accepted students that lived within the area that the schools were located. He figured that they could magic up some paperwork and put a mild Confundus Charm on them to make it seem like all the children were within the area then they could bypass this. It wasn’t Muggle baiting, since it didn’t harm the Muggles, just confused them as to what was on the paper then they would fill in the blanks in on their own. He needed to work fast as the deadline for enrollment was coming up soon. And while he didn’t want to do it, he would play the Boy-Who-Lived card to sway people to listen to his plan.

He had already convinced the Weasleys, the Abbots and the Bones when he had invited them over for the twins’ and Neville’s birthday. When they had shown the Weasley father the computer, the man was in heaven. His obsession with all things Muggle had made it easy to sway him. Lily had shown him how to look things up on the Internet that would help him in his job for the Misuse of Muggle Artefacts Office, which he was the head of. She also let him know that there were computers in most Muggle libraries and they were free to use. Since that day the Weasleys had been constant visitors. The Potter twins were overjoyed to finally have more friends, though they seemed a little leery of the two youngest.

Ron, the youngest boy, didn’t want to learn with them, he was kinda lazy, and all he really wanted to talk about was Quidditch. Maybe when he attended school and learned about Muggle sports that might change. Ginny, youngest child and only girl, seemed to have a crush on Gary and would blush and hide whenever he said anything to her. Still they had convinced Arthur and Molly to enroll the three youngest boys in primary school. Ginny would start next year.

James did feel better that young Hannah Abbot and Susan Bones only treated the boys like any other kids they would play with. Hannah’s parents and Susan’s aunt were excited about the school and said they would talk to other parents about the great opportunity to educate the children.

It was a start.

**August 20, 1985**

Harry was conflicted, he remembered when the bad man had tried to hurt him and had hurt his mummy. Sally told him that she had made his mummy all better after the bad man hurt her. He remembered what the man had said about the other man who wanted to save his mummy and daddy. What was conflicting him was he didn’t know who the other man was and whether he should tell his mummy what he remembered. He talked it over with his brother and Sally and they said that he should talk to his mummy in case the man was a good man.

“Mummy, who is Sev’rus? And can I have a glass of water?” Harry asked as he walked into the kitchen to get a glass of water. He saw his mummy there and just blurted out the question.

That shocked Lily enough that she almost fell. She turned to her son and asked, “Honey, where did you hear that name?” She sat Harry down on the counter so they would be eye level.

“I ‘member when the bad man hurt you. I ‘member he was saying that Sev’rus begged him to not hurt you or Daddy. The bad man said that Sev’rus wanted ‘avenge. But he said he knewed that Sev’rus was lying and he hurt Sev’rus and was going to make him watch while he killed you and Daddy. I think Sev’rus might be a good man. So I wanted to know who he is,” Harry explained keeping eye contact with his mummy.
“Severus was a friend of mine in school. We knew each other before we went to Hogwarts. He was the one who told me I was a witch. We were great friends, until we had a little fight and stopped talking to each other. Severus thought the bad man was a good man and so he stayed with the bad man and did what the bad man told him to do. We know the bad man is a bad man so we don’t talk to Severus anymore because he listened to the bad man,” Lily explained as best she could.

“Mummy, I think you should write Sev’rus a letter and axe him if he still thinks the bad man is a good man. I think if Sev’rus begged the bad man not to hurt you or Daddy then he still liked you. You should write him and axed him,” Harry said with an understanding far older than a five year old should have.

Sally had told the boys that they needed to dumb down their talking so that their parents would be happy thinking the boys were growing normally. She explained that their parents didn’t want anyone to think that they were different than other kids. That they were hoping that if everyone saw them as normal then they would treat the twins like everyone else.

She was going to have to talk to James about this. She knew what James thought of Severus, but if he had truly begged for their lives it was the least she could do. After all she had heard that Dumbledore had hired him to be the potions professor and if the boys were going to go to Hogwarts, she didn’t want him hating the boys for what had happened when they were in school.

She knew Severus and she knew how he could hold a grudge and just how petty he could be. He was that way when they were younger. She always liked him, even when he was being an arse. She would definitely be talking to James and maybe Sirius and Remus as well. Maybe, if she got them all together they could fight it out and get it all in the open or kill each other, it could go either way. If she did that she would have to take their wands first.

Now that she thought about it Severus also seemed very cautious of Remus that year and the following years as well. Perhaps he had found out Remus’ secret. Lily knew James hated Severus, but she would try to make him understand that a truce with the Potion Master would be best for the boys. They could hate each other all they want but be civil.

Well Sirius and Remus were coming over to see their godsons today, maybe after the boys went to bed she would sit them all down and talk this out. Either way she was going to write a letter to Severus thanking him for trying to save their lives and asked why he didn’t try to save the boys. His answer would define whether or not he could be trusted.

September 7, 1985

The boys were now attending Muggle primary school. They had managed to convince fifteen families to let their children attend. The children were having a lovely time learning and playing
together with all their new friends. After school they would all come back to the manor and play in the entertainment room, mostly watching movies, sometimes Lily would go over magical theory, while they waited for their guardians to come and pick them up.

The other parents and guardians liked this arrangement, because they had a hard time finding someone who would tend their children while they worked. That and with them attending primary school, which was free, they didn’t have to pay for tutors.

Lily was positive that most of these kids would be sorted into different houses when they attended Hogwarts. They had even convinced two families that traditionally were sorted into Slytherin. And Lily felt that this was great progress.

A house elf popped into the room, “Missy Lily Potter, ma’am, there is being a letter for you,” she said and handed Lily the letter. “Taffy is making sure the letter is being free of all curses. Taffy is not wanted Missy Lily to be hurt again.” The elf nodded her head to show that she had done her job.

“Thank you, Taffy,” she said to the elf, and when she looked at the letter and saw it was from Severus she asked, “Will you go and ask James to come here?”

“Taffy will be doing that right away,” And with a pop she was gone.

Lily turned the letter over in her hands. She was a little afraid of what it might say and she wanted James there just in case it was bad news. Or maybe she was worrying about nothing. Her letter to Severus had been heartfelt and that gave her a little hope.

James came into the room with a confused look on his face. “Taffy said you wanted me and mentioned something about a letter that upset you. Who is the letter from?” he asked as he sat beside her.

“It’s from Severus. We’ve already discussed this, James,” she said when he started to sneer. “We need to make sure that the boys won’t be mistreated when they take his class. That and I feel bad for the way I treated him the last two years of school.”

James put a neutral look on his face. He would do this for Lily and the twins, no matter how much he hated that man. So what if he asked for them to be spared, he didn’t ask for the boys lives. Lily was always blind when it came to her friend. The bad blood between the two men may never be sorted, but Lily would always come first in each of their eyes. “Okay, Lily-flower, for you I will try. Let’s see what he has to say,” he said aloud but silently thought that if that man hurt his wife again, then they wouldn’t have to worry about him anymore because James would kill him and he could make it look like an accident. Dumbledore be damned.

Lily opened the letter and quickly scanned through it and sighed in relief. “He’s agreed to come and talk. He states that he’s willing to hash things out with you boys; however, you will never be forgiven. He states that Dumbledore told him that Voldemort isn’t gone, and confirmed this with the dark mark, and since we may have to fight on the same side, we’ll need to work together. He explained that he knew Voldemort would not spare the boys, so he only asked for our lives. He also states that unless the boys are sorted in to Slytherin he would have to treat them harshly to maintain his cover as a Death Eater. He says if you men can come to an agreement, then the best he could do is ignore the boys, however, he can’t interfere with the house rivalry,” she concluded with a sigh, letting the letter fall to her lap.

She was glad that something could be worked out. She would tell the boys why Severus had to act the way he would. Hopefully they would understand. She hugged James and sighed again. “I know how hard this is for you. Thank you for doing this for me.”
James hugged his wife and thought. ‘The things I do for family. Damn, now I can’t kill the bastard. I will have to tell Sirius not to kill or prank him either. If we did that then the first people they would blame would be us and then any truce we make would be broken.’ He hugged his wife tighter. "Okay, Lily, make the arrangements and I’ll tell the guys," he said.

He only hoped this would work, every single one of them were hotheads and each felt the other was right, well except Remus. Even though Sirius felt bad for almost getting Snape killed, didn’t mean he like the man. James hated Snape because he kept trying to keep Lily from him the first five years of school, though it could be said that James did the same thing.

James always felt that Snape was a Dark wizard, even back on the train ride. He could feel it in the boy’s aura, Sirius felt the same. Yeah, they were young and stupid and didn’t really give the boy a chance, but as the years went by they felt themselves justified. Especially after Snape joined the Death Eaters. Not once even thinking that the bullying they did in school might be what pushed the man into doing just that.

He sighed and hugged his wife harder. He would do this for his family.
My Son Is Not Evil

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*blah* is from Harry Potter Wiki.

Hphphp

September 9, 1985 (while the kids were in school)

James, Sirius, Remus and Severus had come together for a long day of yelling, accusations and apologizing (Lily took their wands). They finally came to an understanding. The men would have no contact with each other, unless it was necessary for the downfall of Voldemort. Lily made no such promise she and Severus started a cautious friendship. It was only cautious because Severus had become quite bitter over the years, not that he wasn’t in childhood, but he was more so now.

Snape kept his darkest secret to himself, praying they never found out that he was the one who told the Dark Lord the prophecy. It was the only reason he bowed to Lily’s pleas for this meeting.

Lily after finally hearing that Sirius had almost killed Severus by sending him to Remus on the full moon, and then having Dumbledore just sweep it under the rug, understood where the bitterness came from. She scolded her men, except Remus who as innocent in all of this. And apologized to Severus for not seeing that something had happened that year. James could be said to be innocent as well, but for the fact that he and Sirius had never once let up on Severus, making as though it was quite okay to lead a man to his death.

James agreed to not prevent or even comment on their friendship (well not to Lily anyway). The men also agreed that if they had to be in the same room with each other they wouldn’t antagonize each other and there will be no snide comments or pranks. They probably wouldn’t even speak to each other as none of them were known for their control, except Remus.

Severus agreed that he would not demean the boys too much when they attended Hogwarts, however, he couldn’t be seen giving them any special attention and would more than likely make snide comments on their brewing skills no matter how good they were. Unless they were sorted into his House. He had to make sure that the Death Eater families though he was still a spy for Voldemort. He had kept in contact with some of those families to spread that lie, telling them he had used Dumbledore’s policy for second chances to keep him out of Azkaban.

Unknown to everyone, even himself, Severus toned down his habit of belittling his students, now he simply snapped at them if they mess up, instead of bemoaning them as moron and dunderheads, the students noticed, but they weren’t going to tell. His lesson plans even changed, so that more theory was taught.

Severus would be better equipped than Remus for getting things in Knockturn Alley, because of his dark mark. Plus, that might give him an edge to the Death Eaters thinking he was trying to find a way to get his false master back.

Lily had convinced him to get her some more research material and to not tell Dumbledore. If Dumbledore knew she was looking into why Voldemort was still around he might go to the
Wizengamot and tell them she was a Dark Witch and try and take her children again.

**December 24, 1985**

Lily and James decided to take the boys, Sirius, Remus and the Longbottoms to the London Zoo. They had been going Muggle London since the boys turned five, so the twins would be well educated on Muggles.

They usually went to theme parks. The look on all the pure-bloods faces the first time was hysterical. Sirius, being the speed junky he is, loved the rides. This time however they were going to the zoo.

Harry had seen the advert on the Internet and wanted to go. Since it was Christmas time, everyone was off work, so they decided to go now.

They went to all the shows, had some lunch and picked up many souvenirs for all their friends from school.

“Well, where should we go now?” Lily asked, it was getting close to closing time but they had an hour to see one more exhibit.

“I want to go and see the snakes, please,” Harry said almost pleadingly. He had heard the snakes on the Internet and they were funny.

“Okay, sweetie. Is that okay with everyone else?” Lily asked as she looked at everyone to see if they were in agreement. Everyone nodded their heads or gave confirmation. So they headed to the reptile house.

There were snakes and lizards of all kinds in glass displays. When they got into the exhibit Harry started giggling. Gary leaned to his twin and said, “What are they saying, Harry?”

“They’re complaining that they’re not getting enough to eat and they’re making fun of all the people staring at them,” Harry whispered back. “See that snake over there? The big green and black one? He just called the fat man in front of him a walking walrus with a mustache,” Harry giggled with his brother.

They had learned a month ago that Harry could talk to snakes, but Sally told them not to tell anyone because they would think that Harry was a bad wizard, because the bad man that had hurt them could talk to snakes and he would tell the snakes to hurt people. She made sure to tell the boys that Harry was not a bad wizard and the people who thought that were stupid. The boys felt bad for not telling their parents, but they didn’t want them to think that Harry was a bad wizard. Sally was also coaching Harry on how to use parseltongue for his magic. It was slightly stronger than Latin and quicker too.

Gary was a little depressed that he couldn’t talk to snakes, he wanted to be just like Harry, but he knew Harry was special, so he let it go and supported his brother in learning this new magic. And if the Wizarding World ever found out that Harry could talk to snakes and called him a bad wizard then Gary would yell at them and call them stupid, even if his mummy would punish him for it. He would stand by his brother.

“Boys, why are you giggling? Did you see something funny?” Lily asked she had a feeling that Harry was a *parselmouth*; she didn’t share that with James, yet, because he was a pure-blood and he wouldn’t react well. She wanted to do some research first. Maybe she could ask Severus to get some books on it next time he was in Knockturn Alley. She would tell him she was still doing research on Voldemort.
“I heard something funny, Mummy,” Harry said with a slight blush to his cheeks, not really lying, but still feeling bad.

“Okay sweetie,” Lily said patting her embarrassed son on the head. She would have to talk to Harry in private later to see if he would tell her the truth. “Let’s go see the snakes,” she said taking the boys hands and leading the way.

Harry giggled the whole time they were there. Snakes were funny.

Later that evening when James, Sirius and Remus were outside flying and the Longbottoms had gone home, Lily took the boys to the entertainment room. She sat them down and looked at them for a minute.

“Boys, is there something you want to tell me?” she asked with a stern mum look.

The boys looked a little guilty staring at their feet. They really wanted to tell their mummy. Sally whispered behind them, “I think she already suspects so it’s okay, you can tell her about the snakes, but not about me.”

Harry looked at his mummy afraid she would think he was a bad wizard, but felt guilty that he didn’t tell her. He hugged Gary for comfort and courage. “I can talk to snakes,” he whispered as Gary hugged him give him love through the bond. If his mummy called Harry bad, he was gonna yell at her.

“How long have you known you can talk to snakes, sweetie? And why didn’t you tell me? I hope you know you can tell me anything,” Lily asked gently not wanting to make Harry anymore afraid than he already was. It broke her heart that he felt he couldn’t trust her.

“We knew in November, we had heard Daddy say that it was evil to talk to snakes and we didn’t want you to tink that Harry was an evil wizard. We’re sorry.” The boys were crying now, they really didn’t want their mummy to hate Harry.

“Oh, sweeties, Mummy will never think you are evil wizard. Mummy raised you to be good boys. And even if you ever did go bad, Mummy will love you anyway. That’s what mothers are for,” Lily said getting up from the sofa and giving her boys a big hug to make sure they knew she loved them. “I’m going to tell your daddy later. I don’t want you to tell him yet. Let Mummy tell him so that he understands. Okay?” Lily said decisively, she would make sure those men understood her son was not evil.

“Okay Mummy,” both boys intoned still sniffling. They were just glad their mum still loved them and she said she would always love them, even if they were bad, which made them feel much better.

“Okay, why don’t you boys go and get ready for bed? Santa is coming tonight and you need to be asleep so he will come,” Lily said giving them a gentle push out the room, frantically going over in her mind how she was going to tell James.

“Okay mummy. We love you. Good night,” the boys said again together, both feeling lighter now that one of their secrets was revealed.

“Don’t forget to brush your teeth and wash your face. When you are done getting ready come back down and say good night to your daddy and uncles,” Lily called to them as they ran up the stairs. “And quit running in the house.”

“Okay mummy” they said slowing down, but walking very fast.
“It’s kinda creepy when they do that,” Lily said to herself going off to find the men.

She had talked to Molly and found out that it was normal for twins speak together. Molly said they will start finishing each other’s sentences soon. That just showed they had a really strong bond. Molly told her that the reason one boy had more magic than the other, thinking Lily was talking about Gary, was because magic was more like souls than anything else.

The boys looked alike and sounded alike, but they each had different souls. She pointed out that George and Fred might be pranksters, but it was George that made the plans and Fred that carried them out, because Fred’s magic was just a little stronger than George’s. Not by much, but enough that when he stole her wand it worked better for him. Her brothers had been the same way. So it was normal that ‘Gary’ was more powerful than ‘Harry’. She said as they grow older and the bond formed better than they would share magic and it would make them both powerful, though ‘Gary’ would always be more powerful than ‘Harry’.

She had better write Severus tomorrow and see if he can help with books on *parselmagic*. Since Harry had this skill, they would try and train it as best they could. If he figures out why she really needs those books she hoped he would keep it to himself. Now all she had to do is figure out how to tell James.

**January 20, 1986**

Lily sent the boys to go and play with their friends in the entertainment room when they got home from school. She had done all the research she could and found reference on many *parselmouths* that were not Dark wizards. So she needed to sit the men down and explain what was happening. She had a house elf go and tell the men that she needed them in the sitting room on the east side of the manor. She didn’t want to take the chance that Harry and Gary’s friends would overhear. She set another house elf to watch them and let her know if any of the kids left the room. The men entered the sitting room.

“What’s up Lily, you look serious,” James said as he sat down next to her taking her hand in his.

“Oi, she is not me,” Sirius exclaimed, sitting on the sofa next to Remus.

“That joke is getting old, Sirius,” Remus said shaking his head.

“I’ve something very serious to talk to you all about. I need you to listen to me before you start exploding. I have done a lot of research on this so I know what I’m talking about.” Lily took a very deep breath. “Harry is a *parselmouth,*” she said then she held up her hand when it looked like they were going to start shouting.

“Listen to me,” she yelled making them be quiet. “Now I know what you all are thinking. Harry is not evil. I think he got this from Voldemort,” ignoring the flinches, “I don’t know how, but I’m pretty sure that is what happened or Gary would have it too. I’ve done some research and found that there were many grey and light wizards who could talk to snakes. There are some countries than respect and admire *parselmouths*. The only reason we don’t is because of Salazar Slytherin and Voldemort. But I have found some *parselmouths* in British history that were never Dark.

“This one in your Chocolate Frog card collection; *Phillipus Aureolus Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim (1493—1541), more commonly known as Paracelsus, was a secretive alchemist about whom very little is known. He also contributed to the field of medicine, having been a notable physician. Paracelsus's bold theories challenged medieval thought. Paracelsus was credited with the discovery of *parseltongue.*"* She flipped through her notebook, determined to make these guys understand that her son was not evil. So she started her lecture, not once pausing until she was done.
“Then there’s, Jordan Tomlinson, who lived in 1658, who helped keep the snakes from his home village. There was a forest that held poisonous snakes and he helped them stay away from the village and also collected their venom for the local potion master. He was considered a Grey wizard.

“And also, Joel Coxhead, who lived in 1759, who was also a collector of venom for potion masters. He made his living doing that and as a traveling healer. He was considered a Light wizard.

“There are many more, I listed them in the research you can look them up yourselves. I want you to know I will stand by Harry no matter what. I want all of you to do the same. You need to read the research I’ve collected before you go off half-cocked. Don’t you love Harry as much as I do? Don’t you want to protect him from anything that will come his way? He is just a little boy. He is terrified that you will all think he is evil and hurt him. Or worse leave him or take Gary away from him. Do you really want that?” Lily asked sternly she would make these pure-bloods understand if she had to beat it into their heads.

The men looked at each other and then looked at Lily. They could see she was determined to protect Harry. James was thinking that he would stand by Harry no matter what. The godfathers were still mulling over what she said.

“Lily can I see the research you’ve done? I want to be prepared to defend Harry if this somehow reaches the public. They might not listen to me because I’m a werewolf, but if we all have the same facts and stand together then it might work,” Remus said he would do anything to protect his godson.

These people were the first to accept him as he was. They had hired him to teach the twins and all their friends theory magic so he could afford to pay his rent. They knew he would never accept charity.

Lily handed the papers to Remus and he and Sirius started to read them over. James reached over and brought his tense wife into a hug. “Lily, why didn’t you trust me enough to tell me sooner?” he asked, he could sort of understand, but he wanted hear her reason.

“Oh James, I wanted to, but I’ve heard what you’ve said about parselmouths and I didn’t want you to shun Harry or think he was evil. You didn’t see the fear in his eyes when he told me about talking to snakes. He was terrified. I needed to make sure you all understood that the public opinion on parselmouths was wrong,” Lily cried feeling bad that she didn’t trust her husband, but her boys came first.

“It’s okay Lily-flower, I kinda understand. I’ve said some pretty hateful things about parselmouths so I get where you’re coming from. I’m just upset that my family didn’t trust me enough to know I love them,” James said hugging her tighter.

“I’m sorry James,” she said leaning into his shoulder, “its human nature to fear the unknown. I didn’t know how you would react after everything you said,” Lily said hugging him harder, drying her tears. She was happy this was turning out well.

“We stand together, no matter what. As long as you don’t cheat on me, you can tell me anything. That is what family is for.”

“Hear, Hear,” Sirius said after reading the papers, he now knew that everything he had been taught was wrong. “We stand together.”

“Okay,” Lily said sitting up and looking at the men and seeing acceptance in their faces. “We’ll sit the boys down after supper and explain that we’re all on the same page and that we love him no matter what.”
That night they did sit the boys down and explain it to them. The relief in Harry’s eyes was enough to know that he had been really scared. They did remind the boys that the public would think he was an evil wizard and that he needed to keep this a secret. He couldn’t tell is friends, yet. Maybe when they were older and could understand better.

They told the twins that they could come to them with anything. The boys were really happy and felt safe, but they were feeling guilty that they couldn’t tell them about Sally; maybe. They would talk to her tonight or tomorrow and plead with her to let them tell their family.

After all she had been wrong about this.
January 21, 1986

It was getting close to supper time and the boys were going over what they should say to Sally. They really wanted their parents to know about her. But, they were afraid on how they would react. They trusted their mum and dad, as much as they trusted Sally. And after last night they trusted their parent even more.

“I think she’ll understand if we just explain that if they catch us talking to air they might think we’re crazy. I mean, we can’t say she is a ghost, because, everyone can see ghost and Dad would know if there was one in the manor,” Harry said as he followed his brother into the game room.

“I know, Harry, I’m not arguing with you about that. I just don’t think we have to trick her. I want them to know too. I just think we should come up with a stronger argument than that,” Gary argued as he sat on one of the sofa.

Harry sat next to him and huffed, “Well what do you think we should say?”

“Look, I think it is time we told them everything. We should tell them how much magic we can do and how smart we really are,” Gary said picking up a book off the table and thumbing through it, “I think we should explain to Sally that we think it’s time to let them know how much we trust them. It’ll help us in the future if they know how many players there are and everyone can plan together, it only makes sense. Both Sally and our parents have done so much for us to make the future easier.”

Gary put the book down and turned to his brother and waved his hand indicating the room and continued his points, “This room and our friends from Mum and Dad. Our magic and our learning from Sally. If they can plan together then it would be that much easier for all of them. What would happen if Mum planned something and it goes against Sally’s plan? Who would we go with?” he questioned.

“We need to present a united front when we get to Hogwarts, because, I don’t trust Dumbledore — not after he tried to separate us as babies. He thinks I am the Boy-Who-Lived and I wouldn’t put it above him to try and separate us when we get there,” the younger twin said with a little depression and worry. He really didn’t want to be the Boy-Who-Lived and he didn’t like that everyone ignored Harry.

They had made great progress with kids their age and younger. All his friends, except Ginny, just saw him as just another boy, but there will be hundreds of kids they didn’t know when they got to Hogwarts. All those stupid books, that they couldn’t get off the shelves because they were listed as fiction and they didn’t use his real name just called him Boy-Who-Lived or BWL so legally they weren’t liable, make him out to be some kind of wizard prodigy. And the stupid public was eating it up. If it weren’t for the Muggle world Gary would never be able to leave the house.

“I know Gary,” Harry said giving his brother a one armed hug. “I think we can trust them too. If they
didn’t get angry at the whole parselmouth thing then I think they can handle this. Do we bring Padfoot and Moony in this too? If we are going to tell Mum and Dad, then we might as well tell the whole family. What about Neville and his parents? Dumbledore might try something with them too, you know? Probably not but do we take that chance?” He asked all the questions crowding his brain which frustrated and worried him.

Harry knew that their parents didn’t want them to grow up special. They just wanted them to be normal little boys, but he didn’t think the public was ever going to let them do that. He felt really bad for Gary, it was supposed to be Harry that got all the attention, not that he’d like it any better than Gary did, but he wanted the attention off his brother so Gary could go out into public and not have to worry about all those retarded people. That and he could tell Gary was very depressed about not being able to walk down the Alley with his friends.

Sally appeared behind the boys, they seem to forget that she was almost always around them. She had delegated all her responsibilities to her minions and she was to only be contacted on really tough cases where the person refused to move on. The rest of the time she was here with the boys.

“You forget I can hear you boys,” she said causing the boys to jump. “I’ve heard your arguments and I agree on some things. You know I can’t read the future I only get vague feelings. I have been around for a long time and I understand how humans think better than you do. But, you were right about the whole parselmouth thing and that we should have told you mum right away. She would have done exactly what she did, research and talked to the men.” She got a thoughtful look on her face as she sat in front of the boys.

“So I think we should tell your mum and dad and uncles,” then she held up her hands and continued, “but right now that is all. I need them to promise not to tell anyone, I’ll ask them to take a vow to stress how important what we are about to tell them is. And if they don’t know Occlumency then they need to learn it before you go to Hogwarts. How much magic you’ve learned and how smart you are, are secrets that cannot get out to anyone outside your family. Not yet anyway, maybe later when your friends are more mature or you know more about them.”

“So when do you think we should tell them? I really want to get this done as soon as possible. I don’t like keeping secrets from my parents,” Harry said as he sat back down on the sofa. Gary sat beside him and waited for what Sally would say.

Sally leaned forward in her chair and looked both the boys and stated decisively, “I think you should ask that they all come here after supper. Ask your dad to make sure your godfathers are here as well. Tell them that it is very important.”

“Okay, Sally,” both boys intoned getting off the sofa to go and wash up for supper.

Later that night after supper, right before everyone left the table Gary spoke up, “Mum, Dad, we have something we need to tell you. Can you call Padfoot and Moony? We need to tell them too. It’s not something bad, promise,” he stated at their expression and he held his hands up to calm the parents down. “It’s just something weird that we feel you should know about it.”

“Is this something I’m going have to yell at you or ground you for?” Lily asked worried. It was only yesterday the adults talked about Harry being able to talk to snakes and she wasn’t sure if they could handle anything bad right now.

“No, yes, maybe. I’ll tell you that we’ve been keeping a secret for a very long time, but we had a really good reason. And we want to tell you now, but we want to tell everyone at the same time. Can we meet in the game room?” Gary asked as he and Harry, as one, jumped from their chairs and ran out of the room before his mum answered. They ran to the game room and sat on the and waited.
Lily and James looked at each other in shock. Lily was getting up to go and yell at the boys, but, the look on James face made her stop. “Lily I don’t think the boys would keep a secret if it wasn’t important. Besides they are only five, how big of a secret could it be? Could really be bigger than Harry being a parselmouth?” he asked, tempting Fate in Lily opinion, but she listened to him quietly. He was making sense, after all. “Why don’t you finish your tea and I’ll go call Padfoot and Moony. I’ll get Taffy to tell the boys we’ll be there in a minute. But you need to calm down before you go,” James said he knew his wife had quite a temper, but it was not needed right now.

James had grown up a lot since school and being in politics had made him realize that a calm manner would get him what he wanted faster than yelling. He should have listened to Remus all these years.

Lily took a deep breath and sat back down. She grabbed her cup and finished her now warm tea. James had called the house elf and sent her to the boys and left to Floo his friends. When the men came into the room ten minutes later she got up to follow. They all made it to the game room and sat around facing the boys. She looked at James and let him start.

“Okay boys we’re here. What is it you wanted to tell us?” James said.

Harry looked at the worried faces of the adults and took a deep breath and said “You know the night Voldemort came and tried to kill everyone?” nods and flinches all around, “Well something else happened that night. Mum, you really died, but Death, we call her Sally, said she had a feeling that you would be needed and brought you back. She is the one that made the cutting curse so you couldn’t have any more kids. She said in order to bring you back a price had to be paid. She said she asked your soul first and you agreed. She has been with us ever since.”

Sally appeared on the sofa next to Gary and gave a little wave. The adults jumped and grabbed their wands, forgetting this was a magic null room.

“Sally has been teaching us things. We know loads of wandless magic, passive stuff. And as you can hear from the way we are talking, we are a lot smarter than you think. We’ve been reading since we were three. Little stuff —like children’s books. We didn’t start reading the heavy stuff until we went to school,” Gary said taking up the conversation.

“We wanted to tell you now, so that all of you can make your plans together. All of you are trying to keep me and Gary safe, and it would be easier if you worked with each other,” said Harry playing with a cushion from the sofa glancing that the adult faces trying to judge how they were taking this. So far it was mostly disbelief even though Sally was sitting right here.

“We’re sorry for keeping this a secret, but you have to understand we’ve been listening to Sally almost as long as we’ve been listening to you,” Gary again continuing taking the cushion from his brother’s nervous hands. “She told us that we needed to keep it a secret, but she also said that if she ever told us to do something bad we were to go straight to you and tell you about her. Sally is not any more evil than me and Harry.”

“Let me get this straight,” said Sirius pointing at Sally, “You’re Death, but, you don’t want to hurt anyone. We’re not going to die by seeing you?”

“No,” said Sally shaking her head, “it doesn’t work like that. You will only see me after you die not before. I’ve taken a special interest in the boys because Voldemort was supposed to die that night. He didn’t though, he used found a way to run from me. He created soul containers, you call them horcruxes. Lily was on the correct trail with all her research. The problem is that there isn’t much written about them. If she and I work together, we can hopefully find them and I can destroy them. I can’t find them because they are in the land of the living,” Sally as she looked at the adults and saw they were horrified that they were correct that Voldemort was going to come back. “There is
something I need to tell you that I haven’t told Harry yet. Harry has one of these in his scar. I saw it implant there that Halloween night.”

Everyone, including the boys, gasped and then they all started shouting in disbelief. Lily and James ran to their children and pulled Harry and Gary into a four way hug.

Sally let this go on for a few minutes knowing they needed to get it out of their system. Then she shouted above everyone. “SIT. DOWN and shut up. If you listen I will explain,” Everyone sat down, shocked that such a young looking girl could yell that loud, and tried to calm themselves. James and Lily had the boys on their laps, not letting go for any reason.

“Does that make me evil after all? There’s a piece of an evil man in my head. Am I going to hurt my family? I don’t want to be evil,” Harry started get hysterical again, hugging his family close.

“Harry look at me,” Sally said gently getting up to kneel in front of the distraught boy. “I would have never left that in you if it was going to turn you evil. You and your brother are very gentle souls with an abundance love for everyone you meet. There is no way you will ever, ever be evil. Do you understand? Take my word for it I have seen evil souls and yours is not one. I saw your soul that night when the Killing Curse hit you, and it is bright and beautiful. Do you trust me?” Sally asked looking into Harry’s eyes hoping to calm the poor boy.

Harry looked into the eyes of the little girl he had known most of his life. She had never lied to them, she had always made sure they have fun while they learned and never said anything bad to them. “Yes, Sally, I trust you,” Harry said leaning back against his mum, feeling much better now.

“Well I sure the hell don’t,” Lily stated leaning forward around Harry so she could get in Sally’s face. “I have no idea if you are who you say you are. I have no way of knowing if you are out to hurt my children.”

Sally touched Lily’s forehead and made her remember the night she died. Lily reeled back in shock and then started crying. “Oh my god, you’re telling the truth. You gave me back my children,” Lily said tears of sadness and happiness streamed down her face. “James, I remember, I died. I was so worried about the kids that night. I was afraid that they would die too. I thought you were already dead. I remember talking to…Sally and I remember making a deal with her. It’s like the boys said,” She said looking at her husband then looked down at the boys and said, “I’m still upset with you boys for keeping secrets. If you want all of us to trust each other you can’t keep secrets. Understand?” she said sternly to the twins. They nodded their head in unison.

Lily and James settled further on the sofa with the boys still in their laps. Sally took the armchair at the side of them. Sirius and Remus were sitting on the sofa on the other side.

“Okay,” Sally said, “now that everyone is calm let me tell you why I feel that Harry needs this horcrux in his scar. Like I told the boys I can’t see the future, but I get vague feels, like mothers intuition, when this horcrux imbedded into Harry I got the feeling that one day it would save his life. I have been monitoring it ever since. It seems to be contained in the scar and is not affecting him in any way. To make sure of this I have been teaching both boys Occlumency to go along with the meditations you Potters do each night. Every one of you that doesn’t know this technique will start learning it tonight when we are done talking. You must know it before the boys reach Hogwarts.”

The adults all nodded their head. All the pure-bloods had a pretty good start on Occlumency; it was taught to all pure-bloods when they were young. Remus didn’t have to worry about it, the wolf in his mind kept everyone out. James made a promise to himself he would help the boys and Lily learn it.

“Now that you all understand how important all this is I need vows from all of you that you will not
reveal anything that has been said or will be said this night or any time we discuss what we talk about,” Sally demanded looking into everyone’s eyes.

The adults looked at each other in silent discussion, after a few minutes of this there was a nodding of the heads. Lily and James put the boys on the sofa and the adults left the magic null room and went into the hallway. They deliberated how they were going to phrase the vow, because vows can be tricky things. They finally decided to keep it simple, yet all encumbering. The vow they all took was thus:

_I, insert name here, do vow on my life and magic that I will never tell anyone not in my company right now about Sally, also known as Death, or anything she says that is so noted must be kept secret on this night or any other time, as long as it is said it must be kept secret. Or unless given leave by Sally. On this I vow._

After the vow was spoken and everyone returned to the game room positioning themselves the same way they were before. Remus spoke for the first time. “Okay, tell us everything and then we can start planning on how to keep the boys safe.”
Sally’s Lesson

AN: all I can say is I’ve read this over and over and can think of no way to split up the rather long speech. So sorry for the length of Sally’s lesson.

Disclaimer: I don’t own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belong to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her.

Hphphp

Still January 21, 1986

Sally looked at the anxious adults and sighed and began her lecture, “Okay, like the boys told you, I’ve been around them since they were fifteen months old. At first it was just at night when you were asleep. I would teach them little things, like changing the color of their toys or having them float the toys to their crib. As they got older I started on bigger things, like shields and stinging hexes, nothing really demanding.

“I’m the one to who told the boys not to tell you. I heard you talking some nights just wishing that you had normal little boys and that you wished you had never heard of the prophecy, so when they were old enough to understand, I told them that they should act like normal little boys. I even walked them through how to talk for someone their age. And it worked, you were happy,” Sally shrugged looking around at the adults, again. “At first they reacted like any other child and it was great fun keeping a secret from adults and playing pretend. Then as they learned to read and started think logically they wanted to tell you about me, but I told them no. I told them you wouldn’t understand that adults were scared of Death.

“After we discovered that Harry was a **parsemouth** we started to become worried that you would reject him,” she said and held up her tiny hands to ward off the protestations. “I know now that I was wrong and I’m sorry, but can you really blame us? Think of your initial reaction and tell me the first thing that popped into your head wasn’t horror and then denial and you probably thought ‘My son is not evil’. After the boys saw that you would love them not matter what, they decided to come to me and convince me to tell our secret.”

The men looked sheepish; it had been their initial reaction. Thank Merlin, Lily was more levelheaded than them. Had it not been for her research then it might have been harder to overcome years of teaching.

“There isn’t much more to tell, just that the boys are very smart and can do limited wandless and wordless magic,” the deity continued after noting they were still paying attention. “Harry’s better than Gary, but they are both pretty good. Now that you know you can help by seeing if you can’t get their friends caught up with at least Gary. Not in intellect just in magic. The boys were born smarter than their friends. I’m sure my sister Fate had something to do with that, because they are smarter than even Lily was when she was younger. However, if you get their friends to start thinking logically it would help. I’ve notice most wizard lose their common sense when they really start doing wand magic.” She pointed around the room. “Including you men, so lessons in logic might benefit you as well. If you quit making everything about pranks there might be help for you yet.”

Lily silently agreed, she was already making list of television programs and websites that would
further the children’s knowledge along.

“There is much to learn on the Internet, many self-help sites will help get the brain ticking. Hogwarts goes a long way in reducing logic by telling the young children not to question why magic happens just except that it does. People like Lily and Severus are among the few that graduate Hogwarts and still have logical thinking. Most Muggle-borns or raised are so caught up with magic they forget everything they were taught in primary school.

“This is one of the reasons that I brought Lily back; she has kept James on his toes, mostly, since they’ve been married. James then kept you two,” Sally said as she pointing back and forth between Sirius and Remus, “on your toes, sorta. Remus has always had a pretty good head on his shoulders, however, he lets his wolf decide to much in his life,” she shrugged at Remus, who knew what she was saying was true and nodded his head in agreement.

The rest of the adults stayed silent wanting to hear what she had to say. The boys were leaning back trying not to fall asleep, they already knew what was happening.

“What we need to do is to continue doing what your are doing,” Sally continued and looked a Lily, “maybe add some Muggle moral stories to the kids play time, those kid shows on the television help a lot. This will keep the kids wondering and thinking for themselves, I can’t stress how important this is,” she said sternly with a mild glare. “You guys did the right thing bringing them all together and putting them in that school.

“We also need to make plans on how to keep all the kids together when they get to Hogwarts. Dumbledore will try and separate them, after all house rivalry is tradition. I have a feeling that it might work on a few of the boys’ friends, but if we can get the rest to continue to think for themselves then the boys will have a large support group. And maybe they can start reuniting all the houses like the souls of the founders tell me they want,” Sally said looking off into the distance, seeing the souls of the founders nod in agreement.

“Wait, you can talk to the souls of the founders? Didn’t they like pass on to a….. I don’t know, higher realm or something?” Sirius said looked around trying to see what Sally was looking at.

“Of course I can talk to them,” Sally snapped as she brought her focus back on the group. “I’m Death I know all souls that have passed on. They come to the crossroad realm to look at the living world to see how much is has changed. The founders have been moaning to me for centuries about how divided the houses in Hogwarts are.”

“But wait, didn’t Salazar want the houses to be divided?” Remus asked in confusion.

“No, don’t be stupid,” the little girl spirit snapped. “Use your brain; you were always the smarter one of you three. That castle and all its wards didn’t show up overnight you know. Those four worked together for decades to make a school where all magical children could learn. They were very good friends. Of course they fought, don’t you guys? They were human after all.

“After one of the major fights, Salazar left to cool off and never came back. History doesn’t know what happened to him. But I do, Salazar was killed by religious mongers that were out to kill all wizards and witches. They knew who he was and wanted him to tell them where Hogwarts was and who was there. He died keeping their secret, therefore keeping all of them safe, including the Muggle-born,” Sally sighed remembering when Salazar died and how sad he had been that he could never make up with his friends.

“How he died was one of the reasons he didn’t want Muggle-borns in the school. He feared that they too would be tortured to give away the secrets of the castle. And he was correct. Many children died
that way. It was a good thing the wards kept Muggles away or the castle would have fallen shortly after it was established,” she said defending the Salazar.

“I remember how sad they all were when history told their story and made them out to be godlike. They were only human, powerful yes, but only because they worked together,” Sally looked around the room to see how they were taking the story. She could see some doubt, after all the men had grown up being told that Salazar was an evil man. It was going to take some time and maybe more history from her to convince them otherwise. The boys and Lily though seem to believe her. “The point being is they want the school united as it once was and maybe it will be the boys and their friends that do that.”

“Maybe, but won’t most the of the school turn against the kids if they try. They’ll be going against tradition and all. Kids can be cruel you know. You should hear some of the names the bullies call Gary and Harry because of their scars. And if Hogwarts’ students all think that Gary is the Boy-Who-Lived, they might be harder on him if he doesn’t live up to their expectation,” Lily said still taking in everything they learned that night.

Who would have thought that Death was a little girl and that she had been friends with the boys since that night? She was still very grateful that …Sally brought her back and seemed to want to work with them; however, it was still a lot to take in.

“Yes kids can be cruel,” Sally agreed with a nod of her little head, causing her pigtails to bob. “We will have to prepare all the children that that might happen. They all need to know about peer pressure and how to fight it. Which, is way I am stressing the point that they all need to be taught to think for themselves. Remember all those other children you’ve brought into your group can be taught. Most of them are still young and impressionable and just want to make friends.

“I know Gary doesn’t want to use his fame for anything, because he knows it is false; however, he can use it to be heard among the children. If he and Harry and all their friends stand together they have a chance. I know there will be people who will be cruel and petty, especially among the older children, it can’t be helped. I will be there with them to help them through those times. If you can find a way for the boys to communicate with you instantly that would help them a lot. You can support them as well,” Sally said trying to push that if they work together they will not fail.

“Oh, Oh we have those mirrors we can give them. We can make more and maybe even try to market them. We can give them to the kids, that way if they are in separate houses they can still talk to each other at night,” James said snapping his fingers as he came up with the idea.

“That’s a great idea James. I’ll see if I can’t find the notes on how to make them. I know a guy that can help us market them. His name is Hayden Robson, you remember he was in Ravenclaw a year above us. I dated his sister, Madison, who was in our year. He told me before he graduated that he was going into the family business. They make most of the gadgets that are sold in Zonko’s so maybe he will help us market these,” Sirius said rubbing the back of his head in thought. “Not sure if we can sell them in Zonko’s though, they only sell joke stuff. We’ll have to figure out which store to sell them in, maybe Wiseacre’s, they sell all sorts of weird stuff. Oh well,” he shrugged, “we can give it a thought later, but for right now we can make them for the kids. And maybe we should recreate the Map so all the kids can get around the school. We should think up a name for the kids group, it will give them a sense of unity like us when we called ourselves the Marauders.”

“Ummm…” Harry who had been quiet up till now spoke. “We think we, the kids, as a group will think up a name. After all we’re the ones who’ll have it. So I think it is only fair that we think it up. Besides I’m not sure if I trust you not to think up something stupid,” He said with a smile showing that he was mostly joking.
“Oi, we don’t think up stupid names,” Sirius said with a mock growl.

“Wormtail,” Remus said in all seriousness.

“Oh, yeah, that one was pretty stupid. Who thought of that again?” Sirius said a little shamefaced.

The adults just looked at him shaking their heads. But, at least the atmosphere wasn’t as heavy anymore, which is what Harry wanted.

“We think that the mirrors and map are great ideas. We’ll get together with the kids after school tomorrow and see what they say about the name thing. We’ll still have to dumb ourselves down, but, I think we should try and start coming off a little smarter. We don’t want them to bump us up a grade so we get separated from the group. However, when we’re here at the manor, we should start coming off smarter then we have been. I know some of them will start getting jealous, but, as long as we don’t lord it over them we should be okay,” Gary said far older that a five year old should be.

“It’s getting late and the boys have school tomorrow. We should get together over the weekend when all the other kids are at their homes. We need to continue this when we are all awake and alert. We need to talk about who we’re going to tell or not. But right now the kids need to go to bed,” Lily said taking Harry off her lap and stood him up nudging him toward his uncles.

After everyone left she would go and tuck them in. They may be smarter than other five year olds but they were still children. “Give you dad and uncles hugs and kisses, and mummy will tuck you in after you brush your teeth and wash your face,” she said, taking Gary off James lap and prodding him to Remus and Sirius.

“Okay Mummy,” the boys said as they did what they were told. They were just happy that the evening went as well as they hoped. “See you later Sally,” they said as they ran out of the room to get ready for bed.

“Quit running,” Lily yelled.

“Sorry Mum,” the boys yelled back not really slowing down.

“It’s so weird when they do that. And it kind of creeps me out when they talk in plural,” Sirius said giving a false shiver.

“Molly said that it’ll get weirder the more they mature. She said they’ll start to finish each other’s sentences like they’re reading each other’s minds. She doesn’t know if they are actually doing that. When she asked her brothers and sons about it, they wouldn’t tell her,” Lily informed them. “I can’t wait for when they do that, because it means that no matter what they won’t ever be separated.” She was hoping beyond hope that it happened before they get to Hogwarts.

Sally knew why that happened, but she wasn’t telling, because not matter how much trust these adults had with each other and her it was a twin thing, a secret kept for many generations. She heard the Weasley twins say that they would tell the boys what to do when it was time, just as their uncles had told them before they died, even though the boys had only been two. The Prewitt twins had given them a diary and told them to read it when they were six and they would know a secret. The Weasley twins were happy they had a secret from their family that only they would know, and kept the diary hidden and read it last year. They had also expressed that it was too bad that there was no one tell the Patils and since they were not part of this group they may never learn. They thought it would be neat to have so many sets of twins that could read each other’s minds.

“James?” Sally said drawing the man’s attention to her.
“Yeah?” James answered, wondering what else she could want.

“Do you know the Patils?”

“Ummm, no, I know of them, I remember thinking about them when the twins were born, they had a set of twins born a few months before the boys, girls I think. I remember reading about them and thinking that it was good thing the boys wouldn’t be the only twins in their year,” James said his forehead wrinkled as the remember what he had read.

“I think you should find them and befriend them, maybe see if they will let their girls go to school with your boys. I have a feeling those girls will need the boys help with something. It would be easier if we get them together now so a trust can form.”

“Okay, I’ll look them up tomorrow when I go to the Ministry. More children are always welcome,” James said as he tried to figure out just how to do that. The Patils didn’t have political clout, because they were foreigners, maybe if James sponsored them they could get a better foothold here in Britain. It was something to look into.

“Okay, well I’m off. I have things to do. You won’t see me until the weekend, but I’ll be around,” Sally said as she faded out of sight.

“That’s creepier than when the twins talk,” Sirius said with a real shiver this time. This whole night had been weird and it was going to take a few days to get it all sorted out in his brain. But now that he was going to start Occlumency again it would be easier. “Well I’m off too. I want to go to sleep and see if the world rights itself in the morning. Have a good night everyone.” He slapped his hands on his knees and got up from the couch.

“Good night, Padfoot. See this weekend if not sooner,” James said waving off his best friend.

“Hold up Padfoot and I’ll walk with you. Night James, Lily,” Remus said as he joined Sirius at the door.

“Night boys,” Lily waved them out. “Let’s go to bed, I need to tuck the boys in so I’ll join you in a minute,” She said giving James a kiss on the cheek.

“Okay sweetheart, I’ll see you in a few,” They separated and Lily went to the boys’ room. She gave each sleeping boy a kiss on their scars and hoped that tomorrow wouldn’t hold any more surprises. She went to bed cuddled up with James and went to sleep.
The Ritual and the Mutineers

AN: I have been remiss in not thanking you all for your reviews and favorites and follows. I apologize for that. I just get so caught up in the writing of my stories that I forget. So please forgive me and take my thanks in the heartfelt manner it is given.

Disclaimer: I don’t own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belong to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her.

Hphphp

July 31, 1987

It was close to midnight and Harry and Gary were sitting in a clearing behind the manor. It was as far away from the house as they could get yet still be inside the wards. They had drawn a circle in salt to keep all the magic inside so their parents wouldn’t hear or feel anything. They had notes all around them that they were reading to make sure they had everything right.

The Weasley twins had sworn that this was something they needed to do to cement the twin bond. They might not have believed them had it not been for the Patil twins standing up for them telling the boys they had done the same ritual a few months earlier.

Their dad did get ahold of the Patil’s and brought them into the group, which now consisted of twenty seven children, twenty in their year. The Muggle School had to hire out for more teachers and a mild Confundus Charm kept them from wondering where all the extra kids had come from.

After school Lily taught them critical thinking. She got the lessons from a website off the Internet designed just for teaching children. Most of them took to it rather well, though not all. Even the year below them had a few extra children, but Dad said that most pure-bloods that were sending their kids to school decided to do it closer to their home.

It was a successful plan as more and more wizard kids were sent to Muggle schools. Some of the bias pure-blood on the Wizengamot tried to stop it, but too many members were doing it with their own families.

The Weasley twins had approached the boys about a year ago and had given them this ritual. They told them that they wouldn’t find it in any book because it was a twin secret. Part of the ritual was that they could never talk about it unless it was to pass it on to other twins. While the boys hated that they would be keeping another secret from their parents at least this time they could tell them is was a twin secret and not even Sally knew. Or so they thought.

The notes said they had to be alone at midnight on their seventh birthday, they were hoping that this day was okay, since technically, Gary was born August 1.

“It’s almost midnight. Do we have everything?” Harry asked Gary looking around and gathering up the papers.

“Yeah, the circle is drawn, the candles are ready and the knife is cleansed and sharp.” Gary said helping his brother, there couldn’t be anything, except the knife and them in the circle.

The candles marked the five-point star on the boundaries of the circle. They had no idea where this ritual had come from; the Weasley twins didn’t know the history of it either. Just that their Uncles
said it was very old. It was nothing like all the rituals he had read about in the Potter library. It was more like a Wiccan ritual then a wizard ritual.

Not that wizard used a lot of rituals; they mostly just used spells unless it was something huge. Gary had looked up similar rituals on the Internet and found that a lot of non-magical people used these. He wondered if it actually worked for them.

“Okay everything is ready,” Harry said placing the papers outside the circle and pinning them down with a rock. “Let’s sit in the middle and face each other. I have an alarm spell set just outside the circle so we will know exactly when to do this,” Harry said a little worried, this would be big. If it worked correctly he would be able to read Gary’s mind.

The Weasley and Patil twins said it was not a subconscious thing, though they would always know what each other is feeling, they had to want it to send thoughts to each other to read the others mind, kinda like a telephone. But still Harry didn’t know if he wanted to read Gary all the time, he only got slight impressions now. Did he really want to know what Gary was feeling all the time and did he want Gary to know what he was feeling all the time? But he would do this ritual, because if it helped his brother bounce back from the whole Boy-Who-Lived depressions he gets every now and then, then Harry would help. It’s what big brothers were for.

Gary was of like mind, he didn’t want his brother to feel the depression either; however, he knew that this could save their lives one day, so he would do it as well. That’s what little brothers were for.

Harry lit the candles in the order the ritual called for starting with the north and going clockwise. He intoned the secrecy spell that was in the notes as he closed the circle. Then the boys knelt facing each other in the middle of the circle.

Harry had the double sided dagger in his hand laying across his right palm. Gary put his right hand over Harry’s making sure the dagger was across his palm as well. They waited until the alarm went off. They had to do the ritual quickly; it was short and to the point. The boys only had to say three lines, but they had to say it and the same time.

The alarm sounded and Harry pulled the dagger down in one quick motion. As their blood mingled they incanted:

“Let it be known that the blood of Harry and Gary Potter hereby binds these twins forever. We stand together. So mote it be.”

There was a large flash of green light, much like the Killing Curse, and they leaned together forehead to forehead, hands still clasped, breathing hard, and the dagger on the ground between them. For one second, time stood still and the twins were one.

The soul piece in Harry’s forehead screamed silently in agony for the love it felt going between the boys. The black piece of magic slowly cleansed and turned a light grey. It was still trapped in the scar, but it would no longer try to influence the child nor would it show as dark magic on any medical scans.

When time restarted the boys looked at each other and grinned.

“That was weird, but totally worth it,” Harry said ecstatically, feeling light and refreshed and he could tell his brother felt the same.

“Yeah, I haven’t felt this good in a long time. Thanks bro, you’re the best,” Gary added equally happy.
They started to take down the circle counter-clockwise and with a wave of his hand all the blood cleared away. They had gotten pretty good at wandless magic; the other Mutineers knew a little bit of it. Well most of them anyway, there were still a few who were lazy and only interested in sports and didn’t want to learn, but since they were still friends the others just tried to nudge them along.

The ritual was done and the boys were on their way home to finally get some sleep. They couldn’t hear each other yet, but the ritual said it would happen overnight while the bond realigned. They were just thankful that the circle worked at keeping the magic in and they hadn’t woke their parents. Tomorrow was going to be a long day. As they drifted off to sleep they thought about their group of friends.

Sally’s suggestion about muggle moral stories went a long way in helping everyone with that. They all now brainstormed on what kinds of magic should work and what kind to leave alone for now. They were questioning everything and researching on all kinds of magic that was listed as fantasy and Wicca.

Everyone’s grades escalated and they were doing really well in school. They still weren’t as smart and Harry and Gary, but most of them accepted that. The boys had slowly brought the groups attention to how smart they really were, by helping them with their homework and adding references to essays.

Lily had brought out her old Hogwarts first year school books and showed the kids all the improvements she and Severus had made on charms, transfiguration and potions, so that they didn’t go in blind like a lot of kids would. She mentioned the few clubs that Hogwarts had and suggested they ask Professor McGonagall for an empty classroom where their group could study, maybe one of the classrooms already used for a club then they would simply use it when it is not in session. That way none of the professors or the Headmaster could accuse them of sneaking around. They could open the group to more people and choose who they would add to the Mutineers.

Remus and Lily were a lot of help with the theory of magic. James and Frank were teaching them some minor politics and laws that would affect minors. Sirius stressed how important classes were if you wanted to play good pranks.

The Mutineers didn’t know everything about the Potter family, but they had all been together for two years and the boys had never lied to them (they just kept Harry’s core a secret and Harry never showed off).

The fact that Potter manor now had ten computers went a long way in forging the group’s solidarity. Many of the children talked their parents into also getting a room set up like the game room they all studied in. A few of the parents with Lily’s help did so. Unfortunately, not all of them could afford such a room (computers were quite expensive and satellite wasn’t cheap either) but the Potters didn’t mind sharing so there were many slumber parties.

Right now the Mutineers consisted of:

1. Harry Potter… half-blood …parents are Lily and James (Lily was muggle-born)
2. Gary Potter …half-blood …parents are Lily and James (Lily was muggle-born)
3. Hannah Abbott …half-blood …parents are Giffard and Mary (mom is muggle)
4. Alice Mcfay …muggle-born (lives near the manor) …parents are Hollis and Kestrel
5. Susan Bones …half-blood … parents are dead, aunt is Amelia (head of the DMLE)
6. Terry Boot …pure-blood … parents are Dee and Albert
7. Mandy Brocklehurst …half-blood … parents are Rachelle and Kenton (dad is muggle-born)
8. Michael Corner …half-blood … parents are Wright and Wren (dad is muggle)
9. Spencer Jackson …pure-blood (a year below the boys)… parents are Pearl and Derryl
10. Tracey Davis …half-blood … parents are Aric and Grace (mom is muggle-born)
11. Fay Dunbar …pure-blood … parents are Cherry and Lewin
12. Ellie Godfrey …muggle-born (one year below the boys) … parents are Austyn and
   Dora
13. Seamus Finnigan …half-blood … parents are Kiera and Finbarr (dad is muggle)
14. Daphne Greengrass …pure-blood … parents are Celeste and Natalie
15. Astoria Greengrass …pure-blood (a year below the boys.)… parents are Celeste and
   Natalie
16. Wayne Hopkins …half-blood … parents are Jeanne and Wayne (mom is muggle)
17. Megan Jones …muggle-born (brought in by Hannah Abbot)… parents are Peter and
   Gwenog
18. Neville Longbottom …pure-blood … Frank and Alice
19. Padma Patil …pure-blood … parents are Sarita and Mayur
20. Parvati Patil …pure-blood … parents are Sarita and Mayur
21. Leanne Jameson …half-blood … parents are Elliot and Aimee (both parents are
   muggle-born)
22. Luna Lovegood …pure-blood (a year below the boys) … parents are Xenophilius and
   Pandora
23. Percy Weasley …pure-blood (four years above the boys and will be going to Hogwarts
   this year.) … parents are Molly and Arthur
24. Fred Weasley …pure-blood (two years above the boys) … parents are Molly and Arthur
25. George Weasley …pure-blood (two years above the boys) … parents are Molly and
   Arthur
26. Ron Weasley …pure-blood … parents are Molly and Arthur
27. Ginny Weasley …pure-blood (one year below the boys) … parents are Molly and
   Arthur

They didn’t have many muggle-borns, because they had no way of finding them. Most of the group
was brought in by Frank and James through their political connections.

The next day Harry woke up to a voice in his head, “Harry, Harry, wake up. Can you hear me?
You need to wake up to let me know if it worked,” Harry sat straight up realizing that was Gary in his
head. He let out a whoop and jumped around his room.

Gary came into the room still in his pajamas. “Harry! Did you hear me? Why didn’t you answer?”
Gary said grabbing his brother as he ran by.

“It worked! Sorry I didn’t answer you, but I was just too excited. It worked, Gary, it worked. Now I
will always know where you are,” Harry thought to his brother as they started jumping up and down.
Soon James and Lily came into the room to see what all the noise was about.

“What has you two so excited?” Lily said with a smile, it wasn’t often the twins got this enthusiastic
about anything.

“Yeah, you’re making enough noise to wake the dead,” James said sharing his wife’s smile.

The boys had a quick conference in their head as they settled down and decided to tell part of the
truth.

“Well we woke up…” Started Harry.

“and felt the bond was…” Gary continued.
“much stronger than last…”
“night. So we got really…”
“excited and wanted to celebrate.”
“Sorry we woke you,” Said both twins together.

Lily was ecstatic she had been waiting for this for years. She ran and grabbed the boys and started jumping up and down with them. “Oh, I’m so happy for you boys. I’ve been hoping this happened before you went to Hogwarts. This is wonderful. We should celebrate. Since it is Saturday do you guys want to go to the zoo again? We haven’t been there in years and we can take as many of the kids from your Mutineers who can bring their parents. I’m not watching a large group of seven year olds with just me, your dad and you uncles. So get dressed, start making floo calls and see who can come, we’ll leave at 11 am.” She gave them one more hug and started to run out of the room.

“Hey don’t I get any say in this?” James said with a smirk, making Lily stop her flight.

Lily and the twins smirked back and said, “NO.”

James smirk dropped and his shoulders drooped in mock defeat. “I see I’m not wanted. *sniff* I will go and call your uncles and tell them what a cruel family I have. *sigh* Where did I go wrong?” throwing his hands in the air in pretend dejection.

Lily and the boys looked at each other and tackled James to the floor and started tickling him. After about five minutes they stopped their attack.

“So Dad…” said Gary with a smile.
“can we go…”
“to the zoo? And…”
“will you ask Padfoot…”

“and Moony if they will come?” Gary finished, “this is fun, but from the look on Dad’s face I don’t think we should do it too often,” He projected to his brother, looking at the slightly devastated look on James face. It was the same look he got when the Weasley twins got started. They twin-talked all the time, with everyone.

“Yeah I think you’re right. I also think we should keep it in the family for now. I don’t want Dumbledore to know about it. We can’t even tell the Mutineers because of the whole twin secret that was in the ritual,” Harry thought back to him. ‘This is really neat and I’m glad I can have private thoughts to myself.’ He thought privately.

“Don’t worry Dad, we’re not going to be like the Weasley twins, we’ll be more like the Patils,” Gary said trying to reassure his father. “We’re just so excited we can do this. But since we don’t want Dumbledore to know then we won’t do it outside of the family. Maybe the Mutineers,” he shrugged, “maybe not.”

“Good, good, because when the Weasley twins get started I get a pain in my neck just trying to follow them. Okay now that that is out of the way. What say we all get dressed and eat? I’ll call your uncles and see what they are doing. You boys split your list and start asking everyone else. Let me know how many and I’ll have one of the house elves make a picnic,” James said as he started to walk away. Now that the plans were made he could go and get ready.
Lily went sprinting past him. “I’ve got first shower,” She said as she ran by. James gave chase, maybe they could share.

In the end around ten of their friends could come. It was a last minute thing, so a lot of families had other plans. Fun was had by everyone and Harry stayed out of the Reptile House so he wouldn’t laugh at the snakes making everyone think he had finally lost it.

It was a good day.
A Group Divided

AN: The chocolate frog cards mention I found on Harry Potter Wiki. Thanks again for the reviews, follows and favs.

Disclaimer: I don’t own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belong to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her.

Hphphp

July 15, 1989

James and Lily were holding a little get together with the parents and guardians of the Mutineers. They wanted to go over the report cards everyone should have received by yesterday and celebrate good grades. They did this every year; most of the parents were really impressed with their children’s learning.

The Potters also had finally decided to see who was going to stand with them about Dumbledore. While they didn’t think that Dumbledore was a bad person, they did think he had an overwhelming urge to control everything. This was proven by how many times he came by before the twins were five trying to convince the Potters to separate them. He stopped after Lily threatened to castrate him.

If he knew that they were going to teach the Mutineers as much wandless magic as they could, before they got to Hogwarts, he would come and stop it. Because some of the Mutineers would more than likely be sorted into Slytherin and Dumbledore, for all he spouted school unity, didn’t trust Slytherins or anyone not from a purely Light family.

The Potters were going to try and get the parents to understand that there were things that needed to happen for the sake of the children. They wanted to have everyone know that the kids wanted to merge into a study group for all houses. They were hoping that they could express how they wanted that to happen and keep the kids from bending to peer-pressure.

They had done a lot of work with the kids and now they wanted the parents’ permission to teach the kids *Occlumency* and let them know how they were doing in the theory category and wandless magic. The kids had promised not to do wandless magic at their homes since it was frowned upon, though not illegal. The Potters were pretty sure that some did anyway, but since no one complained they figure that those parents’ were either proud of the fact that their children were doing so well or that it was such a little thing that it wasn’t worthy of mentioning.

So far no knowledge about the magic their children had learned after school had left the core group of parents and they wanted to make sure it stayed that way in Hogwarts. The Potters knew it was going to be hard since parents like the Weasleys were firmly in Dumbledore’s court.

The adult Potters were waiting in the Floo room, while the younger Potters were in the game room waiting for the kids to join them. The first family to Floo in was the Weasley’s.

“Good to see you Molly. Where is Arthur?” Lily said as she led everyone to the room they had set up for the adults, leaving James and Tilly, a house elf that did most of the housekeeping, to wait for the rest.

“Arthur had to work, he is sorry he couldn’t come. Working on a Saturday, I don’t know what they’re thinking making him work the weekends. I’ll tell him how everyone is doing when I get
home, the poor dear. Goodness knows that man works to hard. Should I send the kids to the game room?” Molly said as she sat down on one of the chairs waving towards her noisy children.

“Yes we have one of the house elves, Taffy, watching them. She’s really good at tending the children. If something happens she’ll come get us right away. You kids know where the game room is. Harry and Gary are already there,” Lily addressed the boys and Ginny.

“Thank you, Mrs. Potter. I’ll make sure they get there,” Percy said heading for the door and motioning the rest to follow.

“Yeah, perfect Percy…” said George standing straight and pompous, making Percy stop and glare at his younger brother.

“will make sure, we…” said Fred copying his twin.

“don’t get into…”

“trouble,” they both said in a dignified voice trying to copy their older brother, noses in the air.

“Leave your brother alone you two and just go and play with the others. Behave yourselves,” Molly said glaring at her two most troublesome boys.

“Come on Ron and Ginny, we know when we are not wanted.” The twins grabbed a sibling each and left the room. Percy followed.

James came into the room followed by Sarita and Mayur Patil and Gwenog Jones. “Take a seat everyone,” He said waving to all the chairs. He turned to Lily and said, “I’ve sent the kids to the game room from the Floo room and I have Tilly waiting for everyone else while we get these guys comfortable. I should go back and wait for the others. I don’t think the Longbottoms are going to be able to make it, but we can talk to them on the boys’ birthday.”

“Okay Honey. I’ll help everyone get settled here,” Lily said giving him a kiss on the cheek and gave him a playful nudge towards the door.

After about a half an hour of chit-chat, everyone that was coming settled in the chairs provided with tea and cakes in hand. Mary Abbott, Kestrel McFay, Dee Boot, Rachelle and Kenton Brocklehurst, Wren Corner, Cherry Dunbar, Amelia Bones, Aimee Jameson, and Pandora Lovegood were the rest that come for the get-together today. Most everyone else was working or had other plans. That was okay, because if everything went as planned the Potters would send out letters for another get-together with everyone that was not here and they would continue until everyone that was for the plan was sorted. The ones that showed they were with the plan would be invited back for another meeting and leave the ones against out.

“Thanks for coming everyone,” James said after everyone was settled. “There are few things we wanted to talk about, seeing as how our kids are all friends and school mates. I figured we could start by sharing the report cards and do some bragging. I see everyone brought theirs with. That’s lovely. So who wants to brag about their children first?” James said looking around at all the proud faces.

“Oh, my boys’ are doing much better than I thought they would, even the twins. Arthur is so proud and wants to thank you for introducing us to this school and letting him use your computer. I really didn’t think it would work as well as it has,” Said Molly with such pride in her voice, which was rare when talking about her youngest kids, except Percy and Ginny. “Those library computers help Arthur so much with his job, though I still think he is working too hard, the poor dear. He doesn’t even care that the other departments give him a hard time. He has everyone in his department going
to the library and looking things up. He is trying to get the Ministry to set up a room like yours there, but they won’t. You know what the Ministry thinks about Muggles, so they won’t even listen to him,” she said shaking her head, she had been against the idea of the children going to a Muggle school at the start, but now she was happy Arthur talked her into it. Her babies were learning far more than she could teach them. It would do them well when they get to Hogwarts.

“That’s wonderful Molly. Tell Arthur it’s not a problem and we were happy to help,” said Lily as she looked around the table to see who else would speak up.

“I’ve heard nothing but good things about that little group they have going on, the Mutineers, was it? Faye won’t quit talking about them, she goes on and on about how much she is enjoying school and having so many friends. She was a little lonely before you came and explained to us what you were doing and asked us to join. I think it’s wonderful how they all work together. Her grades are marvelous,” Cherry Dunbar said with pride, “We have a computer room just like yours, only smaller. I can’t get Lewin off it sometimes. All he wants to do is look at what sport’s teams are doing what; he never knew Muggles played so many sports. Sometimes I curse you Potters for getting us into these computers,” She said with a smile showing she was just kidding, mostly. Then her face got serious. “I know when we all agreed to send our kids to your home after school we said that we wouldn’t tell anyone what you were teaching them, however, I feel it is time we tell Dumbledore what the kids are learning so he can adjust the teaching accordingly.”

Amelia Bones, Aimee Jameson and Molly Weasley nodded their head in agreement. They trust Dumbledore to do what is best for their children. The rest of the group snorted, they didn’t really like the headmaster and didn’t trust him, because of his politics and his ‘Greater Good’.

James and Lily looked at each other, they had discussed this before and since they had only really taught the kids’ theory and some minor wandless magic, like summoning and such, they decided to let those that wanted to, to go ahead tell Dumbledore. The plan was to get everyone else together on the sly and talk about teaching the Mutineers more magic in secret, mostly defensive magic, nothing like they were teaching their own twins. They had been hoping not to go with plan B, but they knew they were only being optimistic.

Lily nodded her head. “I’m okay with that. If you feel that he should be told then that’s okay by me. We only wanted to make sure our children got along okay and that they were truly learning in the Muggle school. So now that we know that it worked you can tell whoever you want, its fine by us. Does everyone else agree?”

“I’m not sure that’s a good idea,” Mayur Patil said with his thick Indian accent, looking around the room to see who agreed and who didn’t. “I don’t want the kids shunned or taken advantage of by the other first years. They’ve all worked hard to get where they are. If others wanted to do that they should have taught their children just like we taught our… well the Potter’s taught ours,” waving at the Potters. “I know James told me that he was approaching everyone he knew and asked us to do the same. So they had their chance,” He said feeling happy the Potter’s had brought his family into the fold. His twins were closer than they had ever been before and he knew he had the Mutineers to thank for that. Dumbledore had had the opportunity to help them when they had first come into this country and he did not. His wife nodded in agreement, she felt the same way.

The rest of the parents, besides the four, agreed with Mayur. They didn’t want Dumbledore to know about what they had been up too. The Potters had told everyone that Voldemort might not be dead, though the press and the Ministry disagreed with them and they wanted to give their children every advantage.

The four that wanted to tell Dumbledore didn’t agree and didn’t want their children to think about
It was surprising that Amelia was agreeing with telling Dumbledore as she had mentioned in the past that she didn’t really trust him. The Potters wondered what had changed her mind.

“No, if you want to tell Dumbledore then it is your right. If you don’t then that is okay too,” Wren Corner said trying to get everyone calm. “We only agreed at the beginning because we didn’t know if this was going to work and we didn’t want to get anyone’s hopes up. What the Potter’s started was something that had never been tried before. But no one should tell you who to tell and who not to,” He said sending covert looks at all the disagreeing parents. He had the feeling that there was more going on then what was being said, so he was playing devil’s advocate and taking a wait and see approach. “I want to say that Michael has done really well, his grades are wonderful and I’d like to be able to brag about him.”

The discussion went back and forth for about an hour and it was decided in the end that Dumbledore could be told about what the kids were learning. For the next hour after that everyone got to brag about their children. No one could really dispute that their kids were learning a lot of things that would help them when they get to Hogwarts, like writing essays and such.

The group broke up after about two hours; the kids were brought from the game room by Taffy, with much noise and complaining.

James had few notes in his pocket that he palmed to the people, who disagreed with telling Dumbledore, while shaking their hands as he said good-bye. On it was a date that they were going to try and get everyone with like minds together.

*While the adults were talking, in the game room*

Most of the kids were sitting down cross-legged in the middle of the room and enjoying going through their chocolate card frogs and trading them, if they didn’t want one or had a double, they discarded it in the middle of the circle and whoever wanted it would pick it up. The pictures were frozen as they were in the magic null room.

“So what do you think our parents are talking about?” George said as he threw down Alberic Grunnion, the guy who had invented the Dungbomb. Padma Patil picked it up but didn’t replace it.

“Well Mum said they’re going to celebrate most of us doing well on our report cards, ya know bragging and stuff. And then talk about if we should get more magic education, ya know potion theory and stuff, before we go to Hogwarts,” Gary said as he looked through his cards and plucked Dymphna Furmage, a witch who got famously abducted by pixies, down in the middle to see if anyone wanted it. Playing down what the Potter really wanted to teach the Mutineers.

“I heard my parents talking last night and they said that they want to tell Dumbledore what we’ve been learning. Mum said that if they told him we might get special classes,” Faye Dunbar said picking up Gary’s card and discarded, Laverne de Montmorency, the witch who invented a large number of Love Potions.

“Not bloody likely.” Terry Boot said shuffling through his cards to see if he had any doubles. “Dad says that he hasn’t changed the curriculum in years. Not even when someone wants to learn ahead. Dad said when he was reading for the year ahead he asked if he could get tutoring in charms, Dumbledore told him that he didn’t want people studying ahead as it would make others feel left behind. So Dad studied during the summer and just didn’t tell him about it,” he shrugged, not finding any doubles in his pack. “If we want to keep ahead we’re going to have to keep what we’re doing...
secret. Not sure how we’re gonna do that, but with Harry and Gary here I’m sure they will come up with a plan.”

“Language Terry,” Susan Bones said putting her cards down and looking around the room as it started to get serious. “Auntie says we should tell him anyway, because there is no way we can keep secrets from the Headmaster while in the castle.”

The Potter twins looked at each other with a little bit of worry, they really wanted to teach those that could keep a secret more then what they were learning now. They had been taught far more than the other Mutineers, their family knew that when Voldemort came back they would be in the middle of everything. So after all the other kids when home each school night James, Remus and Sirius taught them up to third year DADA. And then after everyone else went to bed Sally taught them more. They knew if they were going to keep this group together then they would have to teach them how to protect themselves. It was a good thing they hadn’t handed out the mirrors yet.

“I agree that Dumbledore should be told. I don’t know why we didn’t tell him in the first place,” Percy said looking down on everyone as he always did. He felt since he was the oldest everyone should just listen to him.

“Mum said that they wanted to make sure everything would work out. You know how most pure-bloods are, if it’s Muggle they want nothing to do with it. Even the Wizengamot tried to stop us from going to Muggle schools. Mum says that if they knew we could do the little bit of wandless magic we do they would try to stop that as well. Sirius says not to worry because they really have no way of tracing that,” Harry said giving up on the cards as no one else was going through theirs.

Daphne Greengrass nodded her head. “I’m surprised my parents agreed with your dad when he came and talked to them. My dad thinks we should keep quiet, he thinks that Dumbledore will try and break us up when we get to Hogwarts, because some of us will go into Slytherin and we come from neutral families,” she said, ignoring Ron’s glare, he never liked to think about any of them going into Slytherin. She also knew Dumbledore looked down on Slytherins and she wanted to keep her friends. She knew that her best friend Tracey would have a hard time there because she was a half-blood. Her father and Mr. Davis were teaching them defensive spells at night after they got home. She had a feeling that the Potters were up to something and she hoped for her and Tracey’s sake it was helpful.

“Well it really doesn’t matter what we think. Our parents are going to do what they think is best for us, so if your parents think telling Dumbledore is cool then that is what they’re going to do,” Gary said picking his cards back up. “Does anyone have Babayaga or Hengist of Woodcroft? I’ve got three of Gondoline Oliphant so I’ll trade ya,” Steering the conversation back to the cards, he knew what his parents were doing and it wouldn’t help to let those who shouldn’t know, know.

“Oh wicked, I’ve been looking for Oliphant... I’ve got two of Babayaga so I’ll trade ya,” Ron said holding out his card and the trading went on from there, the conversation stayed mostly on school work and Quidditch.

When Taffy told them the parents were getting ready to leave they all packed up their cards and noisily went to the Floo room. Gary and Harry noticed their dad palming the notes into people’s hands and figured there must have been parents that wanted to tell Dumbledore, it was okay they had a plan, sorta.

It was a shame that Mrs. Weasley didn’t get a note, they were hoping that they could keep the Weasley twins, maybe after they got to Hogwarts.
A Like-Minded Gathering

AN: all spells were taken off Harry Potter Wiki.

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Hphphp

August 1, 1989

It had taken three such meetings to get the die-hard Dumbledore fans sorted out from the rest. This was the last meeting of the summer and most of the kids would be going back to the Muggle School for the last time. Percy and the Weasley twins would be in Hogwarts this year; Percy had started two years ago, the twins will be starting this year. It was the only day they could get everyone together.

James was looking into have their boys sign up for summer tutoring so they didn’t fall too far behind in the Muggle studies. He encouraged the other parents to do the same. He figured that those that couldn’t afford it could join them.

They only had to keep this from six families; the Weasleys, the Bones, the Dunbars, the Jamesons, the Jacksons and the Finnigans. Everyone else was gathering tonight to talk about teaching the children *Occlumency*, Disarming Charms and a few Shielding Charms. They were also going to talk about how to keep the kids together when they got to Hogwarts.

It was around 7 p.m. and all the adults were in the dining room and the kids were playing outside. Seated around the extended table were the Davis’, the Brocklehursts, the Abbotts, the Mcfays, the Boots, the Corners, the Godfreys, the Greengrass’, the Hopkins, the Jones’, the Longbottoms, the Patils, and the Lovegoods. Snacks and drinks were provided and everyone settled.

“So,” James said clapping his hands together and looking around, “glad you could make it. You all remember Sirius and Remus, right? They don’t have any kids in the group, but they know what’s going on. Everyone okay with them being here?”

“I’ve no problem if they think they can help,” Aric Davis said. He was very worried about his little princess. He was sure she would get into Slytherin and he knew how half-bloods were treated there and if the Potters had a plan to help her, he and his wife were all for it.

Nods were seen all around the table.

“Good, let’s get started then. Well, what Lily and I were thinking it to teach the kids *Occlumency*. *Occlumency*, for those that don’t know, is a way to shield one’s mind from intruders. I know Dumbledore takes peeks at the student’s minds to keep the trouble makers down. He used it on us, Marauders, all the time when a prank went off,” he said and he winked and Sirius. “Good thing we already knew it. Too bad Peter didn’t or we would have gotten away with everything. Oh well,” he said with a shrug and got back on topic. “It’s in the school charter that the headmaster can do this, if he is able. The only time he can’t do it is when there hasn’t been any trouble. I, for one, don’t think he abuses it, but I want to be on the safe side. That and we have no idea who else can, though Lily thinks Snape,” he held back a sneer, “can, but she isn’t sure.

The rest of the parents looked around the table at each other, they hadn’t known that Dumbledore could read their minds. Some who had had problems in school now realized why they had never
gotten away with lying. Well if it would protect their children from his manipulations they would come up with a way to teach them. They whispered for a few minutes then James drew their attention back to him with a clearing of his throat.

“Everyone knows that Dumbledore wants to split up our family and I wouldn’t put it past him to take a peek if he felt it was for the ‘Greater Good’,” James said with a grimace on his face. “It shouldn’t be too hard for the kids since we’ve been having all the Mutineers do an hour meditation every day after school. All they need to do now is put up some barriers. We’re thinking of doing a guided meditation right before bed to help them with that. Anyone have any ideas? We know the basics,” he said pointing at Lily, Remus and Sirius, “but if you know something that has worked for you that you think might help we are all for hearing it,” James said squirming down in his chair to get more comfortable.

“I think I might have a few suggestions,” said Wright Corner making everyone look his way. “I’ve been looking things up on the Internet and researched guided meditations. I wanted to make sure that Michael was getting the best out of it. There are a few that try and organized the mind and from what I know about Occlumency, I think we can put these together and get the kids to have a pretty strong barrier before they get to Hogwarts. We can also create a mantra to keep the children from losing their heads in confrontations. If you have a pen and paper then I can write stuff down as we talk about it,” He said thinking of all the things he had researched. Once a Ravenclaw always a Ravenclaw. The Internet was a godsend to his busy brain.

Lily called for Tilly and asked for some notebooks and pencils. Tilly popped back in with the requested items and looked around the table to see if everyone had what they needed and seeing that they did popped back out. Lily put the items in the middle of the table so everyone who wanted one could grab it.

Wright took a pencil and notebook and started jotting down his idea. Xenophilius and Pandora Lovegood both grabbed a notebook each to do the same. The rest took the notebooks and pencils, but didn’t write anything down. They would wait to hear everyone else’s idea’s before they wrote anything.

“Oh, before I forget we have these two way mirrors,” James said holding up what looked like a square hand mirror. “They basically work like a cell phone. A cell phone is phone that can be carried around in your pocket so you are never without them. It’s pretty new so I’m not surprised you don’t know about them,” he added at all the confused looks. “But they gave us the idea. With these mirrors the kids will be able to talk to you and each other no matter what house they are sorted in. We’ll be giving them to every family in the Mutineers, we just wanted to give these to you guys tonight and show you the security feature that won’t be on the other mirrors.”

Sirius and Remus started handing out the mirrors to the parents, one for each parent and kid. Remus took up the explanation. “We used these mirrors when we had detention back in the day. If you tap the fourth rune on the back that will silence the call. It is a modified Muffliato. There’s a notice-me-not charm on the mirror itself, only those that know about the mirror will see them. There is another notice-me-not on the security rune, that way the other parents and children will not see it. I would strongly caution the kids not to use them in the hallways unless it is an emergency. If the staff finds out that the kids have these mirrors they might wind up on the ban-list and we don’t want that,” he said taking a breath. “We’re going to add a pocket to inside the boy’s robes with a Disillusion Charm. We suggest you do the same for you kids. The mirrors also have an Unbreakable Charm.”

Most everyone was picking up the mirrors and examining them. “How does it work?” Sarita Patil wanted to know.
“If you look on the back you will see some runes,” Sirius said showing everyone the four runes on the back. “The first one is to keep the mirror in normal mode. The second to keep it in silence mode. They should use this in class and in the Great Hall, which will make it so if someone calls they won’t hear their name called out. The third is to see if anyone called while in silence mode. The fourth is to put it in to security mode. That is the one that will muffle the mirror, it is only on these mirrors and can’t be seen by anyone who doesn’t have the same type of mirror,” he explained, pointing to each rune. “The kids can duck into an empty classroom between classes and check to see if anyone needs anything. The fourth will be what they would use when they are in bed or something.” Shaking his head with a small snicker he said, “Now I know we can tell them not to use them in detention. But I also know that that didn’t work for us. So you all can do the parent thing and tell them what you will. If they want to talk to someone they only have to say that person’s name to the mirror and wait for them to answer. We’re still working on a way that they can talk to more than one person at a time.”

“Here let me show you,” Remus said and picking up a mirror he tapped the first rune. “Grace Davis,” he said into the mirror.

The mirrors in front of Grace said her name and she picked one up. She could see Remus’s name in the mirror. “Um, what do I do to answer it?”

“Just say the name that shows up in the mirror.”

“Remus Lupin.”

“Hi, Grace,” Remus waved from the mirror. “Okay, now tap the fourth rune.”

She did and suddenly no one saw the mirror nor could they hear the conversation. They saw Grace make a motion with her finger and heard Remus say. “To end the calls just say ‘done’.”

“Done,” Grace said and the mirror went blank. “Ohh, this will come in handy. We can always talk to our little girl,” She said getting excited she too was worried about Tracey.

There were excited whispers around the table as everyone not writing picked up a mirror to look at them. Some trying them out by calling someone at the table. They played around with them for about ten minutes.

“Right,” said Wright getting everyone’s attention. “I’ve got a few things to add for the **Occlumency**. I think the Lovegoods do too. What I’ve researched on the Internet tells that an impenetrable bubble would be best to use for a shield. It is said they would be harder to break through because they flex. If we add this into the meditation the kids to each night then that should, in theory, give them a good shield before they go to school,” He looked down at what he had written. “Also we might want to add organizing one’s mind on there. Who has the softest voice? One that is strong yet comforting. The sites I went to say that that is the best kind of voice to use. If we make up a script and have that person read it. We can use a recording spell on a crystal and play it for the kids every night,” he said putting the paper on the table in front of him and looked around the room. Everyone was looking thoughtful.

“Well,” Xenophilius said. “Can it be a child? The best voice I know among us is Luna’s. The only problem I see with that is keeping her on script,” He said with a soft smile for his quirky little girl. Not that he had room to talk, but Luna was usually in a world of her own, much like her mother.

“Yes, your daughter’s voice will be best, but I think in order for this to work we will need a stronger, more adult voice. Maybe Pandora can to it. Her voice is almost as dreamy as Luna’s. And I think she will stay on script,” Rachelle Brocklehurst said making a note in her notebook. “If she could put a little more softness in her voice I think that it would be perfect.” Everyone nodded, say what you
want about the Lovegoods they did have soothing voices.

“I would be happy to help keep the wrackspurts from infecting the children,” Pandora said in her soft voice looking at everyone with her large blue-grey eyes. Many people shaking their head in amusement, they were quite used to Pandora by now. “I can put the children in a meditative state; if you write up the script then I’ll follow it. We,” pointing to herself and her husband, “also think that we should add creatures outside and inside the bubble. The children can pick what creature they think will best keep people out. We could say something along the lines of ‘now that you have your bubble, think of the scariest creature you can and have them patrol your mind’ or something like that.”

Lily gave a slight smile. “That would be lovely Pandora. I’m sure you would be great at it,” she said.

The adults talked about this for about forty-five minutes and they came up with a workable script.

“Now all we need is a quiet room with some soft music in the background,” Dee Boot said after they had a workable script. “I’ve heard that that is the best type of situation for recording these types of meditations. Do you have a room that is quiet? Or music that will work?” she asked Lily.

Lily thought for a moment, the manor was pretty big, but she wanted to make sure that no outside noise was heard and that the room had good acoustics. She looked at James after all he grew up here.

James thought about it and decided that the room on the top floor in the back would be a good place. It had been a music room before; his mom used it so she would not be disturbed by James when she practiced. The music room was moved to the first floor after his parents died. Both the boys like to play a large variety of instruments. Not that they were very good, but they had fun. “I’ve got a room in mind, but how are we going to get the music to play there. There is no wireless up there for some strange reason the stations don’t come in right.”

“Well,” Hollis Mcfay said, “you can always record the music and then play it back while Pandora records her part.”

“That’s a great idea. Not sure why I didn’t think of it,” Lily said shaking her head. “Recording charms won’t work in the game room so we are going to have to find a wireless and see if they have a classical station or soft natural music to record. Why don’t I do that while you guys talk about the defensive spells we want to teach the kids,” she said as she got up from the table.

“Okay, Lil’s we will write it all down so you know what we decided,” James said.

Lily left the room to find a wireless and a quiet room, the rest of the parents talked about the spells they felt would be best to teach their children. They decide on: Expelliarmus (causes whatever the victim is holding to fly away), Petrificus Totalus (temporarily binds the victim), Protego (shields the caster), Stupefy (knocks the victim out), Finite (cancels most other spells), Muffliato (muffles sound so people can’t hear you) and the Jelly-leg Curse (causes the victims legs to be jelly like).

They figured that these would be easy to learn and within the children’s magical ability. They’d tell the children to use them only if absolutely necessary. Other than that go and get a teacher, walk away or anything but get into a fight. They wanted the children to stay under the radar. They were hoping that Occlumency and this guided meditation would keep the hot-heads from getting into too many fights.

Lily came back about a half an hour later with a good recording on a crystal. She played if for everyone to see if they agreed. They did. Pandora was then shown by a house elf which room to go to for her part. She came back forty minutes later and played her crystal for everyone and they
decided that it would work well. James called Tilly and had her go to Diagon Alley and get enough
crystals for all the kids so they could record it for them.

Everyone got comfortable; some got up and chatted to other parents while they waited. Tilly came
back ten minutes later. Pandora went back to the room and recorded the extra crystals and handed
them out when she came back. This took another thirty minutes. The meeting broke up around 10
p.m. and the parents grabbed their kids, who had long since retired to the game room, and went
home.

“So,” Harry said after everyone left, “how did it go?”

“It went very well. We got everyone to agree to not tell anyone. And we’ve have a small list of spells
we’ll be teaching everyone on the weekends, when the other families won’t be here. It’s too bad that
the other parents aren’t backing us,” James said with a small sigh as they led the boys to their rooms.
“We have a crystal that’ll guide you into a meditation before you go to sleep at night. It should help
you create Occlumency shields and organize your mind better than it already is. We suggest that if
you don’t know the Muffliato then you learn it for your dorm room.” He watched as Lily took Gary
to his room to set up the crystal and tell him the same thing.

“We already know it Dad, but thanks for thinking about us,” Harry said with a small smirk and a
nudge to his side.

“Brat, get into bed and let me set this up,” James said as he tucked Harry into bed and put the crystal
on the night stand. “Good night, son,” he said, as he kissed his oldest on the head, he tapped the
crystal with his wand and soft music started to play. Just before he closed the door he heard
Pandora’s dreamy voice. He met Lily in the hall and put his arm around her and started for their
bedroom. “Let’s go to sleep Lily-flower. It’s been a long night.”

“Hmmm, let’s,” Lily mumbled into his shoulder.

With that the Potters settled for the night.
The Kids Talk

Disclaimer: I don’t own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belong to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her.

Hphphp

August 7, 1989

It had been a week and everyone in the pro-security group, as they called themselves, gathered to see how the crystals were working. While the parents were in the formal dining room chatting, the kids were gathered outside. The parents and the kids that were pro-Dumbledore were not invited that day. They still met with them afterschool since they didn’t want to ostracize them, they just didn’t tell them about the crystals or spells.

They were all playing in the back yard to the Potter Manor. It was huge; with sprawling greens that seemed to go on for miles, though the kids were only allowed to go the first set of wind-break trees. The trees were starting to turn, but the grass was still very green. Some of the children were flying their brooms, for those so inclined. The others were running in the tree line. After playing a rounding game of hide-and-go-seek, which was more fun with brooms, the kids gathered in a circle.

“So,” Harry said after they all settled, “how are the crystals working for you guys? I know I wake up calmer and I’m starting to think straighter. Since we don’t know anyone who knows Legilimency we can’t really test our bubbles.”

“Mummy’s voice is very soothing, she keeps the helographs away with just her talking,” Luna said in her dreamy, vacant voice, so much like her mothers, her wide grey eyes wandered around the group. “I’ve added so many interesting creatures in my mind. I’m sure that the wrackspurts will not be making my mind cloudy, and the added bonus of keeping the helographs and nargles away. They all affect your mind you know. I’ve felt ever so much calmer and my mind is much clearer. I feel that all of you will benefit from these crystals.”

“Okay, Luna, what’s’ a helograph?” Harry took the bait, but her explanations were so much fun.

“A helograph is a tiny creature that, looks like a silver crab, it crawls into your bed at night and whispers facts in your ear making you think too hard to go to sleep. Usually, I drink a cup of nettle tea before bed to keep them away, but this is so much better and I don’t have use the loo quite as often,” the blonde explained with a seriousness that only she could pull off.

Everyone smiled at the eccentric girl; they had long gotten use to her. She was one of the ones that most everyone vowed to protect in Hogwarts. They knew that her quirkiness would cause people to hate her. They already protected her in the Muggle School. The kids there said some pretty hateful things to Luna out on the playground when there were no teachers about.

Ellie Godfrey and Astoria Greengrass were her must fierce protectors since they were in her class. The two girls tried to get Luna to stand up for herself, but she would just wave it off and say it was not the bullies’ fault, that they were infected with some bizarre creature or other. They did finally get her to dress more like a Muggle in school and less like a flower child.

Padma and Parvati gave Luna a big hug and then settled next to her. “I like the line that tells us to treat everyone the same, well suggest, I should say,” Padma said with a thoughtful expression, bringing the subject back to the crystals. “I think it is a good idea to have that in our subconscious.
We’re going to run into some pretty snobbish children. If we keep our cool then we might not make enemies,” she looked around and bit her lip. “I know our parents are worried that we will be separated when we get to Hogwarts, but we are very tightly knitted and I’m sure that we won’t, at least I hope,” she said keeping her arm around Luna. She was almost positive this quirky girl would be in Ravenclaw, because for all her vacantness, this was one smart young lady. Luna was top of the class, and if they were in the same house she’d watch out for her.

“It was a little weird at first, but after a few nights I got used to it,” Terry Boot said with a shrug, throwing a small ball in the air while he talked. When you have a mind that was always thinking it was hard to concentrate on meditation. He was one of the few that didn’t pick up on the afternoon meditation very well. It took him months just to clear his mind, but he persevered and now was meditating with the best. When he found out that it would help him remember things better and that it would help him think more clearly it got easier. “Luna’s right her mum’s voice is very soothing. I’ve never fallen asleep so fast and slept so well. I like the part that helps organize the mind. I’ve got a library set up and I’m working through all the crap that is in my head. I didn’t realize I had so much useless information in there.”

“Well,” Gary said with a small smirk, like he was going to share a great secret, “Padfoot gave me a bit if information that I think will help a lot of us in the long run. Not only is this setting us up for Occlumency it is also giving us a path to become Animagus.” Gasps were heard around the group and everyone broke out in exciting whispers. “But,” he said holding up his hands, “he did warn me that not everyone can do this. So we need to decided if we want to because some of us will be left out and I don’t want to alienate anyone. The last thing we need is to have jealousy in our group.”

“Yeah,” Hannah Abbott said sadly, her blonde hair falling in her face as she leaned a little forward to pick morosely at the grass around her. “I already feel bad that Susan isn’t part of this particular group, she is my best friend. If we decide to become Animagus then we need to bring the rest of the Mutineers in on it and decide as a full group.”

“I know,” Harry said with a small frown. “I feel bad that not everyone is here too. We’ve all been together for a long time and it is a shame that their parents don’t feel the same way ours do, making us split like this. Maybe we can talk to the other kids after we get to Hogwarts and see if we can bring them in without their guardian’s knowledge,” he said not really holding out hope for Ron and Percy, but he did feel good for the Weasley twins and Ginny.

“That might work,” Hannah said perking up. “Susan says she really doesn’t feel the way her aunt does. I think I can talk her around.”

“I just hope,” Megan Jones said with a happy wishful smile, “that we can all still be friends even if they don’t come around. I like everyone in this group and I don’t like keeping secrets. Maybe we can get the adults to make a different meditation crystal for the pro-Dumbledore people. It would be one less secret. Maybe even add a line in theirs like, ‘trust your friends’ or ‘careful who you trust’ or something, we can ask the adults. That way they won’t feel left out and I know that some of the hot-heads would benefit from them.”

“I wouldn’t hold up to much hope for some of them,” Michael Corner reflected sadly. “Some of those guys are too much into sports and not big on learning. Besides, even with the crystals most the die-hard Dumbledore fans won’t be swayed,” he held out his hands when the protest started. “I’m not saying we stop being friends with them, after all they are part of the Mutineers. I’m just saying don’t hold out hope. Everyone here knows that Ron Weasley hates everything Slytherin and that when we’re sorted he will more than likely not talk to anyone sorted in that house. He’s also not known to keep his opinion to himself. I don’t think he will be part of our group after the first week of school.”
“Yeah,” Wayne Hopkins said nodding in agreement. “He’ll probably take Finnigan with him. Those two are tighter with each other than they are anyone else in the Mutineers.” He smiled fondly and shook his head. “It must be all the sports they bonded over. Poor Ron never knew muggles had so many sports. I’m surprised his head didn’t explode when he found out about football. I’m as much into sports as the next guy, but those two are fanatics. Nice blokes though I’d hate to lose them.” There were sad nods around the group.

“It would have been unrealistic of us to think that we could keep everyone together,” Daphne Greengrass said knowingly. She had been on the hateful end of some of Ron’s biting comments. “I know we were all hoping that we could, but honestly we knew that wouldn’t happen.”

“Well,” Tracey Davis added with a bright smile, trying to cheer everyone up, “even if they pull away from the group that doesn’t mean we still can’t be friends with them.” Then she got a thoughtful frown. “Now that we have the mirrors we can still organize a way to meet without anyone who decides they want to leave the group. I think we need to talk to the adults about a way to have the mirrors disappear or a way so that anyone who goes can’t really talk about us or what we do.”

“Yeah,” Mandy Brocklehurst said knowledgeably, “if we are going to try and hide our activities from Dumbledore and the staff then we don’t want anyone telling them about the mirrors. And what about the parents that have the mirrors? We’ll need a way to keep them from talking as well.”

The group talked about ways to get this accomplished and finally decided to take it to the adults, smart as they were they just didn’t know enough. The gang got up and swept off the grass from their clothes and started towards the house to talk to the parents.

Harry saw Sally waving to him out of the corner of his eye and started to slow down. He bent down to give the illusion that something was wrong with his shoe.

“I heard what you guys were talking about,” Sally said when the rest of the group was far enough ahead. “I tell your mum a spell that will make it so the mirrors disappear and modify the memories of those that want to tell Dumbledore. If they leave the group they won’t be able to tell anyone, because the spell will make them think that this is just a study group with no mischievous inclinations.”

“That would be great,” Harry whispered so he wouldn’t be heard, retying he shoe and getting up. “If you can do that it would help a lot. We’ll still have to talk to the parents though, since not everyone knows about you. Maybe after everyone goes home you can join us in the game room and tell Mum, Dad and the uncles. We’ll say that mum can’t share it because is Potter family magic,” he said thoughtfully, scratching his head.

“Yeah,” Sally agreed with a cute nod of her head. “Get the family together after everyone leaves and I’ll join you,” And she disappeared with a smirk.

“Gary, don’t say anything but Sally said she can help with keeping everything a secret,” Harry projected to Gary. “We’re gonna meet with the parents after everyone leaves. Try and get Padfoot and Moony’s attention and tell them to stay. I’ll talk to Mum and Dad.”

“Okay Harry,” Harry heard in his head. “I’ll do that, thanks for the update.”

By this time Harry had caught up with the group. “What happened? Why did you fall back?” Mandy questioned.

“Oh,” Harry said. “Umm, my shoe came off. I had to fix it.”

“Oh okay,” she said with a shrug.
The group made it to the house and was making their way to the dining room where they knew the parents were. They were quietly talking among themselves discussing ways to bring up their worries without sounding like whiny little kids. As they got to the dining room each kid broke off and went to their respective parents.

“What’s up with you guys?” James said giving Gary a one armed hug. “Why so serious?”

“Did something happen?” Lily said looking over the kids to see if there were any injuries. “No one is hurt are they?” causing all the parents to examine their children.

“No,” Gary said batting his dad’s hand away. “No one is hurt. We just have a few concerns we wanted to talk to you guys about.”

“Well that’s a relief,” Rachelle Brocklehurst said. “So, what’s up?”

“We were talking about how, if we can’t bring the other kids into the group, they might tell Dumbledore about us and we might get our mirrors taken away. Then we wouldn’t be able to talk to you guys while we were at school,” Padma said settling on her dad’s chair making him scoot over so she could half-sit on it.

“We were also talking about how some of the other kids will probably not be part of the Mutineers after first year. Some of them have pretty radical ideas and we haven’t been able to dissuade them,” Pavarti finished for her twin.

“Yeah,” Hannah Abbott said sadly, thinking of losing part of the group, cuddling with her mother. “It makes us sad that we may lose one or two of our friends, but as Daphne pointed out it was unrealistic of us to think we would all stand together. That and we don’t want a repeat of what happen to the Marauders,” she looked bashfully at Sirius, James and Remus. “No offence. It is said to learn from history though, so it doesn’t repeat.”

They had all heard the stories about how tight the Marauders were in school and how Peter had betrayed them.

The three men smiled fondly at the shy girl. “None taken,” Remus said with a sad look in his eye as he remembered the good time the Marauders had in school. “You’re right to think of that. If we had taken history seriously and learned from it, we would have caught on to Peter much sooner. Smart thinking you guys.” He reached over and messed up Harry’s hair.

“That’s actually good thinking,” Wright said proudly, glad all the lesson these kids were getting on logical thinking was paying off. “What else has you guys so concerned?”

“Well,” Astoria said turning to Mr. Corner. “We were also thinking that you guys could make up some crystals for the rest of the group. Just because they’re pro-Dumbledore doesn’t mean they should be left out of this. It’s not something Dumbledore can control anyway. Just leave out the Occlumency bit and concentrate on the organizing their mind and keeping control bits. And someone suggested adding a phrase in there about trusting friends. That way if we can talk them around, they won’t be far behind us.” There was a nodding of heads among the children showing they all felt that way.

“That is actually a good idea,” Frank Longbottom said. “We could even look into marketing those crystals and maybe the mirror. And set up a vault for future use. If you guys are sure that He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named is going to come back we’ll need funds.”

“A wonderful idea, Frank,” Xenophilius said with a beaming smile. “Pandora will be more than
happy to do that. Won’t you, my dear?” he asked as he turned to his wife and daughter.

Both female Lovegoods look vacantly at the far wall and then smiles burst from their lips at the same time. “Yes, I think it will be a lovely idea,” Pandora said dreamily, Luna nodding at her side. “If Lily and James don’t mind, I think we can set it up for me to record next weekend. That will give us some time to work on a script or two. We might want to make more of these crystals to cover many different things, but for now ones for the other children will be beneficial to the rest of the group.”

As the group began to discuss what they would need to do to keep their secrets Gary made his way over to his dogfather and Remus. “Hey you guys might want to stick around after everyone leaves,” he whispered with a wink. “We’re gonna talk to Sally.”

The two men nodded and then joined the rest of the group’s discussion. The talk continued for about forty minutes, it was decided that they would all think of ways to up the security and parted for their homes in a flurry of hugs and good-byes. The Potters and the rest of the Maunders went to the game room to talk more. Sally joined them soon after and told them what she had told Harry. They all agreed that it was a perfect idea. The rest of the night was spent in laughter and games until it was time for bed.

“I’m glad you brought all that up to us,” Lily said as she kissed Gary on the head after tucking him in. “I’m surprised we didn’t think of it.”

“Mum, stop,” Gary protested with a blush. “I’m getting to old for you to be tucking me in. That and you know Sally will be here in a few minutes for lessons so I don’t see why you are still tucking me in.” Now that the boys were in separate rooms it was decided that Sally would alternate between them and tonight was Gary’s night.

Lily frowned at the reminder that Sally was still giving the boys lessons, but they had talked about it before and they all agreed that she would continue. “You will never be too old in my eyes,” the red head mother stated as many mothers before her had. “Besides it gives me comfort. Will you really deny me that?” she said with a puppy dog face.

“That’s not fair,” Gary said giving his mother a hug. “Fine, but only until we get to Hogwarts by then I’ll be much too old to be babied,” he relented.

Lily mused up his hair and gave him another kiss. “Don’t forget your crystal after Sally leaves.”

“Like Sally would let me,” Gary grumbled as he laid back down, just to make his mother happy. “I will Mum, good night,” he said to his mum as she was leaving the room.

“Good night, sweetheart, don’t let Sally work you too hard,” she said as she left the room.

She met her husband in the hall. “Did Harry give you a hard time too?”

“Yeah,” James said sheepishly. “I’m pretty sure they set us up. I know when I was this age I felt the same way. My parents didn’t let me get away with it either.” He smiled sadly remembering the fond times.

“Do you want to go to bed or go back down into the game room and watch a movie?” Lily asked.

“Let’s watch a movie; I need something to keep my mind occupied for a while,” he suggested as he snagged his wife around the waist and started for the stairs.

“Good idea.” And they went off to enjoy a quiet evening.
Lessons on Power and Death

Disclaimer: I don’t own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belong to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her.

hphphp

January 15, 1990

Things had been going well for the Potters, the Mutineers and their families. They had made crystals for everyone in the Mutineers and their families. You could tell it was even helped the slower people in their group.

Sirius, Xenophilius and Kestrel Mcfay were working on ways to market the crystals and mirrors. If they became well-known items to Hogwarts teens then hopefully no one could say that the Mutineers thought of themselves as special, even if they did.

Kestrel worked in marketing in the muggle world so she had some insight. She suggested that they set up a booth in Diagon Alley to cater to the younger crowd that sold the items all the Mutineer children had. Sirius was going to finance it and Xeno was going to advertise. Pandora, Lily and a few other mums were making the scripts for the ones sold. Everything should be ready by March.

But for now, things were quiet and everyone was just settling back in school after the Christmas break. It was still plenty cold out and the kids were all gathered together outside near the playground, bundled up and waiting for the stragglers.

There was a sound like a car backfiring in an alley not far from the school. The boys of the group pushed the girls behind them in case there was trouble. Xeno came around the corner and Luna took off to meet him.

“Daddy, why are you here?” she laughed as he took her up in a hug, but the hug was too hard and her Daddy was crying. “Daddy, Daddy, what’s wrong?” Luna cried as she hugged her daddy just as tight.

“Luna, my little moonflower, Daddy is so sorry. We need to go now. Say good-bye to your friends.” Xeno’s voice was hoarse from crying, you could now see the tear tracks on his face. He put his little girl down, but not letting go of her hand.

Luna turned to her friends her eyes wide and brimming with unshed tear. There were lines of worry on her normally clear face. All Harry could think is those lines should never be on that face.

“I’m not sure why, but I have to go now. I will see you soon, I hope,” she said, still clinging tightly to her father’s hand.

Various choruses of “I hope everything is okay, Luna,” “Okay, Luna,” and “see ya’, Luna,” echoed around the school playground. Xeno and Luna ducked back in to the alley, and disappeared with a pop. A few more pops were heard and some other parents came to get their kids, the Weasleys and the Bones’ were two of them. All of them had sad looks on their faces; none would tell the children what was wrong.

“I wonder what that was all about,” Padma inquired, hoping it wasn’t something too bad, but having a feeling it was, especially with the way all the adults looked. “It’s not like Mr. Lovegood, or the
other parents, to come and get their kids. They usually don’t show for another few hours.” She looked around the rest of the group hoping someone had the answers, she only got blank faces and negative shakes of heads.

“Yeah and Mr. Lovegood looked sadder than everyone else,” Parvati agreed with her twin, having the same bad feeling. “I hope it isn’t too horrible news.” She played nervously with her backpack.

The remaining group made their way to Potter Manor discussing school, sports and what could have befallen the Lovegoods. They were met by the Potters, the Marauders, the Greengrass’, the Longbottoms and the Patils. All the parents looked like someone had died. Gary and Harry saw Sally off to the side nodding her head, confirming that fear. With stricken looks on their faces they turned back to the adults and waited.

“Come inside everyone. I’ll get Tilly to make some hot cocoa, and we’ll tell you what we know, after everyone is warmed up,” Lily said putting her arms around the nearest couple of kids and led the way. The other adults followed suit and soon everyone was in the game room.

They had chosen this room because if the kids got to emotional then there could be accidental magic, but here it wouldn’t happen. Beanbag chairs were brought out and placed between the many couches and chairs. Everyone settled his or hers bags next to their feet and soon all the kids had cocoa and the adults had tea.

“Well, now that everyone is warmed up, we have some very sad news.” Alice took a deep breath tears were running down her face, her voice hitched as she said. “You all know Mrs. Lovegood experimented on spells, right? She was trying a new spell today when it went horribly, horribly wrong.” She looked at all the young faces so untouched by death (except Harry and Gary, so to speak) and tried to figure out how to say the rest.

“Is she going to be okay?” Hannah asked delicately, seeing the tears on the women’s faces.

“No, sweetie, she died before anyone found her,” Frank said bluntly not wanting to give the kids false hope. There were gasps and cries of outright denials from the children. Searching for something that would help ease the shock he said, “We can truly take heart that little Luna wasn’t there at the time. If she had not been friends with this group then she wouldn’t have attended the school and she would have been home. While there is no true reason to be happy, it will help that she will have all of us to be there in her time of need; Mr. Lovegood too, of course.”

Many of the girls broke down in tears and the boys looked around either in confusion or with very pensive faces. “Mum, what do we do to help?” Astoria asked she was determined to protect her little friend.

Celeste took her daughter into her arms and considered what to say. She finally decided on, “You know when you’re sad and I take you into my arms like this and hold you really close and say silly little things like, ‘shh it’s alright,’ and ‘it’ll be okay,’?” Astoria and a few of the other children who were listening, nodded their heads. “Well, the reason people do that and say those things are not for the words. It’s because that’s what they want to believe with their whole heart. They want to take the pain away, and sometimes you just have to hold really tight and believe really hard that you can make that happen for the person who is hurting.”

“So,” Lily said catching everyone’s attention, “you just have to be there for her. I want you to just hang around her if you can, a small touch on the arm here, a peck on the cheek there can go much further than always asking if she okay. We’ll do what we can for both Lovegoods. I have to warn you though; people who are grieving can be pretty stubborn about not needing help. I don’t want to you push yourselves on them,” She hedged knowing full well if she had to, she would push the
Lovegoods into accepting help. But, not wanting the children to be in such a position.

“Now,” said Sirius clapping his hands and rubbing them, trying to divert the attention away from the bad news, “we’ve decided that it’s only homework today and no lessons. We want to wait until Luna is back with us, so she doesn’t fall behind. Some of you might feel better after some meditation though. But we’ll leave the choice up to you.”

Harry and Gary looked at each other and had a silent conversation. “Mum, Dad, do you think we could go to our rooms after we do our homework. We won’t be long; we just want to find something that will help Luna. We’re not sure what, but there might be something there,” Gary said, not really lying they would look for something, after they talked to Sally.

“Sure, honey, after your homework,” Lily said wondering what the boys could possibly have in their room for a little girl.

Soon all the homework was done and the kids splintered off, some watching the telly, others on the computers, still others took Sirius’ advise and tried to meditate. Harry and Gary slipped away to Harry’s room.

“Sally,” Harry said after he closed the door, “can you come here for a minute, please?”

Sally appeared and stood in front of the boys. “I know what you’re going to ask. And yes it was just her time. I won’t apologize for this,” she said firmly. “I don’t control when people die. I only helped your mum, because of the damned prophecy. Had it not been for that, your mum and dad would have died that night, and you would now be in the control of Dumbledore. And that was something I couldn’t allow.”

“I don’t understand,” said Harry extreme confusion showed on his face, along with some guilt, “why are we so special that we get different treatment? What is it about this prophecy that lets you interfere with our lives and not the lives of our friends?”

“You know how I told you that I see a little of the future?” The boys nodded. “If I had let your parents die that night, one or both of you would have turned to the dark path. It would have been vengeance on Dumbledore when you found out what he had done to your lives. Many deaths would have happened before their time. This has happened before in the past, when one, who thinks he knows more than others around him, interferes with someone else’s life. I’ve had to bring someone back to life before, so that path was not followed. Now, it is only when it reaches epic portions that I do this. Gellert Grindelwald and Tom Riddle are tragic, however, what would have happened if the both of you turned Dark would have been closer to world ending,” the little girl deity said and motioned for them to sit on the bed and when they did she continued.

Sally started pacing as she does whenever she gets in lecture mode, her tiny shoes making soft noises on the carpet. “Prophecies are only made when something can be stopped. They are made so someone can step in and help change them. Unfortunately, your prophecy was heard by both Snape and Dumbledore. The reason this is bad is because Dumbledore is a very controlling man. He isn’t evil or Dark or anything as stupid as that,” she said with a very stern look, wanting to make sure this was understood. “He is just controlling. Had he not tried to gain control of either of you and only tried to help, then you would have lived a very good life without your parents. You would have grown almost as well as you are now. But, we all know that didn’t happen, and you are doing much better for it. Plus, remember this prophecy could have been about Neville as well, and if I saw something that would have turned him Dark; I would have interfered in his life.”

She stood in front of the boys again with a very serious look on her face. “Dumbledore is not your greatest enemy, and Riddle isn’t either, for all he will try and kill you. The biggest enemy you have is
yourselves. There are three… factions in the world. Dark, Light and Grey. You’ve seen what happens when either the Light or Dark have too much power. If the Light has too much power then the world falls stagnant. If the Dark had too much power then the world falls —period. That is why there must be balance, the Grey. I and your parents are raising you to be Grey, and we are hoping that you will help your friends to be the same. I would never, never tell you to stop liking someone, because they are Light or Dark, just to be wary of how much power they actually hold.”

This of course frightened the two boys. “Are you saying that we’re too powerful? That we could destroy the world?” Gary asked in a very timid voice. He didn’t want that kind of power.

“You are powerful” Sally confirmed with a nod of her head. “However, you don’t have it in you to destroy the world, not now that I’ve changed that. You have learned to share your power with all those around you, by letting them help make choices and helping them learn or any other ways you share. Your laughter, your tears and your affections you share it all with your friends and family. You two are some the most kind and caring children I know,” Sally said touching each child on their cheeks. Calming the boys down, Sally had never lied to them before, so they will believe her now. “I would like to think that was because of mine, your uncles and your parent’s lessons; in addition, you have a large group of friends that stand by you. If you continue to meditate and share yourselves with everyone you care about then you will never be evil.”

She started pacing again. “Back to what started this discussion, Pandora —it was her time. There was nothing I could do to stop that. I wouldn’t even if I could. You have to realize that people you know and love will die one day. Just be there for your friends and loved ones when it happens.”

The boys hung their heads a little. “Sorry, Sally. We didn’t mean to accuse you. We just didn’t understand.” Harry said sheepishly, eyes peeking from under his bangs, blush painted his cheeks.

“I know, and I do understand. The one thing you have to remember about me is —I am not human. I don’t feel things the way you do. And when it comes to people dying, I am completely apathetic. I do understand that humans are not though. Go back down stairs to your friends, they need you now.” She gave each a hug and shooed them away. They left forgetting they were supposed to be looking for something for Luna.

It had been a long few days, where everyone in the group waited for Luna to show back up to school —she never did. They tried calling on the mirrors, the adults tried the Floo, but no one answered. Finally a feed up James marched to the Rookery and forced the two Lovegoods back to the Manor.

“I know you two want to grieve, and we’ll let you do that. If you want to be alone, we’ll let you do that too. But you are not taking care of yourselves, so you’re going to let our house elves take care of you. We have guest rooms on the third floor set up for you as long as you need them. Luna, your classmates have your homework, and that might help you take your mind off things for a little while. Xeno, if you need help there are many of the Mutineers’ parents that don’t work that will be happy to help you.” James said firmly after he had brought the Lovegoods into the game room and sat them on one of the couches. His family around him with concern for the grieving family etched on their faces.

“We love you both and we loved Pandora. We just want to help. Both me and James have lost loved ones and we do know some of what you are feeling. The boys love Luna and they want to help also. Will you let us help?” Lily pleaded to the two miserable people huddled on the couch.

Luna who had been scrunched up at the end of the couch looking lost and stricken, looked at two of her male friends, and as if for the first time in days the cloudiness cleared and she saw hope. She held her arms out like a two year old and begged with her face for cuddles. The boys flew across the room and enveloped her in a huge hug that might not ever stop.
Xeno seeing now what he had been doing to his beloved daughter by keeping her in the Rookery finally broke, the heartbroken wails could be heard around the manor. Lily ran to his side and gathered him up. James sat on his other side and rubbed his back. Together the two families grieved and healed.

Two weeks later Xeno went back to the Rookery and his paper and Luna returned with him and started back at the school with her friends. Not completely healed, but much better than before.

Before Pandora had died she had completed fifteen crystals to market. The only reason it would have taken until March was financing and marketing. Upon her death the Mutineer parents and partners jumped up their schedule, and pushed through paperwork as fast as they could. As many crystals that could be made —were. With Pandora’s dreaming voice to calm the most excitable wizard, the crystals sold rather well. 20% of the proceeds went to the Lovegoods, 10% split to the partners and the rest went into a vault for futures funds in case of a war.

At the booth, called Pandora’s Box, in Diagon Alley where the crystal and mirror sold, hung a plaque that read:

\textit{In Memory of our good friend and loved one:}

\begin{center}
\textbf{Pandora Lovegood}
\end{center}

\begin{center}
\textit{May she rest in peace.}
\end{center}
Mandatory Shopping Trip

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Hphphp

August 3, 1991

'Today is going to be a nightmare,' Lily thought, as she went over who was coming with them and who wasn't. It was the day they would be shopping for Hogwarts supplies, and she wondered if she should Floo all the shop owners to warn them of the groups approach. Maybe she would just tell Madam Malkin, the seamstress was the gossip of the Alley, and she would warn the other shops. That decided she went over to the Floo.

"Madam Malkin's Robes for All Occasions," she called after she had thrown the Floo powder into the fire. "Madam, are you near?" she said loudly, and waited on her knees, head in the green fire, for someone to answer. Boy was she glad the kids had those mirrors, the only time they used the Floo is for business, since all their friends had the other form of communication and her knees were thankful.

Pandora’s Box was doing quite well, soon everyone would have the mirrors and Floos would only be used for travel. She couldn’t wait for that day. Once again the Wizengamot had tried to interfere, but since they were magical artifacts and not Muggle, they couldn’t.

"Mrs. Potter, whatever can I do for you?" Madam Malkin asked as she came into the room, a pin cushion on her wrist, a tape measure around her neck and pins sticking in various places around her dress making her look like the seamstress she was.

"I wanted to warn you, so you can inform everyone else. We're coming with a large group of first years. There will be nineteen all told. Not to mention the parents. We'll more than likely split up in to groups of five or so, but we'll all be there in a few hours," Lily told the clothes maker.

"Oh my, that is quite a few children to be coming all at once. Thank you, Mrs. Potter, you always were so kind hearted. I'll warn the others so they can make sure they are stocked for such a large group. Off you go now, let me get to my gossip," the kind old lady said making shooing motions with her calloused hands.

"See you in few hours, Madam," Lily said and pulled her head out of the fireplace, getting to her feet, she went to call the males of the house. "Boys, aren't you ready yet? Everyone will be here in an hour and you haven't eaten," she hollered up the stairs.

"Coming Mum," came the twin replies.

"Lily, I can't find my green shirt," James said from the area of their bedroom.

"Then wear something else or ask one of the house elves where it is, it's not like I do the laundry,"
she answered her husband, shaking her head in frustration at that man. She turned and went into the
kitchen to see if there was breakfast made, there was. Cold cereal, milk, toast and fruit littered the
table’s center. Now if only her boys would hurry up. She sat at the table and waited.

Lily knew that all the Weasley kids that were already in school, were staying home today and
shopping another day as to not overwhelm their mum. And all the kids that weren't going to school
this year were doing the same for the same reason. So that left everyone Harry and Gary's age.

It had taken months of planning to get all the parents to shuffle schedules so that they could all go
today, and even with that shuffling only the mums seemed to want to go. The men decided they
didn't want be shopping with all those women and made plans to be anywhere but Diagon Alley
today, cowards. The others needed to find someone to tend the younger siblings. So it finally came
down to her, Molly, Faye, Rachelle, Wren, Pearl, Grace, Kiera, Gwenog, and Sarita. Like she said
—a nightmare.

She could finally hear the men folk coming down the stairs and the fleeting thought of, 'herd of
hippogriffs, is what they are,' filtered quickly through. "Finally, you only have about fifty minutes to
eat and then get cleaned up. Make sure you have your caps, not that they will help. I want to warn
you, I told Madam Malkin we were coming, so expect the press. Do you remember what we talked
about? Don't give any information away that we don't want given, don't talk to them at all if you can
help it. I am going to be telling them that we'll hold a press conference on the first, at the platform,"
Lily said as she checked to make sure her boys were dressed appropriately.

The twins were dressed in the exact same jeans, t-shirts, trainers and carrying matching leather
bottomless backpacks to hold their purchases. All the Mutineers had one, the Potters made sure to
give them out as Yule gifts last year. And since everyone got one, no one could complain that
anyone was getting charity. Their hair was styled exactly the same, covering both sides of their
foreheads.

"You decide to go as twins today?" she asked with a tilt of her head, it was rare they dressed alike,
usually they dressed differently. The twin bond made them feel each other’s feelings so they decided
in order to keep themselves separate beings, they wouldn't dress alike. Unlike the Weasley twins,
who thrived on the whole two as one gig. The Patil twins were as different as dusk and dawn, not
really that different, but enough that they could be in separate houses when they were sorted, much
like her boys.

"Yeah, we're hoping that with our caps, we can fool the press. That way they won't just hound Gary.
We warned the group we were going to be doing this. So whoever splits off with one of us will
know that there might be harassment," Harry explained as he grabbed a bowl and poured some
cereal and milk; Gary followed suit.

James came in, dressed in casual pants and a button up shirt with his golf shoes on, he gave his wife
a kiss on the cheek, sat next to her and poured some tea; he'd eat in a minute. "That is actually a
really good plan, but how will your friends tell you apart? I mean, I assume you are keeping your
hair down to hide your scars." the father asked sipping his tea, looking over what was still on the
table and wondering if he should fill up or eat light. Austin Godfrey was taking a bunch of the men
golfing in the Muggle world. So he wanted to be sure that he wouldn't be weighed down by eating
too much, on the other hand it was a lot of walking. "Do you guys have enough money, or are you
going to the bank?" he asked putting some fruit on his plate, deciding to go light.

"Well, we told them ages ago how to tell us apart, what don't you know?" Gary replied with a smirk,
he knew his father never could tell them apart, his mother could, but Dad, well not so much.

"Why don't you ever tell me?" James asked in mock despair. He really enjoyed the game they played
on guess who, which is why he never really bothered to learn the difference of the boys faces. The only difference in the twins faces, besides their scars, was a spattering of freckles across Gary's nose, Harry only had a few. They were light freckles. Being dark haired boys, they didn't freckle like the Weasley's, but there were some there nonetheless.

"You know you love it," Harry teased with the same smirk his brother sported, "and yes we have enough money, we've been saving our allowance just for this day." He pushed his empty bowl away and started going through his bag to make sure he had everything. Gary soon was doing the same.

Forty-five minutes later everyone was gathered in the Floo room to greet all the kids and parents. At ten all the eleven year old Mutineers and parents were ready to go. They had split up in groups; boys and girls separated, with two to three parents for each group. They consisted of:

Group 1: Harry, Terry, Seamus, Neville with Lily and Kiera Finnigan as chaperones.

Group 2: Gary, Mike, Ron, Wayne. Molly Weasley and Wren Corner.


Group 4: Alice, Mandy, Tracey, Megan, Parvati. Rachelle Brocklehurst and Gwenog Jones.

They all went to the Leaky Cauldron first and gathered around a few tables they pushed together to make last minute plans.

"Okay, let's have a rise of hands as to who needs to go to the bank," Cherry Dunbar said raising her own hand. A quick count of hands showed that only two of the groups needed to get money. So it was decided that Group 1 would go to Ollivanders first; Group 2 and 3 would go to Gringotts, leaving Group 4 to go to Flourish and Blotts. Each party would work their way around the Alley from there. Taking at the most one hour for each store, or they'd be here when the shops opened the next morning.

They all gathered at the wall behind the Cauldron, which lead to the Alley and put Harry and Gary in the middle of the group. Lily had warned them knew it there might be a crowd and the press. Some of the parents complained that she shouldn't have warned the shopkeepers, while others commended her on her smart thinking. They knew that if they were the ones working in the Alley, they would have wanted to be told.

They were correct, there was a large cluster of people just hanging around the entrance, but after the many times Lily had lost her temper in the past, the spectators simply watched and shouted 'thank you's' to the Gary. They didn't crowd around them, just waved and yelled and went about their business.

On the other hand, the reporters surged forward, the parents kept the kids behind them and Lily raised her hands to stop the barrage of questions. She cast the spell to be heard. "We will not be answering any questions today," she said ignoring the yells of complaints. "If you come to Kings Cross on the first of September, inside the barrier," she stressed, "we will hold a press conference then. Know this; if you persist today you will not get you answers on that day. We just want the kids to have a fun day of school shopping with their friends. Please, leave us alone today and we will be more than happy to talk to you the day of the conference. Thank you." And she stepped back and waited to see what they would do, keeping her eye out for ones they would shun on the first.

Almost immediately, most of the reports dispersed. It was rare that the Potters spoke to the press and they didn't want to mess up their chances. A few persisted, but when no answers came from the determined looking group, they finally disappeared as well, fading into the crowd hoping to catch the
kids talking. Lily kept a special eye on Rita Skeeter, they’d already had issues with her.

Harry’s group made it to Ollivander’s without any problems, laughing and joking all the way. They all speculated as to what their wands would be. Lily and Kiera smiled at the boys and followed closely to make sure no one wandered off. They came to the creepy store, Lily never understood why Ollivander never cleaned it up, maybe he felt it made him more mysterious, when it just made him creepy.

"Ah, yes the Potters and friends, of course," came that voice that had scared Lily when she first stepped foot in this shop with Severus, oh so many years ago. It made the kids jump as well. She really didn't like this man. "Lily Potter, ten and a quarter inches long, unicorn, swishy, made of willow. Nice wand for charm work. Has it served you well?"

"It’s a perfect wand," Lily responded. "Now it’s time for the children to get theirs, sorry to cut you short, but we’re on a schedule. Let's to do today," she told him wanting to get out of this shop as fast as possible.

"Yes, Madam Malkin Floo’d earlier and warned us all that you would arrive. So who wants go first?" Ollivander asked looking at the children.

"Let Seamus go first, he’s new to all this," Harry said pushing his friend forward, not wanting anyone to think that he was special.

"Step over here, Mr. Finnigan, and we'll get started," the shop owner said, pointing to a spot in front of the counter. Making everyone wonder just how he knew Seamus’ last name.

Seamus was measured with that slightly defiant tape measurer. He only took five tries before his got his oak and dragon heartstring wand.

The other three went before Harry and got their wands, and then it was his turn. He took his place in the same spot as everyone before him. His mum seemed to be keeping a very sharp eye on Mr. Ollivander, and Harry wondered why.

"Right then, Mr. Potter. Try this one. Beech-wood and dragon heartstring. Nine inches. Nice and flexible. Just take it and give it a wave." Harry took the wand and waved it around a bit, but creepy old man snatched it out of his hand almost at once.

"Maple and phoenix feather. Seven inches. Quite whippy. Try —" Harry tried — but he had hardly raised the wand when it, too, was snatched away. "No, no — here, ebony and unicorn hair, eight and a half inches, springy. Go on, go on, and try it out."

Harry tried and tried. The pile of useless wands was mounting higher and higher on the spindly chair, but the more wands Mr. Ollivander pulled from the shelves, the happier he seemed to become.

The group started groaning, they hadn't expected to be in this shop this long, the kids were starting to ask if they could go outside and wait, and were told "No," of course. So they all settled in various place on the wall around the shop and watched the spectacle of Harry making a mess.

"Tricky customer, eh? Not to worry, we'll find the perfect match here somewhere — I wonder, now — yes, why not — unusual combination — holly and phoenix feather, eleven inches, nice and supple." The dark haired boy took the wand, hoping that finally he would get one that worked.

Harry felt a warmth in his fingers. He raised the wand above his head, brought it swishing down through the dusty air, causing a few to sneeze, and a stream of red and gold sparks shot from the end like a firework, throwing dancing spots of light on to the walls.
The group whooped and clapped and Mr. Ollivander cried, "Oh, bravo! Yes, indeed, oh, very good. Well, well, well … how curious … how very curious …" He put Harry's wand back into its box and wrapped it in brown paper, still muttering, "Curious … curious …"

"What's curious?" Lily asked, very impatiently, they were all tired; it had taken thirty minutes for Harry to get his wand.

Mr. Ollivander fixed Lily with his pale stare and then turned those eyes to Harry. "I remember every wand I've ever sold, Mr. Potter. Every single wand. It so happens that the phoenix whose tail feather is in your wand, gave another feather — just one other. It is very curious indeed that you should be destined for this wand when its brother — why, its brother gave your brother his scar."

Harry swallowed not liking where this was going.

"Yes, thirteen-and-a-half inches. Yew. Curious indeed how these things happen. The wand chooses the wizard, remember. … I think we must expect great things from you, Mr. Potter, perhaps you are predestine to protect your brother from his greatest foe. … After all, He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named did great things — terrible, yes, but great. I cannot wait until your brother comes in, to see what wand would choose him."

And with those foreboding words the group quickly left the shop.

The rest of the day was spent in good fun, all the supplies were gathered, into the bottomless book bags, the groups met back up at the Leaky Cauldron and everyone had lunch, the kids without parents with them came back to the Manor with the Potters and settled in the game room to wait and talk about their day.

Later that night the Potters sat and discussed Harry's wand.

"So, Harry, your mum tells me you got the wand that is brother to Voldemort's. How do you feel?" James asked in concern, they knew that Harry would one day face that bastard, but to have a brother wand might be scaring the young man. Just because the boys were powerful and smart, didn't make them less emotional than any other eleven year old.

"Well at first it freaked me out, then I talked to Gary and now I feel better. He said no matter what, he would be by my side. I knew that, but sometimes it is good to hear. That and Gary’s wand has the same wood as Voldemort’s, from the same tree, even. What is it Gary? Yew and dragonheart string?" Harry asked his brother and received a nod in return. “Ollivanders was all giddy when that happened. And I know you and mum will be there as well. Not to mention Sally." Right on cue, Sally appeared.

"There is only one concern about having these wands, if somehow Voldemort gets his wand back, the wands will not fight against each other. What we need to do is add something extra to the wands to make the feather or the wood, not quite the brother wands. I can turn them into cousins, that way they will still work for you, maybe even better. And if and when Harry’s destiny calls the wands will not interfere," she explained, it was good to be a god. And by making them cousins, it would only be curving the hand of Fate and not slapping it, which was a big no-no.

Harry thought about it for a minute, shared looks with his parents and brother. And at their encouraging looks he handed his wand to Sally, who he trust the most, after his family. She added a piece of her hair; it would touch the feather inside and changed the cells to what she wanted. It would also give the boys a boost in Defense Against the Dark Arts. Dark spells would come easier as well. She did the same to Gary's wand and informed the family of what she had done, but warned them to never tell anyone that the boys’ wands were touched by death, so to speak. They all gave
their words and hid the information behind Occlumency barriers.

Soon enough the family got tired after a long day of golf and shopping and went to bed, feeling better now that it was all over. Soon it will be school, so the boys wanted to get up early and start studying. Not that they needed it, but the books they studied before were their parents old books and maybe there had been changes.

They also wanted to make sure they were ahead with potions, Mum had told them how Snape would act, and they weren't going to give him any ammunition. So they all went to bed making plans for the morrow.

Lily was happy the day hadn't been the nightmare she thought it was going to be, brother wands notwithstanding.
The Day Before It All Starts

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Hphphp

August 31, 1991 5 p.m.

There had been a large congratulations party for all the kids who were going to Hogwarts that year. They started around noon and the party was just breaking up. A lot of the pro-security group was staying behind, some left as to not arouse suspicion that there were separate meeting taking place, they would be filled in tomorrow. They wanted to go over last minute plans for the kids.

It had been a fun party. The lawn was littered with party debris and the house elves were popping in and out cleaning up as they went. The kids and their parents were all assembled in a group around a large fire, some were making s’mores, and others were finishing off the cake that Molly had made. Butterbeer and fizzy drinks were passed around and everyone settled for what was sure to be a serious talk. After everyone from the pro-Dumbledore followers had left, they got down to business.

“First things, first, has everyone finished packing?” Wren asked, looking at all the children to get a gage on who was paying attention. Most were, but some weren’t so she clapped her hands and when all eyes turned to her she asked the question again. There was a chorus of “Yes, ma’am’s” and “Not yet’s” causing some parents to shoot looks of approval or disappointment at those who answered. After a few chastisements and some appraisals the group settled back down.

“Now that that’s sorted, does everyone have their crystals and mirrors?” Frank asked. Another chorus of “Yes, sir’s” sounded around the fire. He nodded in approval.

“Okay, a few rules,” Lily said ignoring the moans. “While those items are not forbidden, they do now have rules. A letter was sent to each parent listing them. They are actually common sense and pretty easy to follow. First rule, no using the mirrors in class. Second rule, no using the mirrors in detention. Third rule, no using the crystals unless you, or someone, cast a silencing charm on your bed, so you don’t disturb you roommates,” she listed counting them off on her finger.

“Those aren’t hard,” Harry said. Then with a thoughtful look on his face added, “but I will add that in an emergency don’t hesitate to use your mirror. Not that I’m saying break the rules,” he reiterated after a firm look from his mum, “more like… in case you need help right away, say there’s is an accident in potions or something and you or someone else needs medical attention. Maybe we can suggest to make sure Madam Pomfrey has one for just that purpose, or have one set on the wall of each class,” he suggested.

Lily nodded in approval along with the rest of the adults. She would owl a letter to Deputy Headmistress McGonagall tomorrow stating just that. Even volunteer to donate larger mirrors, just for that purpose.
“Aw, man, you mean we can’t use them in history? Or detention? Man that sucks,” complained Wayne, throwing himself back in his chair with a huff arms folding across his chest. He had been looking forward to using them to get out of boring situations.

“Wayne Michael Hopkins,” Jeanne snapped whipping her head around to glare at her son, causing a lot of the kids give off ‘ohhh’ sounds, everyone knew you were in trouble if your mum used your full name.

Wayne cringed and looked to his mates to help, most just smirked and shook their heads. Terry decided to help his friend, “Mrs. Hopkins, you don’t understand, history is taught by a ghost, which should have gone on years ago. He simply reads from his old notes, which are not even in the books, in a voice that puts everyone to sleep.” He shrugged and sent a reassuring smile to his still cowering friend.

“I hate to say it, but the boy is correct,” Albert said, even he, a Ravenclaw, had had trouble staying awake in that class. “I know you don’t understand this, being a non-magical, but that ghost is dead boring, no pun intended. However, I do understand that you don’t want your child to break the rules, so here is what I’m going to tell all of you.” He looked sharply around to make sure he had all the kids attention, he did. “Don’t go to sleep in that class, if you can’t stay awake, then read a book from a different subject. If you try and read the history book you will still want to sleep. We don’t want to give the staff any reason to take those mirrors away and they might set another ghost on that class to watch for rule breakers.”

A look of understanding came across the children’s faces, though there were looks of regret mixed in there as well. Wayne hadn’t been the only one who wanted to skive off in that class. From what the Weasley twins had told them, it was the perfect class for that. Reluctant nods filtered around the fire as parents firmly looked at their children to make sure they understood the rules.

Sirius, being the ever loving prankster that he is, clapped his hands and got everyone’s attention to him. “Now that the boring rules are in place, who wants to have something fun?” he asked in that voice that warned everyone that a prank was about to commence. A clamor of noise was heard as the children suddenly perked up and a resounding response of “I do’s” were all directed towards him in various degrees of excitement. He pulled out a bundle of folded parchments and started handing them out. “We; Remus, James and I, have been working on these for a few months. We didn’t want to tell anyone in case we didn’t get them done before you lot headed off to school. But we did so here you are,” he said with a flourish. “Can anyone tell me what they are?” he asked mischievously.

“I know what this is,” Gary answered in awe. “It’s the Marauder’s Map, I thought you lost yours.” He quirked his head to the side in confusion, he had heard his uncles and dad complain many times that Peter had lost the only Map they had.

‘Yeah, but then we realized that we are as smart, if not smarter, then we were in school and got together to make a new and improved version of the Map for you guys. Now we’re not making any more for the others. Well, we might make one for those who, ummm… not defy, but come to our side; maybe, I think that’s what I mean,” he said playing with his goatee in thought, then he shook his head to clear it and get back on track. He had learned a while ago not to encourage these kids to mischief while their parents were around. “I don’t want you guys to try and get the other kids in trouble with their guardians. However, if they come to you and say they don’t approve of what their parents think, then get them up to date on Occlumency and then talk to us about this map. This is one thing we will not be selling to the public. So, you lot, make sure you hide yours well and only use it when no one is around,” Sirius concluded with a steady look.

Remus and James nodded their heads in agreement; they didn’t want anyone to know about this
“Ookay, so how do we make it work?” Harry asked already looking at the blank piece of parchment like it was the great treasure it truly was. He had already tried the old password, but it hadn’t worked.

“Well, you know the old password right?” Harry and Gary nodded the rest of the group looked on with eager, excited faces. “We changed it to ‘Mutineers stand united’ to activate it, to close it the key is ‘unity committed’. It has the same enchantment the older one had. So you guys will be less likely to be blamed, if someone tries to reveal it without the password then it will list our Marauder’s names and insult the one who cast the spell. We had to add Wormtail’s name on there. Because if we didn’t, it would have been too much of a clue that the group is now divided,” Remus answered, quite proud of the new map.

There were features on this one that weren’t on the old one. They knew the Weasley twins had found the old map in Filch’s, the caretaker, office and they wanted to make sure that everyone in this group had the upper hand, so to speak.

“Now this map,” James continued taking Gary’s map, which he had already activated, along with most of the group, “shows everyone in the castle on the grounds and parts of Hogsmeade, which is a bit more than the old one. It’ll show all of the tunnels and hidden rooms that we knew about, you can add any others you find by standing in said room saying, ‘room acquired’ (or tunnel as the case may be) and it will show on your map and the others. The other feature is the color coding, it’ll show in green all your friends, red your enemies, tan for those you don’t know and purple the professors and staff. Now if you see a bright yellow name, stay away, that is an Animagus. With Peter still out there we didn’t want to take the chance of him sneaking up on you,” he warned his boys and the rest of the group.

“Call us on the mirrors, if you see red or yellow,” Sirius took up the warning, “and we’ll try to find a way to get into the castle and capture them. You lot are to stay out of it. I know you’ve studied hard and think you can take care of yourselves, but you are still children. Let the adults handle it. If you by chance befriend a professor you can tell them, or even if you absolutely have to—tell Snape.” As much as the men in this group and Snape had come to an agreement, they was still loath to trust the man, but Lily was friends with him, she had even given him one of the secure mirrors, much to their displeasure.

“Oh, Padfoot’s” and “Yes, Mr. Potter and Black’s” were heard. It was getting late and the kids needed to get to bed soon. So after examining the map for a few minutes the rest of the party broke up with a flurry of “good-bye’s” and “See ya tomorrow’s” the sleepy Mutineers and parents went home. The Potters, Sirius and Remus, however, went into the game room for one last bit of instruction. Sally joined them.

“I know you said you were going to think about it, but the time has come. What house did you decided to be in?” Lily asked. They had been talking about it for months, giving reasons for one house or the other. The boys were undecided; because all of their friends would be separated into other houses’ and they couldn’t pick who they wanted to be with the most.

Harry answered first, “Well, I decided to try for Ravenclaw. If I go to Slytherin, which is where I wanted to go, there would be a hassle, and as much as I disapprove of the public’s opinion on that, it would be too much. That and it would give Dumbledore ammunition to try and separate me and Gary, again. All he would have to do is play the Dark wizard card. Plus, if Gary goes where I think he is going, then that house would do the same, especially if Ron goes there as well.” He hated the fact that people thought Slytherin was a house of Dark wizards, he knew better. Sally had even let
them talk to the ghost of Salazar Slytherin to make sure they understood why he did what he did. Then Godric Gryffindor visited and confirmed everything Slytherin said.

Gary nodded his head in agreement and said, “Yeah I’m going to push for Gryffindor, for much the same reasons as Harry going into Ravenclaw. I don’t want anyone to think I’m going to get out of my ‘duty’, so to speak. I mean, we’ve tried for years to get them to listen to us. If I go into any other house then the press will have a field day. I’m glad you told us that we can influence the hat, Uncle Sirius. Or we would be scared out of our minds about the sorting.” He too was saddened that they had to bow to the public.

“I know that it hurts to be separated from friends and each other because of others opinions, but if we don’t want to have to fight off stupid people, then I think you boys made the right choices,” James said proudly, he knew the boys were smarter than their friends and as fiercely loyal as most the Mutineers. In addition, the plans that the whole pro-security group had been making could only be construed as ambition and heroic.

Most of the children in this group could get into any house they wanted. However, it had been decided among the parents that that would be a disaster waiting to happen; it would upset the balance of the student body if suddenly nineteen students were sorted into the same house, like the kids wanted. It took many hours of lecturing and arguing to get them to see reason.

“Remember,” Sally said in her cute little girl voice, it was sometimes hard to believe that she was the most powerful person in the room, with her cute face and doll like dresses, “I will be with at least one of you at all times. I will probably split half a class time between you. So if one of you is in history and the other is in potions. Then I will spend the first half with Gary and the second half with Harry. I do this because Gary is the most likely to be picked on or bombarded with questions, so he will need me to be there more. I don’t want you to think I’m going to neglect you Harry, I will be there, just later,” she explained with an earnest look on her face, all but begging the older twin to understand.

Harry nodded his head with an understanding smile; Sally had never played favorites when they were growing up and he knew she wasn’t now. “I get it Sally; I know Gary will need you more. I’ll be happy to take any time I can get with you.” A pleased smile broke across that darling little face, making the room all but glow with its brightness.

“One last warning, I’ve said it before, but I’ll say it again. I cannot interfere with the living; I can only influence the dead. I will only be there for moral support and advice. If I see you starting to lose control then I will be there to calm you—that’s it. I want to make sure you understand that,” she stated firmly looking both boys in the eyes, making sure that they knew that their battles were their own. “The only reason I can even touch you boys and your mum, is because Lily has already been dead and you boys are shrouded by prophecy. Well, only Harry, but Gary is bonded with you so he counts too,” she explained further.

“We understand,” the boys intoned together, with the same nods of their heads, acting like the young twins they were.

“Now that that is settled, was there anything you guys wanted to ask before you go to bed?” Remus said, he was getting tired and wanted to make sure he was up early. They had that press conference in the morning and he knew none of them were looking forward to it. “If not then we need to talk about what we are going to tell the press in the morning,” he said putting his thoughts to words.

“That’s easy, me and Gary are going to agree with whatever Mum and Dad say,” Harry said, he too was getting tired and it was his night with Sally, so he wanted to get upstairs as soon as possible. Being tired made training harder. He did wonder how they were going to continue training at
Hogwarts. He looked to Gary first and then Sally and posed the question, “Sally how are we going to continue to train at night? I wouldn’t put it past the Headmaster to bug our rooms,” he said with a disapproving frown. He didn’t want to think badly of the man, but from what Sally had told them of the kind of future they would have had, it was kinda hard not to.

“I know it is hard, but for all he is controlling, I doubt he would stoop so low as to evade your privacy. I will keep on the lookout in case I’m wrong,” she answered him. “As to your training, well I’m going make sure the room is secure and all your bunkmates are asleep, and then sneak you down to the common room or to an empty classroom near your dorm. You have your map so that will help. Then I’ll train you like I do now,” she said with a shrug of her tiny shoulders.

After the many blunders the Headmaster had made with this family, there was little Sally could do to convince them that he truly did have the world’s best interest at heart and that he was just going about it wrong. The Potters weren’t buying it though, they couldn’t see how separating the twins was beneficial to the world, besides they had done more to unite people in the last few years then Dumbledore had in all the time he had been in charge.

Further discussion was had on what they were going to tell the press, which really wasn’t much just how happy they were going to be about going to Hogwarts with their friends. The parents would say how proud they were of the schooling all the kids received. And that was pretty much it.

Soon the group dispersed to their own homes or beds, everyone excited and leery about what tomorrow would bring.

Hphphp

AN: Some of you don’t understand why I write Dumbledore the way I do. Well he reminds me of an uncle I have, who acts much the same way. I love my Uncle, but he thinks that the way he thinks is the only way it should be. One example is; he feels that if you are having sex with someone you should be married. Period. End of discussion. And nothing anyone says will change his mind. He is not a bad man; it is just he is so sure he is right, that he has no problem letting you know how wrong you are—repeatedly. We never talk politics or religion, much for the same reason. So no matter what you tell me I don’t feel it is bashing of the Headmaster, just pointing out what I feel is his way of thinking.
The Press Conference

AN: flying solo on this, no beta. So any mistakes are of course my own. I do read over the chapters three times, sometime more, but I know I don't catch everything. If you see something that doesn't make sense or is a plot hole, feel free to tell me.

I do have to warn you if you got this far and it wasn’t posted on the day you read it, I have a terrible habit of adding to chapters and reposting them, thought you’d like to know.

For example: I added to the last chapter to explain a little more about Sally’s influence or lack thereof while the boys are at Hogwarts. Simply because someone pointed out that the boys will have no reason to fight if they had Death in their pocket, and that was not the impression that I wanted to give. I thought I had cleared that up in the chapter where Sally explained to the boys about death and power, but I guess I wasn’t clear enough.

I also didn’t realize until I got to the end of this chapter that I put Seamus in the pro-security group, so I had to change his little scene from the last chapter to Wayne Hopkins. Nothing changed but the names of him and his mom, so you don’t have to re-read that part. Well you don’t have to re-read anything, but I thought I would clear that mess up.

I also added an author’s note to explain about why I write Dumbledore the way I do, but I’ll add that at the end of this chapter also, so you don’t have to go back and read that.

Disclaimer: I don’t own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belong to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her.

Hphphp

September 1, 1991 8 a.m.

“Come on, boys, let’s get going,” James hollered up the stairs. The boys were still getting dressed; they had decided to go as twins again and were searching for matching wizard wear. Since their clothes were highly influenced by the non-magical world, it was difficult for them. The only real matching wizard outfits they had were dress robes, and that was a bit much for the first day of school, press conference or no. Besides they were going through King Cross and couldn’t wear robes until they were on the platform.

“Coming Dad,” came the response followed by the sound of running feet. The boys stopped at the top of the stairs, eyebrows raised in inquiry. They were dress in completely neutral colors. Their shoes were dress shoes, matted black. They wore matching grey slacks, white button down shirt, with the same black and white diagonal striped ties, and covered in a business style grey jacket, which matched the slacks. Both sported the same hair style, which was still messy, but styled in such a way that their scars were clearly visible. It was the only way you could tell them apart, unless you got close enough to see the freckles.

“We decided to go neutral, neither non-magical nor magical. Did we pull it off?” Gary asked, thinking they had done a pretty good job, but hating that they couldn’t wear their jeans and t-shirts. They had mirror called all their friends this morning and warned them how they would be attired, so that they could match with them. They wanted to present a united front, let the wizarding world know that they had friends that they would stand beside and would stand beside them.
“Well I think you guys look adorable,” Lily said with a beaming smile, coming up behind James.

“Mum,” the boys exclaimed together, slight blushes painting their cheeks. “No, that is not what we were going for.” They then looked at each other with smirks; they had really been working on talking at the same time. Before it was only short sentences, now they could almost pull off full paragraphs. It was a work in progress, the twin ritual had helped.

“Don’t listen to your mum. You look very handsome and very impersonal. Just what you were going for,” James said impressed. “Besides, mums are supposed to talk that way.” He shrugged and gestured for the boys to come down and started towards the kitchen.

The boys came down the stairs and joined their parents. Trunks were brought down by the house elves and placed near the door. The Potters ate their breakfast, nervous and excited, with a smidgen of sadness. Lily was sad that her babies were going away for almost ten months, but not as upset as she would have been if they didn’t have the mirrors. They discussed trivial things and gave the boys a last few pointers on what to say to the press.

They gathered the trunks and Apperated to a spot near the train station around nine. They wanted to be early so they could gather the Mutineers before the press got there. It was when they saw that the press was already on the platform, that Lily realized that she hadn’t specified a time for the conference. She groaned at this mistake, then squared her shoulders, grabbed Harry’s hand and made sure James also had a hold of Gary and marched down the platform towards the front.

They took a spot in front of the red Hogwarts Express engine, which would make a good photo background and contrast nicely with the boys’ outfits. Lily held up her hands to stop the barrage of questions. “We’ll talk to you in a half an hour; we’re waiting for the boys friends to come, so they can greet them. I’m sorry I didn’t inform you of a time, but we’ve made plans and would like to follow them through. Please, be patient, we will speak with you before the train leaves. Thank you,” she said and then turned her back to the crowd, ignoring the stupid reporters that didn’t leave off. She did note them however, and noticed her men folk doing the same. When the reporters noticed that they were not being answered they did stop shouting questions, reluctantly.

The Mutineers and their parents/guardians were slowly trickling through the barrier. Most of the kids decided to dress similar to the twins, with the exception of the Patil’s the Weasley’s and the Bones’.

The Patil twins were dressed in traditional India style women’s clothes, brightly colored, long sleeved, multi-patterned flowing tunics, with matching scarves, and a long shimmering turquoise skirt to match, little velvet matching slippers could be seen peeking from under the skirts.

The Weasley’s wore their regular hand-me-down clothes, but they did try for neutral colors of browns and greys; well the kids did anyway.

Susan was dressed in a bright blue knee length, short sleeved, summer dress. She had an apologetic look on her face and made an eye gesture to her aunt, who as dressed in her Auror uniform. The Potters only nodded in understand, they didn’t think everyone would be able to dress the way they did.

As the families and the Mutineers formed in a group around the Potters, you could see an almost unbroken sea of greys, black and whites. It was quite a sight.

Soon it was time for the press conference and the group turned to the impatient reporters, Potters in front. The colorful crowd of other students and parents looked on, either in interest or jealousy. Most had heard of this group and some of the students not included were jealous, because they had to grown up away from other children their age, or with only a few friends. Parents of these children
held looks of disdain; sneers predominate on their face, the Malfoys the most noticeable—Muggle schools indeed, was the thought in those minds.

James held up his hand for silence and started the conference, “Thank you so much for being here. We decided that it was time to speak to you, the press. We’ll be taking questions from some of you. While all of you were warned that if you didn’t follow our rules; you would be excluded. So if we come across harsh… well we won’t apologize for that.”

“If you raise your hand and you’re someone we want to talk to, then when one of us will point at you, and you can ask your question. If it is something we want to answer we will, however, if it is too personal, we will move on. You never listened to us in the past, so this is your one chance to make an impression,” Lily said with a small bite in her voice, showing how unpleasant they found the press before. “If you shout your questions, you will be ignored. Be warned, we do have a solicitor and he will sue you for slander if you print anything untrue or biased,” she advised. It had happened only once or twice in the past, but after a very public lawsuit it didn’t happen again.

Hands flew into the air, you could almost hear the air’s displacement as so many came up at the same time. James pointed at his friend Xeno.

“Xenophilius Lovegood, the Quibbler. Tell my readers, Mr. Gary Potter, how does it feel to finally be going to a wizarding school like Hogwarts?” he asked quill at the ready.

Gary stepped forwards, he could feel his friends’ and bother’s looks of encouragement at his back. “Well, I really enjoyed going to a non-magical school, since it’s where I met all the people you see behind me. We are a great group of friends. However, I am overjoyed to be going to the same school as my parents did, to learn about magic,” he stated in a slightly nervous voice, he stood tall and looked directly at Xeno, it was easier, because he knew the man.

“And you, Mr. Harry Potter, do you feel the same?” Xeno asked; these were pre-arranged questions as planned. He would be the first to ask and then he would step aside and let the other reporters take over.

“I cannot express just how much me and my brother feel the same way. We are both on the same page, so to speak. Even if we are sorted into different houses we’ll still be the best of friends,” Harry said with a fond look at his younger twin, who looked back with the same expression on his face. “That goes for all these handsome young men and pretty young ladies behind us. We are a very strong group of friends and don’t feel that division of houses should influence us,” he concluded turning with a warm smile and a small bow to the Mutineers. The group of children behind them clapped and cheered to showing they too feel the same way.

When the noise quieted down Lily pointed to a rather dully dressed brunette woman. “Aaliyah Conway, Daily Prophet. Tell me, Mr. James Potter, how do you, and your wife, feel about the children going to Hogwarts?” she asked, a yellow quill taking down everything she said to it.

“We are so proud of Harry and Gary; they did so well in the non-magical school. They and their friends were top of the class, mostly. They excelled in English and Physical Education; they did pretty good in the Maths, as well. We couldn’t be prouder, we only hope they can continue being top of their class in Hogwarts,” he finished with a mock glare at the two boys, who only smiled back.

A woman, with tight blond curls and jeweled glasses, pushed herself to the front of the crowd. She wore a bright green business suit, which was lined with fur. Her matching crocodile handbag slung over her shoulder, hanging in the air by her side was an acid green quill, which was only a few
shades brighter than her outfit, poised over a piece of parchment. “Rita Skeeter, Daily Prophet. Tell me, Mrs. Potter, is it true that you’re having an affair with Severus Snape?” this question caused an uproar of voices and protest from both crowds of students and parents. “After all you were seen with him in Diagon Alley only two weeks ago and it is known that you were once… close friends,” she added with an arched penciled in eyebrow. Revenge was sweet.

“Ms. Skeeter, were you not warned the last time you came around me and my family that anything you say can and will be used against you in a lawsuit?” the fuming mother snapped. “You will be hearing from my lawyer. Please, remove yourself from the session, before I have you arrested for violating the restraining order we have against you.” Lily’s glare could melt metal, and her family’s vicious eyes weren’t far behind. The group of parents and children behind them were also glaring at the hated reporter.

She was the reporter that they had had the major, public lawsuit against, when she printed that the Potters were practicing Dark magic, and that is what kept baby Gary from dying. They sued the pants of her, and immediately took out a restraining order so that she was not to come within fifty feet of the Potter family or their friends.

It seems this bitch never learns. She thinks because she is the Prophets number one gossip columnist that she can get away with anything, that and she had the new Minister’s ear. Little did she know that James had far more influence on the Wizengamot than Cornelius Fudge, who was only elected Minister this last year; even if he did have Malfoy’s money. James was well off and he had Sirius backing him.

“Are you afraid to answer a simple question, Mrs. Potter? I mean the public has a right to know, don’t you think?” Skeeter asked, knowing she couldn’t report any of this in print, but her question was in front of the public so the tongues would start wagging no matter what this woman answered, or so she thought. While the group of unaffiliated parents’ eyes started sparkling with anticipation, Rita was always good for gossip.

Lily whipped her wand without hesitation and incanted, “I, Lily Marie Potter, nee Evans, do hereby swear on my life and my magic that I am not having, nor have I ever had, an affair with anyone other than my husband, James Charles Potter, so mote it be.” Since James had been her only lover she was confident that there was no way this vow would hurt her. She cast the lighting spell, “Lumos.” Her wand tip brightened with a small ball of light, proving what she swore was true, that and the fact that she was still alive. Then she canceled the spell with a “Nox”, and the light went out. Lily then sent a smug look to the badly dressed woman and held her head high.

Skeeter’s face fell, her quill dropped to the floor. Never in a thousand years would she have thought that such a vow could be made by Lily Evans, who had been one of the most popular girls in school. No other lovers? Ever? It was unheard of. She turned to look at the crowd and saw they were all glaring at her and could actual feel her numbers drop—like a stone in a well. It would take some serious damage control to get her readers back.

Rita saw the red robe moving towards her and bolted as Amelia Bones made her way through the crowd toward her. As soon as she got through the barrier, she transformed into beetle form, and saw Madam Bones’ very disgruntled face at missing her. She knew she would be hearing from the Potters’ lawyer soon and hoped she had enough money to pay the fine. As she flew away the only thing she could think was ‘Well that didn’t work. I’ll get you next time Lily Potter, no one messes with me.’

The press meeting went on for a half an hour, no more gossip questions were asked. It was mostly what the boys felt about such and such products, like the mirrors and crystals (which they proudly
told were created by their uncles and Pandora Lovegood, may she rest in peace), or which broom they felt were the best (the Nimbus). And of course who was their favorite Quidditch team (the Scottish National Quidditch team for Gary and English National Quidditch team for Harry), what their favorite subject had been in the Muggle school (Math for Gary and Science for Harry).

“Thank you for coming, we have to get the boys on the train. If you will excuse us,” James said finally calling the conference to a halt and shuffled the boys on to the train. Since most of the students and parents were outside the train watching the spectacle, they were one of the first on. James and Lily, pulling the trunks behind them and led the boys to a car that didn’t have compartments, just rows of benches. “You’ll get a lot of traffic through here, but this is the only way that your group can stay together,” James explained at the questioning looks from the twins.

The boys nodded in understanding and watched as their parent put up the luggage, they had both forgone pets for now; they wanted to see where they were sorted first and who they were sorted with, before bringing an animal to the scene. That way if there were predators in their room they wouldn’t get a prey animal. Their parents commended them for such a smart move.

The rest of the Mutineers filtered in excitedly talking about the conference. They had enjoyed the way the boys brought them up in almost every answer given. That way they didn’t feel left out or abandoned by the fame. Most of them knew it would happen that way, but there were still a few that never did get over the jealousy that Gary was a celebrity. The twins took it in stride, they knew not everyone would feel the same, and as long as those few that felt that way kept it to themselves, they could overlook the small glares. They knew they treated everyone the same way, not matter what their status, the only reason they put up with the jealous ones was because of the family they belonged to. Meaning that either the parents were business partners, or the siblings were friends.

The group settled down for a long train ride, everyone gathered in groups mostly separated by gender, which is usual for large group, even ones composed of friends. Gary sat with Seamus, Ron and the Weasley twin and of course their friend Lee Jordan. Soon enough Ron and Seamus separated from them, all but running to Harry and his group, which consisted of Wayne, Terry and the Patil twins. Lee had brought his tarantula and Ron is deathly afraid of spiders.

They were all excited and worried about what would happen at Hogwarts, they settled down to discuss as a group what would happen from here.

Hphphp

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AN: 2 I am adding a poll on my profile, I am getting a few complaints about Sally, so I am putting up a poll as to what to do about her. Please vote on it. (Update the poll is closed and the winner is:

1 I like Sally, leave her alone 56 - 55%
2  Put her in the background  20 - 20%
3  Make her grown up  17 - 17%
4  Change into a real Death (skeletal, male, dark and foreboding)  7 - 7%

Unique Voters:  100

However I got some great ideas on how to improve Sally to be more likeable. Read and see.
The Train Ride and The Planning of the Hunt

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Hphphp

As the Potter parents watched the children filter onto the train, they got thoughtful looks upon their faces. Now that the boys were off to Hogwarts, it was time.

“Well,” James said turning to his wife after the train departed, “what now?”

“We go hunting,” Lily said with a deadly look in her eyes, causing her to look much like the vicious woman she could be. The two turned to go home and contact the rest of the team they had put together for this hunt. Severus had really come through with the books she needed and Sally’s telling of the *Horcruxes* gave them just what they needed to have a nice long hunt.

Hphphp

The car was getting crowded, as all the Mutineers were gathered in clutches around the seats. Animals were hooting, croaking, or meowing with the displeasure of having to be in carriers. Children were talking, loudly and with excited voices. Each group was discussing different things. Harry’s group was talking about the press conference. Gary’s group was talking about the sorting, they had all be told about the hat, but were sworn to secrecy. They could only tell other first years that it wouldn’t hurt. Others were talking about the Houses or what new friends they could bring into the group during the year. They really wanted to get more Muggle-borns, they felt if they could unite all the so called ‘class of wizards’ they would have a better society when they graduated Hogwarts. Some of the girls, of course, were talking about clothing.

“I miss Luna, I’m sad she won’t be here until next year. I hope her, Ellie, Astoria and Ginny will be alright in the school. Not to mention poor Spencer, being the only boy,” Pavarti said with a wistful look on her face, she really would miss her quirky friend. The rest of the girls in this group nodded, they too would miss the school and their younger friends.

“It’ll be alright, he has some friends in his class and Mr. Lovegood said he would take the kids home in the afternoons so they can still learn,” Padma said petting her more emotional twin on the shoulder. “Besides they all have a mirror, of some sort, and you can talk to them every night and mother-hen them to death,” she said with a smirk, causing Pavarti to mock glare at her.

“Brat,” Pavarti said clumsily swinging at her sister. Padma just laughed and ducked out of the way.

“I wonder what the Potters are going to be doing. They said they couldn’t take the younger ones after school anymore. That they were going to busy, now that the boys won’t be there. The twins’ uncles said the same thing. What could be so important that they are bowing out like that?” Alice said a frown of consideration on her face. She knew the Potters wouldn’t let the kids down unless it
was something very important, but she hated not being told.

“I don’t know,” Susan said shrugging her shoulders. “Auntie thinks they’re up to something sinister. I tried to tell her that the Potters weren’t like that, but she wasn’t listening.” Her aunt was very vocal about the Potters hiding something from her. Because of Susan’s comment, Padma made note to tell Harry and Gary to warn their parents that they may be watched. She didn’t think that Madam Bones disliked the Potters. However Padma felt, the Head Auror was protesting about being left out of something.

Padma shook her head from those thoughts and noticed there was a lot of traffic through the car claimed by the Mutineers, and a lot of whispers and sly looks thrown Gary’s way. Making the poor boy blush and glare at the same time. He really hated the whole Boy-Who-Lived thing. His group of friends formed a barrier around him and glared as the offenders. People would soon learn that if they wanted to meet Gary, they would have to be polite and approach him without star-struck eyes. And if they wanted to talk it would have to be about normal kids’ stuff. All his friends would tell everyone they met that. They were hoping this way more friends would be made and less fan groups. The Mutineers saw Gary and Harry as normal kids and wanted the whole school to see the same.

Of course not all looks thrown Gary’s way were of awe and admiration. He got plenty of looks of smugness and scorn from a lot of the pure-bloods. They would come into the car and look around at who the Potters surrounded themselves with and see many kids they didn’t know, therefore, if they didn’t know them, they were not pure-blood. And the pure-bloods that they did know about must be blood traitors, to be hanging around so many lesser class children. They had all heard about the disgrace of these pure-bloods lowering themselves to going to a Mudblood school.

The pure-bloods, that were thinking this, had been grilled on who was who in the wizarding world and anyone else was unimportant should not be around a wizarding icon like the Potter brat. They were told, by their parents, to try and befriend the idiot. Most decided, after they entered the car and saw the tight knit group, it wasn’t worth their time. They would try and get him apart from all his friends at school.

For every rule on human behavior there was always one who breaks the mold, in this case it was one Draco Malfoy. He came strutting into the car, wearing a very expensive set of black and silver robes, his white blonde hair slicked back on his head and his loyal bodyguards at his back. He went straight to Gary’s group. Ignoring those he didn’t know and nodding, like a prince of some sort, to the others.

“I heard that Gary Potter was in this car. Looking around at all the Mudbloods and Blood traitors,” Draco drawled, ignoring the outcry from the large group around him, “I feel it is my duty to inform him that he needs guidance,” he finished a sneer firmly on his lips, as if he was surrounded by disgusting things. He marched up to Gary and held out his hand. “I’m Malfoy, Draco Malfoy.” Snickers broke out from almost everyone; thanks to the Potter game room everyone had watched the Bond movies at one time or another.

This caused Draco’s face to morph into one of confusion, these lower class people shouldn’t be laughing at him. They should be looking at him with awe. After all his family was a very important family. He shook it off for the moment as unimportant. He had a mission to complete, given to him by his father. “I can help you get to know the important people of our society. I know you have hidden away from the public in that…” he paused remembering the uproar of the use of Mudblood earlier and settled for, “…Muggle School and I can introduce you to the right people,” he said as he confidently held out his hand.

Cries of protest filled the air, while Gary looked at the hand in front of him. He could feel his friends and brother starting to edging around him in a show of support. He had been told what to do and say
“Draco, was it? I’ve heard of the Malfoys and while your family would make great business partners, I feel, at this time, we cannot be friends. Now if we get to know each other better, then maybe, in a few months, that might change. However, I will not be friends with someone who feels they can… guide me to making better friends then the ones I already have or someone that insults those I care about,” the youngest Potter said with a small smile as he was shaking the upstarts hand in a firm business-like manner.

After the stories told by his dad and uncles about what happened with Snape, it was decided that the boys should try and make as few enemies as possible. That way there would be less fighting in the halls of Hogwarts and less for Dumbledore to use against the Mutineers. All condescending children were to be treated with a professional manner and not to be turned down flat. It was hopeful they could turn some of these kids away from their parents’ way of thinking.

Draco was confused; his hand had been shaken, no insults were thrown, but his offer of friendship was turned down—for now. His father had not told him what to do in this type of situation. He knew the Potter name was just as big, if not bigger, than the Malfoys and to make an enemy of the family could be detrimental to his father politics. After a moment’s pause he returned the handshake in the same professional way and nodded his head twice. “I will look forward to speaking with you in the future then,” he said and with one more nod of his head he turned and walked out of the car, his head held high, ignoring the glares of a good part of the Mutineers. Bodyguards flanking either side.

All of the kids were told of the plan, that didn’t stop Ron and Seamus from protesting, they had no head for politics. They only understood that they had been insulted and that Gary hadn’t stood up for them, not catching the subtle insult Gary had laid into Malfoy.

“Slimy snakes,” Ron muttered at the retreating backs, Seamus nodding in agreement. No matter what anyone told Ron he would never trust anyone who would be sorted into that house. Sad shakes of heads were seen throughout the car, glares were added from people who hated that insult. “What the bloody hell, Gary? Why did you shake that slimes hand? Don’t you feel the need to wash it now? Didn’t you hear what he said when he came in?” Ron questioned rapidly, voice rising with each one as he turned to the de facto leader of this group. A large sigh was heard from most of the kids, to tell the truth they were getting tired of this argument.

Gary turned to his friend, a sad look in his eyes, “Ron, we’ve been over this before. We can’t make enemies of anyone. We want the group to remain whole and if we’re seen fighting then the Headmaster might use it as an excuse to separate us. Don’t you want to stay with your friends? Besides, you just insulted a good quarter of the people in this car, which you’ve called friends for the last six years. There are at least two that we know are going to be sorted into Slytherin, and many others whose parents were. Do you really think that fighting should happen over insults?” he said, pleading with his entire face for this hot-headed friend to understand. If he didn’t and they were in the same house, it was going to be a long seven years.

“Yeah, Ron,” Neville added putting his hand on Gary’s shoulder in a show of support, “I don’t get why you don’t understand this yet. It is for the good of the Mutineers that we are seen as upstanding students. United, just like our motto says.”

Ron looked around the car and saw that he and Seamus were the only ones that felt the way they did. He rubbed his hand through the back of his hair and tried to come up with a way to get out of the debate he had lost so many times before. “Yeah, alright. Sorry, I just lost my head for a minute,” he mumbled an apology and turned way to talk to Seamus and Wayne about Quidditch again. Not noticing that no one believed him.
After a few minutes of contemplative silence, the rest of the kids went back to clicks and started up the conversations they were having before the interruption. The rest of the train ride was fun and exciting they had met a few more people that stayed in the car with them. There was a slightly bossy and inquisitive girl named Hermione Granger and a shy little girl, who wanted to be around a large group of people her age for protection, Sally Anne Perks. Susan and Hannah took Sally Anne under their wing and drew her into the conversation they were having about dress robes. Harry and Terry were talking with Hermione about what house they wanted to be in, trying to get the girl to decide on getting sorted for who she was and not who had been in the House in the past.

While the kids talked, so did the parents

At the Potter manor there was a group of ten people, all these particular parents didn’t have jobs and had plenty of time to go hunting. The hunting team consisted of; Albert Boot, Kenton Brocklehurst, Gifford Abbott, Wayne Hopkins Sr., Augusta Longbottom, the Potters and, of course, Sirius and Remus.

“Okay, guys settle down,” James said to the excited group. They had been making plans for a year now and were all anxious to get the show on the road, so to speak. “Now, that our kids, or grandkid, are at Hogwarts we can get started. Everyone knows what they have to do?” he asked settling down at the table now that he had everyone’s attention.

“I am going to be asking around about people that went to school with Tom Riddle, since they are mostly my age, I should be able to get them to spill some gossip. Most don’t know he is Voldemort, I did not know and I went to school with the man, albeit years ahead of him. However, if I mix it up with gossip of other alumni, then no one should be the wiser,” the eldest Longbottom said, with a regal nodding of her head, making the vulture on her hat bob with her. “I do hope you will allow me to use your name. It would make whatever I get back that much more… juicier,” she added a quirk of her grey eyebrow.

“Of course,” James said with a tight smile, “just don’t slander us, keep our secrets and we’ll be fine.”

“Yes,” said Lily in agreement, “that’s the perfect job for you. Use our name, but try and keep the boys out of it. You can talk about their schooling and friends, but that’s it. I trust you Augusta, and the more we know about Tom’s whereabouts after he left Hogwarts, the better we can decide where to look and what to look for,” she stated then turned to the rest of the team. “Albert and I are on research. Severus really came through for me with the books I needed.” She ignored the disgruntled looks from the Marauders.

It was the reason she had been ‘spotted’ by Skeeter in the Alley. She was thankful that vile bug of a woman didn’t get a close enough look as what they were doing or discussing. She would have to meet him somewhere more private in the future. Maybe the Shrieking Shack, it was close to his work and there were plenty of reasons Lily could be in Hogsmeade.

“Yes, and while you ladies, and gentleman, do that, we’re going to take that doodad that Lily made and scout as much of Britain as possible. When the research and gossip teams come up with a location we’ll go there right away. Until then I think we should do some visiting on our own. We’ll start with Grimmauld Place, since everyone is dead now,” Sirius said, talking about the point-me crystal that found Dark magic, the Darker the magic the more it vibrated. So if it wasn’t vibrating hard then they could ignore what it as pointing to.

They had tested it last month in Knockturn Alley. It was a simple design; a black crystal, five inches long, about a finger’s width. In that Dark Alley the thing went off at every store. They discovered that a few stores weren’t as Dark as they were told they were. There was even some niffy stuff in them, which didn’t make the crystal go off at all. Sirius had talked to the owners about the meditation
crystals and mirrors in those shops. James’ voice brought Sirius back to the discussion.

“It’s going to be a long year, Britain isn’t small, and we’re going about this willy-nilly. But it’s the only plan we have until we get more information, that’s where you three come in. Hopefully we can find at least one of these things before the year is out,” James said seriously. He waved it off a moment later and said, “Don’t forget to go home to your family every night. I think we have some time before the Dark Wanker returns. So talk to your kids, or grandkid, and spouses. Don’t let this hunt take up all your time. If we hear anything that makes us believe that we need to pick up the pace, we’ll let all of you and the other parents know.”

The team split up, Augusta went home and started making Floo calls to set up teas. Lily and Albert went to a room on the top floor that they had set up as a study. This particular room had a hidden book shelf in the wall, hidden the Muggle way with a sliding panel. You had to press the correct spot on the wall for it to slide open. The books that Severus had retrieved for her were Dark and she didn’t want anyone to know they were in the house. She put up the magic null spell on the room so all the Dark magic on the books was inert and couldn’t be detected with any spells used to find magical items. The rest of the men sat in the dining room and poured over a map of Britain planning out their strategy.

Hphphp

For those of you not new to the story (so sorry for the double post of this) and want to know the results of the poll they are:

In Potter Stand United there is an OC, Sally, or Death, I have been getting a few complaints about her, so what should I do?

1  I like Sally, leave her alone  56 - 55%
2  Put her in the background  20 - 20%
3  Make her grown up  17 - 17%
4  Change into a real Death (skeletal, male, dark and foreboding)  7 - 7%

Unique Voters: 100

I did get some cool ideas in the comments. So watch for a few, non-drastic, changes.
Later that day, well, now night

It was getting dark when the train pulled into Hogsmeade. The Mutineers decided to let the rush of other students go first and then disembark from the train. Making sure they had their mirrors and crystals on their persons, well most of them, they left the train.

“Firs’ years! Firs’ years, over here!” came the booming voice of Hagrid. The Mutineers knew Hagrid, and while the Potters were at first angry at him, they soon came to realize that he was simply doing what he was told. So they forgave, but never forgot. He visited them upon the occasion, but never became a close friend of the family or the group of kids, just a nice guy that hung out once and a while.

The tall, shaggy man stood to the far side of the platform, near a path that led to the lake. He had a lantern in one hand and was waving it around so that people would see him. “Firs’ years! Gather ‘round. Mind yer step. Everyone ‘ere? Good follow me,” the gentle giant said after receiving nods from a good part of the group.

Carefully, they made their way on what felt like a steep path through some dark woods. A lot of the girls were clinging to their male friends to keep from slipping on the damp path.

“Yeh’ll get yer firs’ sight o’ Hogwarts in a sec,” Hagrid called over his shoulder, “jus’ round this bend here.”

As the path opened into a large area in front to the Black Lake, you could see the beauty that was Hogwarts. It was a grandiose castle, with many tall towers and torrents. There was light coming from every window, making the castle look very fairytale like. It stood half way up a mountain and seemed to almost float in the sky, with it getting dark like it was.
“No more ‘han four ‘o a boat,” Hagrid said pointing at the fleet of small wooden boats on the shore. Harry and Gary, along with Padma and Pavarti, shared the boat ride over. All of them had large grins on their faces, sharing a moment about what was to befall Hogwarts this year with the Mutineers now in attendance, all good things of course.

Hagrid called for the boats to go forward, after making sure everyone had their seat. The children all watched as Hogwarts got closer and the closer it got, the more excited, or frightened, the children got, as the case may be. The Potter twins were getting more apprehensive, they had a plan, but it had to be done carefully.

After making it across the dark and murky lake and going up yet another long steep path, they came to a flight of stair and at the top was a large wooden double door. Hagrid used his plate size fist to knock on the door, and you could hear the echo come from within, indicating a large room on the other side. An older stern looking woman, that the Mutineers knew to be Professor McGonagall, opened the door and stepped out.

“Firs’ years, Professor,” Hagrid said with his customary smile.

“Thank you, Hagrid. I’ll take it from here,” the Professor told the man, who nodded and left. She then turned to the children. “Follow me,” she said in a clipped voice.

The Mutineers had been warned not to get on this woman bad side. The students followed her into and large stunning entrance hall, then down another hallway and into a smaller room. It was empty with grey wall that had torches mounted on them, which gave off shadows in the corners, making it a little foreboding.

Deputy Headmistress McGonagall gave what sounded like a well-rehearsed speech, about the sorting and the Houses of Hogwarts. She then left them to ‘straighten’ themselves out. The Mutineers grouped together and straighten the shirts, ties and robes of the person closest to them. Soon they were all sorted. After a small scare with the ghosts, who seemed a little nervous, the professor came back in and led the now leery children to the Great Hall.

The four, long wooden, student tables were filled with the upper years. There was one for each House and they ran the length of the Hall. There was a staff table that ran the front width of the Hall, which was raised higher than the other tables and was filled, of course, with the professors and headmaster. The room itself was easily the largest room most of these kids had seen. The ceiling reflected the night sky and thousands of candles hung in the air. The overall atmosphere was welcoming, yet slightly overwhelming. You could almost feel the thousand years of magic hanging thickly in the air.

In front of the staff table was a three-legged wooden stool, upon the stool was a battered, patched and very dirty hat. The first years were looking around with various states of awe on their faces, until the brim of the hat formed a mouth and started to sing.

Oh you may not think I’m pretty,
But don’t judge on what you see,
I’ll eat myself if you can find
A smarter hat than me.

You can keep your bowlers black,
Your top hats sleek and tall,
For I’m the Hogwarts Sorting Hat
And I can cap them all.
There's nothing hidden in your head
The Sorting Hat can't see,
So try me on and I will tell you
Where you ought to be.

You might belong in Gryffindor,
Where dwell the brave at heart,
Their daring, nerve, and chivalry
Set Gryffindors apart;

You might belong in Hufflepuff,
Where they are just and loyal,
Those patient Hufflepuffs are true
And unafraid of toil;

Or yet in wise old Ravenclaw,
if you've a ready mind,
Where those of wit and learning,
Will always find their kind;

Or perhaps in Slytherin
You'll make your real friends,
Those cunning folks use any means
To achieve their ends.

So put me on! Don't be afraid!
And don't get in a flap!
You're in safe hands (though I have none)
For I'm a Thinking Cap!

A round of applause was heard throughout the Hall as students and professors alike clapped to the song. Harry and Gary clapped with everyone else and shared a smile; this is what they had been waiting for, for years. It was time to put plans in motion.

“When I call your name, come up here and place the hat on your head and it will sort you into your house,” McGonagall stated as she pulled a roll of parchment out of her robes, unfurled it and started calling names. “Abbott, Hannah”

Hannah walked up to the hat with a little bit of trepidation, she placed the hat on her head and got a happy look on her face when after a minute the hat called out “Hufflepuff.”

The Mutineers were sorted in the following order:

Susan went into Hufflepuff like they knew she would. Wayne, Leanne and Megan joined her.

Terry went into Ravenclaw, like his father before him and was soon joined with Mandy, Michael and Padma.

Tracey was sorted into Slytherin with Daphne and Malfoy, much to their distaste.

Fay, Seamus, Neville, Alice, Parvati were all sorted into Gryffindor, along with Hermione Granger. They never figured that a large portion of the Mutineers would go to that House.

After Sally Anne Perks was sorted into Hufflepuff, and you could tell just how happy she was by the
joyous look of relief on her face to be sorted with her new friends, it was time for the Potters.

“Potter, Gary,” McGonagall called. A hush fell over the Hall, then suddenly whispers were heard everywhere.

“Is that him?”

“He’s handsome for a young…”

“Is that his twin?”

“I wonder if they’ll be…”

“Shhh, I want to hear the…”

The disjointed whispers followed Gary as he made his way up to the stool, with a blank look on his face. He placed the hat on his head and said, “Hello, Mr. Hat.”

“Oh ho, a polite one. Well meet, Mr. Potter, oh I see you have a plan. It’s a good plan too, I’ve been preaching for years for a plan like this. To unite the entire wizarding world of Britain, that is quite ambitious. You would do well in Slytherin, but I see that would go against your strategy. The bravery you are showing to pull off such a grand scheme you would also do well in Gryffindor. The mastery behind this plan puts you well in the lead for Ravenclaw. But your loyalty to your brother and friends put Hufflepuff in the front. Tell me Mr. Potter, will your plan work if you are placed there? Think carefully,” the hat stated into his head.

Gary sat for a few minutes running that scenario through his head and then shook his head and stated, “No. In order for this to work I have to go into Gryffindor,” he thought firmly to the hat.

“Then it better be —Gryffindor.” The last word was shouted to the hall.

The room exploded with noise. The Weasley twins, who knew this would happen, made fools of themselves anyway by chanting “We got a Potter, We got a Potter.”

Gary took the hat off and winked at his brother, who gave a slight nod back, and went to the Gryffindor table and sat next to Hermione. He was a little disappointed that she didn’t listen to Harry and get sorted in to Ravenclaw, where he felt she belonged. Oh well, if things worked out they would be good friends anyway. He had hoped that if she had been there, then there would have been more inter-house relationships. Then again, maybe Harry will befriend the girl.

“Potter, Harry”

The Hall fell silent again as the name was called, and then more murmurs broke out. Harry matched his brother as he went to the stool, face blank and ignoring the whispers. He placed the hat upon his head and did the same as Gary did and greeted the hat.

“Oh, another polite one, I don’t think it’s fair that your parents let all these kids know about me before you came. But, ah well, what’s done is done and I see it was part of the plot. So many children trying to tell me how to do my job. It was actually a pleasant change of pace. Now where to sort you.”

“I would like to go to Ravenclaw, if you please.”

“Yes, I know all about your plan from you brothers head. But, let me at least pretend earn my keep, hmmm. I see from you memories that you would do even better in Slytherin than your twin.
—“But,” Harry started. — No, hush, I know, I can see why that wouldn’t work. The Headmaster wants you there, you know? Gave me a long speech as to why he needed you there above all other Houses. Even after all these years he wants to separate you two. He should know by now he can’t influence me. Hmm, I see you’re far more powerful than your brother, perhaps the most powerful student in these halls. Your family and Sally seemed to have taught you well, little one. You would do well to heed their words and advice. Now let’s see, while you are loyal, your true loyalty is only to your family, so unlike your twin that is not the House for you. Gryffindor won’t do for you, while you are brave; you are not fool-hearty. So it best be— Ravenclaw.” The last again shouted into the hall.

This time there was stunned silence, everyone had believed he would be sorted with his brother. Harry took a quick sidelong peek at the Headmaster and saw his lips firm, but the calculating twinkle was in his eyes. Harry smirked inwardly; he loved it when a plan came together. He went to the Ravenclaw table, which had finally started clapping for him, and sat next to Padma. He gave a knowing nod to Terry, Mandy and Michael. Then turned back to the sorting just in time to see Ron sorted into Gryffindor.

After Zabini, Blaise, was sorted into Slytherin, McGonagall took up the stool with the hat still perched on it and carried it away.

The Headmaster stood and in a parody of Gandalf the Grey, opened his arms as if he was encompassing the whole room. He started to speak, “Before we begin our banquet, I would like to say a few words. And here they are: Nitwit! Blubber! Oddment! Tweak! Thank you.” And he sat back down in his throne like chair.

The tables magically filled with food; there was roast beef, roast chicken, pork chops, lamb chops, sausages, bacon, steak, joints, steak and kidney pie, boiled potatoes, roast potatoes, mashed potato, chips, Yorkshire pudding, peas, carrots, gravy, ketchup, and peppermint humbugs.

Comments were passed around about the Headmasters sanity. Harry snorted as selected the foods with the least amount of fat and noted that the rest of the Mutineers at his table were doing the same. Muggles may get overweight and die of heart attacks, but wizards just became lazy when they ate too much fatty food. The magic burned the extra calories, but not right away and only if they were using it. So the extra fat and calories made them lethargic.

There was talk among the first years and the Mutineers made sure they introduced themselves to everyone around them. They wanted to make sure everyone knew they were approachable. Harry didn’t like some of the upper-years, they seemed snotty to him, and he hated stuck-up people. But he kept his thoughts hidden and smiled welcomingly. He waylaid most of the questions asked about his twin by saying, “Ask him, if he wants you to know, and you’re polite enough, he’ll tell you himself.” Then Harry would change the subject. He made a list of those who asked, and what they asked. Then sent a mental message off to Gary. Gary raised his head and looked at the people Harry indicated and nodded, making his own list.

Harry glanced at the staff table and covertly watched the professors; there was the Headmaster, Professor McGonagall, Hagrid, and Professor Snape. Those were the only ones Harry knew by sight. Then there was the other two Head of Houses’ ‘The tiny man must be Professor Flitwick, and the grubby woman must be Professor Sprout,’ he thought, and looked further down the table, there was wishy-washy looking man next to Snape with a ridiculously large purple turban, who had his head turned to speak to the Potions Master.

There was a small but sharp pain in Harrys forehead and he heard Sally whisper in his ear, “That’s the Horcrux, ignore it for now. I’ll fill you in later.”
Harry discreetly nodded and turned to one of the upper years. “Who is that professor next to Snape?” he asked.

“That’s Professor Quirrell, ‘e usta be the Muggle Studies professor. But, Dumbledore gave ‘im a year off and ‘e came back to teach the Defense Against the Dark Arts. Not sure what ‘appened to ‘im, ‘e didn’t usta be this twitchy,” she answered with a shrug and went back to her meal.

Harry nodded in thanks and turned back to his plate just in time for the dessert to fill the table. There were blocks of assorted ice cream, apple pies, spotted dick, chocolate gateau, treacle tart, pumpkin tart, chocolate éclairs and jam doughnuts, trifle, strawberries, jelly, and rice pudding. Harry greedily took up some of the treacle tart and dug in. He was a kid; desserts didn’t count in his book.

The feast finally came to a close and the Headmaster stood and welcomed everyone once again and gave a speech about magic in the hallways, no going into the Forbidden Forest, banned items and not to enter the third floor corridor, on the right hand side, if you didn’t want to die a painful death.

There were going to be a lot of mirror calls tonight and they weren’t all going to be from the Mutineers. The Headmaster should’ve known better.

The prefects called for the first years to follow them. And everyone stood and left the Hall. They all went tiredly to their assigned dorms and mirrors were whipped out as soon as silencing charms, or security runes, were applied.

“Gary Potter,” Harry called into his mirror after activating the security rune. He wanted to see his brother’s face.

“Hey, Harry, what do you think so far?” Gary said tiredly. “And why are you mirror calling me and not just broadcasting?”

“I think the Headmaster is off his rocker. I wanted to see your face I hate not being around you.”

“Do you think we should tell Mum and Dad?”

“No, let Susan call her Aunt, which reminds me we have to warn Mum and Dad that Madam Bones is keeping a sharp eye on them. Oh, it looks like Sally wants to tell us something,” Harry said as Sally appeared on his bed.

“What’s up, Sally?” Gary asked, hoping it wasn’t too bad of news.

“You need to call you parents’ right after we’re through talking. Voldemort is in the castle,” she said dropping that bombshell.

“What?!” came the twins horrified response.

“How, the bloody hell, did he get into the castle?” Harry asked. He was angry and confused and very, very scared. For himself, but mostly for his brother, if Voldemort was in the castle then he would eventually go after Gary. Both boys were shaking badly with the maelstrom of emotions running through each of them and cycling through the link.

“He is on the back of Quirrell’s head, the poor man is possessed. I can’t touch him; as long as he has those thrice damned Horcruxes then he is still partially alive. I have no idea if the Headmaster knows, but that’s why your Horcrux was pained earlier. It will always do that when you are in the Dark Lord’s presence. It is a good thing your twin ritual cleansed it grey, or that pain would have been a lot worse,” Sally said and then noticed the narrowing of two pairs of green eyes. “Oops, I forgot you didn’t know that I knew, sorry,” she said sheepishly. “But, that is neither here or there,
call your parents. You, Gary, call your dad, Harry your mum. You can finish your talk later.” And with that she left.

“Done.” And both mirrors went blank.

“Lily Potter,” Harry called frantically.

“Harry, what’s wrong sweetheart?” Lily asked as soon as she saw her pale son’s face.

“Voldemort is possessing one of the professors. Sally just told us. I don’t know what to do. I’m nowhere ready to face him. Mum, I’m scared. What do I do?” Harry’s trembling voice came over the mirror and Lily longed to take her child into her arms and make that fear leave him.

“Shhh, it’s okay, sweetheart, listen to Mummy. We’re going to call Amelia as soon as we get off the calls with you two. I want you to talk to your brother; you can do it mind to mind or… no it’s better that way. Less chance of being overheard. You two talk about stupid stuff, like what pranks you’re going to play, or what classes you’re going to like. Or even make fun of your professors, anything to get your mind off what you told me. When you’re done activate your crystal, Okay?” she quickly talked her almost hysterical child down. She knew the twin bond would help, so would the crystal and if Sally showed then that would help too.

Taking deep breaths Harry calmed himself down. Then remembered the Headmasters warning and even though he was going to leave it to the other Mutineers, he figured since he had her there anyway might as well tell her that as well. “Mum,” he said a lot less emotional now that he was feeding calmness to his brother and receiving it back, “the Headmaster warned us away from the third floor corridor on the right hand side. He said we would die a ‘painful death’ if we went there. Why would he tell us something was there if he wanted it hidden?”

“I don’t know, sweetheart, you let us adults deal with this okay? Talk to your brother and then try and sleep. You have classes in the morning. I love you, baby,” she crooned trying to further relax her child.

“Love you too, Mum. Done.” And the mirror went blank. He had forgotten all about warning her about Madam Bones. Harry tucked the mirror away and tried to contact his brother with their mental connection. They had never tried from this distance before. “Gary? Are you done talking to Dad?”

“Yeah, he said Mum told us to talk,” came the reply.

“Yeah, let’s talk about pranking. I can’t think of anything else to get my mind off of all this crap.”

And so they did. Until the wee hours of the morning they talked of stupid things, sending love and comfort between them, until they fell asleep.

Unknown to them hundreds of mirror calls were made, those calls cause owls to fly, Floos to flare and phones to ring. Parents everywhere were contacting magical and in-the-know Muggle officials. Officers were contacting their Heads; pandemonium was rapid in the wizarding —and parts of the Muggle— world that night.

Tomorrow would be a big day.
The First Day

AN: flying solo on this, no beta. So any mistakes are of course my own. I do read over the chapter's three times, sometimes more, but I know I don't catch everything. If you see something that doesn't make sense or is a plot hole, feel free to tell me.

AN: I'm going put the first day in this chapter, so you have an idea on how the boys do in school. The parents and officials will show in the next. Then I will more than likely time skip through the first year.

Disclaimer: I don't own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belong to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her.

Hphphp

After the mirror call, Potter Manor

Lily was practically screaming for Amelia Bones at the mirror, but it just kept flashing busy. Finally, James came and took the mirror from her hands. He grabbed her gently, yet firmly, by the arms and guided her into the game room. That much emotion was a magical accident waiting to happen, even with an adult.

“Lily-flower, please. You have to calm down a minute and think,” James begged, holding his struggling and hysterical wife in his arms. Swaying back and forth to try and get her calm. She was usually the logical one and he needed her brain to figure out what to do next. She couldn't do that if she wasn’t thinking.

Lily fought to get free and out of the room, her children were in danger and she was not going to stand by while that happened. She needed to get to a room where the mirror worked and call someone to rescue the kids. “Calm down! Calm down? How the bloody hell am I supposed to do that?” she yelled in her husband’s face. “Let me go, James. Or so help me I’m going to hurt you.” And if he hadn’t had her arms pinned to her side, she would have belted him one.

“Lily! Lily! I need you to think. If you run off halfcocked then who will rescue the boys. It’s obvious that the boys weren’t the only ones to call their folks. Other kids must have told their parents about the ‘painful death’. Listen, please, we need a plan. Do you think Amelia is going to believe that a dead man is possessing one of the professors? No. she’s going to think we’re… I don’t know… trying to get attention or something. Lily, think,” James pleaded quickly, running through all the reasons why calling Amelia was a bad idea. “We need to be like the other parents and tell her about the Headmasters warning. We’ll think of something when we get to the castle either tonight or tomorrow. Come on, I need your beautiful mind to help come up with a plan.”

“You’re right, you’re right. Okay I’m calm,” the less hysterical mother stated and relaxed enough that her husband let her go. She started pacing around the room thinking hard. James was correct she couldn’t call the Head of the DMLE in a feverish fit, with no evidence and they couldn’t tell her that Death told them, they would be locked up before they knew what was happening.

Lily’s clearer head started going over the spells she had read about in the secret library. Was there any that could tell if a man was possessed, yet wasn’t Dark? She couldn’t be seen casting Dark magic. She thought and thought and thought and then ran from the room to go to and look through the books. She had a plan.
The next morning, Hogwarts.

“Gary Potter,” the youngest Potter twin heard upon waking the next morning. So he got up and grabbed the mirror from his nightstand, put it in security mode and answered. He quickly noted the time; it was 6:30 a.m.

“Glad to see you’re awake, sleepyhead. It’s almost breakfast time,” his father’s smiling face greeted him. Making Gary feel much better than when he went to bed. He trusted the adults in his life.

“Hey Dad, I see your humor is the same as always. Did you guys work something out?” he asked while trying to get the sleep out of his eyes. Harry and Gary didn’t wear glasses like their father; they had gotten magical contacts when they were ten. They wanted to be known for themselves and not miniature James’. They were tired of hearing, ‘Just like your father, with your mother’s eyes.’

“Yes, but you’re to leave it to us. I want you and the rest of the Mutineers to act as if there is nothing wrong. You and your brother don’t tell anyone what you know. You’ll only create a panic. Your mum is telling Harry the same thing right now,” James said firmly to his child, then quickly glance to the side to see that his wife was indeed doing just that. He and Lily had been up all night going over plans with the Hunters, as they were calling themselves. “Your Mum and I are going to be coming to the castle with the other parents, some officials and the Aurors tonight,” he said looking back to his son. “It’ll take that long for them to get organized; Madam Bones doesn’t feel that the kids are in danger at this very minute, so she is going through all the proper channels so she can search the entire castle. Expect us around dinner time. Okay?”

“Alright Dad,” Gary yawned his answer. “Give my love to Mum.”

“Be careful, son. And stay away from Quirrell and the forbidden corridor. We love you. Done,” James said and signed off.

Gary got up and did his morning ritual, before getting dressed and heading out, expanded book bag loaded with his course books. He had shook all the boys wake except two, he tried to wake them for five minutes, but to no avail and he was going to be late if he kept trying. So he shrugged his shoulders and left. He went to meet up with the rest of the group, sans Ron and Seamus. They all met in the common room, plus Hermione, he was determined to make sure she was included in the gang soon. Dean Thomas joined them as well.

Gary consulted his map discreetly, making sure Hermione and Dean didn’t see it, and as one they walked down to the entrance hall with him in the lead. They waited for the rest of the Mutineers so they could all go into the Great Hall as one.

The rest of the first years started trickling in and each person went to who they related to best, like Susan and Hannah made a beeline to Pavarti, dragging Sally Anne behind them, and started talking about their guardians’ reactions to the mirror calls made last night, much to the confusion of the new girl. It seemed that was the hot topic of the morning, and it wasn’t even breakfast on the first day yet.

After waiting for ten minutes for stragglers, off to the side as to not get in the other students way, they all went to get breakfast, chatting away, as if they weren’t in separate Houses. They did have to break off when they entered the Hall, but it was with cheery calls and hugs that it happened.

Harry and Gary glanced at the Staff Table to see how the group was received. They noticed most of the professors beaming with pride and happiness. On the other hand, Snape was wearing a passive face, Quirrell was trying hard to hide his disgust, and the Headmasters lips were firm and he eyes held none of their usually twinkle. The two boys hugged each other and promised to meet in class and when they had breaks together.
Gary was a little worried about his two friends that had been sorted into Slytherin, but from the looks on the two girls’ faces, nothing had happened. Which was a relief, he had to remember that the only accounts he had of that House were a thousand years old or very biased. The Slytherin parents of the Mutineers were pretty closed-mouth about what went on there; it was like a traditional secret. But they only seemed slightly worried and mostly because Tracey was a half-blood. And Gary knew for a fact that those two were taught how to defend themselves, both magically and non-magically.

Gary took his seat at the Gryffindor table and started serving up his meal. There was all manner of meat; bacon, sausage, ham, scrapple, blood pudding, kippers, steak. Eggs in various forms, beans, toast, cereal (hot and cold), and bowls of fruit. There was water, pumpkin juice and milk to drink. So he served himself up some cold cereal with fruit and a glass of milk. He noted that all his friends did the same, with a few adding some kippers, eggs or toast to the side. It did make him wonder what happened to all the food that was never eaten, a project for later.

It was about fifteen minutes before the end of breakfast that Ron and Seamus came running into the room. “Mate, why didn’t you wake us?” Ron asked sitting down. He and Seamus loaded their plates with the fattiest food they could and started chowing down, not noticing the looks of disappointment on the rest of the group’s faces, including their brothers. Almost everything these two boys did pointed to them not staying with the Mutineers, it was sad.

“I tried; for five minutes. I even told you that you were going to miss breakfast. You told me to go away. I was already running late, so I left. You can’t really expect me to brush off the rest of the group just because you want a lay in,” Gary explained with a shrug.

“You should’ve tried harder. Mum always rolls me out of bed,” Ron said as he shoveled food in his mouth not even stopping to chew some of it.

“Ron, I’m not your mum. You’re eleven now and should be able to get yourself out of bed. I didn’t have to roll any of the other boys out of their beds. I just shook their shoulders and told them the time and they all got up on their own,” Gary said and nods from Neville and Dean accompanied his explanation.

“Whatever,” Ron said and continued with his breakfast. Gary just shook his head.

It was around this time that Professor McGonagall was handing out schedules, unknown to the students the four Head of Houses had stayed up late changing the classes around so that only two were Gryffindor and Ravenclaw. The Headmaster was determined to put as much space between the Potter twins as possible. They had already done this once when Dumbledore was sure that Harry would be sorted into Slytherin.

“Mr. Longbottom, Mr. Potter, Mr. Thomas, I commend your efforts at House unity, I would award points, but then I would have to award them to everyone that came into the Hall with you. So let’s just said that most of the professors are very proud of you and your friends,” she said as she handed them their schedules.

“Thank you, Professor,” Neville and Dean said and Gary smiled at her, nodding his head with respect.

“As for you two, Mr. Weasley and Mr. Finnigan, I expect better punctuality from you in the future,” she stated firmly to the two still eating as she placed their schedules next to their plates.

“Yes, Ma’am” Seamus said as he finished his plate and looked at his timetable. Ron nodded his head to her as the continued to chew his food. McGonagall continued down the table handing out schedules.
Gary looked at his piece of parchment and noticed that he only had Transfiguration and Herbology with Harry. ‘Looks like it’s beginning,’ he thought to his brother.

‘Yep, it’s okay though we’ll make sure we study together. I’ve been thinking we should get the group to study here in the Hall. That way we can subtly rub it into the Headmaster’s crooked nose, and he can’t do a thing about it. Not without making himself look bad. We’ll still work out a way to get a room for the practical stuff,’ Harry sent back not even looking in Gary’s direction.

‘We have Herbology first, and then I have a break then Charms. What do you have?’

‘I have Defense Against the Dark Arts, then a break and then Potions. Where are you when I’m in Potions?’

‘History,’ Gary thought looking over his timetable.

‘Well that’s today’s schedule, we have afternoon study time together. It is so much different than the other school. There’s so much free time. We’ll have to look into clubs or something. I have Astronomy on Tuesday, when do you have it?’

‘Wednesday.’

‘Okay that sounds good. We have Transfiguration tomorrow first thing, then I have Potions again then we have Herbology. I have a break at ten, when is yours?’

‘Mine is at nine, but we both have lunch together and we can study after, we’ll meet with the rest of the Mutineers in the library and check out the books we need and gather at the Raven… no that table will be full, how about the Hufflepuff table?’

‘Sounds like a plan. Hey everyone is getting ready to go. Try and behave,’ came a mocking reply from Harry.

‘Prat,’ Gary sent back. He gathered up his book bag and the first year Gryffindors meet up with the first year Ravenclaws. They all made their way to Greenhouse one.

Professor Sprout was a happy-go-lucky woman, who you could tell loved her job, she taught them the safety measures that were needed to work with magical plants. The first year plants and fungi weren’t deadly, but they could give you a nasty welt if you didn’t pay attention. Dragonhide gloves were brought out and used to repot a simple snap-dragon plant. This plant had a horrible habit of biting anyone who came within its reach and though it wasn’t poisonous the bites did hurt. It was a good thing that its reach was only two inches and the snapping heads were six inches from the roots. So you only had to tip the pot to the side and grab the bottom of the plant, gently pull it out, carefully tip the plant upright —and there is where it got tricky— avoid the heads and put it in the bigger pot.

Neville was a great fountain of advice, and all the first years listened to him. Hermione was especially grateful, this was something not told in the books. The class ended on a good note, no one was hurt. The Potter twins were happy to note there was a mirror right next to the exit. They assumed that meant it was connected to the important offices in the school. They did wonder why Professor Sprout didn’t point it out, maybe she wasn’t used to it and had forgotten.

Then Gary made his way to his break and Harry to DADA. Today’s classes were only covering theory for now; the practical lessons would start later. The Mutineers knew most of the theory, thanks to Remus and Lily. But they still learned stuff those two hadn’t covered, since their teaching was years old and some new stuff had been discovered, which made everyone feel less bored.

Professor Quirrell was a nervous man, though only Harry knew truly why, whose stutter was
horrendous. It was almost impossible to make out what he was saying. His turban would bob with his stutter making him look absolutely ridiculous. The room smelled of garlic and was kept dark. Harry’s scar hurt every time the Professor turned towards the board, which was a lot. Most of the class tried to follow along with their books and were doing okay with that. It was decided that this class would need extra study.

Professor Flitwick was like Professor Sprout in demeanor. He was a rather short, cheery man that loved his profession. He did get a little excited when he called Gary’s name, but settled down afterward and taught them the safety measure on Charms, warning them that a miscast charm could be potentially fatal, something about a water buffalo smushing them. The first half of class, like the others, was on theory. They spent the second half of the class, using a stick, going through the six basic wand motions. Before everyone left, Professor Flitwick pointed to the mirror by the door and gave some brief instructions about what it was for.

So the two classes went as well as they could. Harry went to Potions class with a great deal of trepidation. He knew that Professor Snape had told his mum that he would ignore the twins, and in part the Mutineers, but Harry was also told by his dad that the man was still holding a grudge. Much to his surprise the class went off without a hitch. They didn’t brew that day, but spent the class much like the others going over theory and safety protocols. Gloves were brought out again, and it was a good thing Professor Sprout made them clean them before they left her class, though Professor Snape suggested they get two pairs. Then ingredients were prepared for the next class which was when they were going to brew a boil relief balm.

Gary’s History class was anything but calm. Not five minutes into the dead boring class, just as students were falling asleep, Sally showed up. “Well,” she huffed from right behind Gary’s shoulder, making him jump. This caused Hermione to look at him quizzically. He just gave a slight shake of his head and continued to look forward. “This will never do. I’m not letting my boys learn from this has-been,” the embodiment of death stated and with a determined look on her cute little face, she stomped up to the front of the class, walked right through the desk and tapped the professor on the forehead, causing him to stop talking and look up. “Teach or leave,” she said in finality.

“What?” asked the confused ghost of a professor. He startled as if coming back to himself, and he looked about the classroom for the first time in a very, very long time. “Hmmm, I don’t remember any of you.” He scratched his withered chin, with his short fingers. “Why are you in my class?” he ask the students, peering through his glasses. The class just stared at him, except for a few who had their hands raised to answer.

“I’ll give you one chance, Cuthbert Binns, you can stay here and teach proper or leave,” Sally said, bringing his attention back to her, by getting in the confused professors face.

“Who are you?” he asked, and peered at the little girl. She had no school robe on, so maybe she was a Muggle and didn’t know this was a magic class. He wondered how she could have gotten past the wards, and into the castle proper. He didn’t seem to notice she was standing in his desk. The few that had fallen asleep, startled awake and were watching the now believed crazy professor talk to himself.

“I’m Death,” Sally replied with a steel glint in her eye, which was out of place on that lovable little face. “You’re dead, so straighten up or leave,” she repeated as she floated to the top of the desk, then she stomped her foot, which made her look more endearing than threatening.

“Oh my,” he said in sudden realization, looking down at his see-through hands, “I’m dead. I’ve always wanted to die. Now, I can meet so many historical people. Thank you,” he said to Sally, who gave an adorable little giggle, angry face fading as if it had never been. Binns then turned to the gobsmacked class and said, “Well, I must be off children. History waits for no man.” And with a
jaunty wave, he floated through the chalkboard, to his next great adventure.

“Much better,” said Sally turning to Gary, with her hands on her hips and a beaming smile on her face. “I’ll be right back, Gary. Try and study or something.” She had just the person in mind, Isobel Watts, who had been twenty-five when she died in 1977. Isobel had volunteered to come and teach as soon as someone got rid of Binns, she had been whining at Sally for years about how horrible he was. Unfortunately, Sally had a few more important things to worry about than some worn out history teacher—like tending her boys.

Gary nodded his head too much in shock as to what had happened to do anything else, though he did make a mental note to talk to Sally about her appearance. It was hard to take a six year old seriously, especially one as adorable as Sally. Shaking his head and putting that thought away for later, he pulled out his book and started reading the first chapter. He noted that half the class was doing the same. However some, like Ron and Seamus, were getting up to leave. They stopped when they heard an older female voice say sharply; “Sit down, all of you.”

The miscreants scrambled back to their seats and stared at the woman in front of them. She was a tall and slender ghost, with a nice womanly figure, and looked to be in her upper twenties. She had what appeared to be brown hair, pulled into a tight bun on the back of her head. And, well, they couldn’t tell what her eye color was because it was so bleached out, so they probably had been light blue or grey. She was dressed in formal teaching robes and had a ghost of a ruler in her right hand, and was tapping it into the palm her left hand. Sally had altered her clothes and given her the ruler to make her appear more professional.

“My name is Isobel Watts, I was a Ravenclaw here in the late ‘60’s early 70’s,” she stated, looking around the class as they all started to settle. “I studied for years to be the Professor of Magical History. However, before I could take the position I was killed by Voldemort”—she ignored the gasps—“during his reign of terror. I received an O on my NEWT’s—Nastily Exhausting Wizards Test, you’ll take them to graduate,” she explained seeing the confused looks. “Thanks to my good friend, Sally, I’ll be taking over for this class. Now sit down and open your books to chapter fourteen.”

The class complied and Professor Watts taught an amazing class. She started by telling them all about the Grindelwald wars, and the headmaster’s role in them.

“Gellert Grindelwald was born 1882,” the lecture began, “and was considered one of the most powerful Dark Wizards of all time, in Europe, second only to Tom Marvolo Riddle, who later became known as Lord Voldemort,” she said and glared at the gasps coming from some of her class. “Mr. Grindelwald was schooled at Durmstrang Institute until his expulsion, history is not sure why he was expelled, though rumor has it that it was for practicing the Dark Arts on the students and faculty.

“The Durmstrang Institute is a Wizarding school that is notorious for teaching the Dark Arts. It is located in the northernmost regions of Norway or Sweden. We’re not sure exactly where; they tend to keep it a secret. Durmstrang has, however, taught students from as far afield as Bulgaria,” she explained remembering this was a class of first years. Some of whom had never heard of magic until maybe six month ago. Quills were heard scratching all through the class; most didn’t want to miss a thing.

Professor Watts looked around the room to make sure everyone was paying attention and then continued when she saw they were.

“Later, Grindelwald fostered a friendship with Albus Dumbledore, while living in Godric's Hollow for a summer with his great-aunt, Bathilda Bagshot. As you know, Professor Albus Percival Wulfric
Brian Dumbledore is the headmaster of this school. He is a half-blood wizard, the son of Percival and Kendra Dumbledore, and the elder brother of Aberforth and Ariana. His father died in Azkaban when Dumbledore was young, while his mother and sister were later accidentally killed. His early losses greatly affected him early on, but in turn made him a better person.” Gary scoffed quietly, earning another look from Hermione; he ignored her and continued to take notes.

“Albus Dumbledore is considered to be the most powerful wizard of this time. He is mostly famous for his defeat of Gellert Grindelwald, the discovery of the twelve uses of dragon’s blood, and his work on alchemy with Nicolas Flamel (we’ll learn about him in another class) and he became, the Transfiguration Professor, and later Headmaster of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Headmaster Dumbledore now serves as Supreme Mugwump of the International Confederation of Wizards and Chief Warlock of the Wizengamot,” Professor Watts continued on, in a sharp voice that garnered no nonsense.

“The two young men —Gellert and Albus— made plans to find the Deathly Hallows…,” she paused seeing more blank looks. “The Deathly Hallows are said to be three highly powerful magical objects supposedly created by Death and given to each of three brothers in the Peverell family. They consisted of the Elder Wand, an immensely powerful wand that was considered undefeatable. The Resurrection Stone, a stone which could summon the spirits of the dead. And the Cloak of Invisibility, which, as its name suggests, renders the user completely invisible. We will learn about the Peverells in another class,” she said ignoring the grumbles. “According to legend, he who possesses these three artifacts would become the Master of Death. Though this is just that a legend, there is no base in facts,” she informed them, with a firm look in her eye, confirming that this was not a fact. She knew the Hallows were real, but Sally asked her to make them a myth, Isobel was to consider it a payment for bringing her here. It went against her grain as a History teacher, but every word she said was true, there was no evidence in the real world they were real.

“Grindelwald and Dumbledore wanted to find these and wield their new-found power as Masters of Death, leading a Wizarding revolution with the aim of ending the International Statute of Secrecy and creating a benevolent global order led by wise and powerful witches and wizards,” Professor Watts continued. “Their partnership fell apart after the two were involved in a three-way duel with Aberforth Dumbledore that resulted in Ariana Dumbledore’s death,” she summarized, realizing she didn’t have much time with this class as it was almost over.

“Grindelwald then left Britain and soon stole what was believed to be the Elder Wand, proceeding alone with the revolution he and Dumbledore had planned. He established a power base in continental Europe at the fortress, he built, called Nurmengard. He was a highly idealistic man, but greatly uncaring about anything but his quest and his links with the Dark Arts. He was a revolutionary who operating outside the law. He was not a wanton killer or torturer,” she educated them steadfastly, tapping her ghostly ruler on her hands punctuating her words. “But, he and his followers in a single-minded and unpopular pursuit committed numerous crimes, including several known murders. His allies must often be unsavory characters as well.

“In 1945, at the height of Grindelwald power, Professor Dumbledore confronted and defeated him in a legendary duel. Grindelwald was subsequently imprisoned in his own fortress. Where he resided to this day,” she concluded. “Now for homework, I want you to look up and find anything you can about Grindelwald, his fortress and his army and give me a one foot essay. No more than one foot, you need to learn to be concise, to be turned in the next class.” She would have to figure out a way to read those essays, perhaps enlisting one of the NEWT students.

It was a much better class then Gary thought they were going to have. He nodded to Sally and left with the rest of his class, he couldn’t wait to tell his brother.
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AN: most of that lecture was adapted from Harry Potter wiki, which I don’t own. I’ve also used it in ‘Little of this, More of that’ as a oneshot called ‘Replacing Binns With Isobel’ and at the end of ‘Harry Breaks Free’ so if you’ve read those two stories, sorry for the repeat. I just feel History is very important.
September 2, 1991 lunch time

All the Hogwarts students sat at their House tables eating a filling lunch of; roast beef, pot roast pork with apples, roast lamb with green beans and mint sauce, pork pies, sausage rolls, sandwiches (of all sorts), plates crisps and chips, Cornish pasties, cured ham, salad, potted shrimps and freshly smoked fish. There was the always present pumpkin juice, water and milk to drink. Harry happily loaded his plate with fish and chips, his favorite, added some salad and a glass of pumpkin juice.

Gossip about the History class was sweeping through the Hall. It even overpassed the parent’s and official’s visit. Harry was keen on what his brother had to say about it. A lot of the upper-year students were excited for what was sure to be the only true History lesson they had ever received in this school. As the word spread you could see that the Headmaster was not happy. And Harry couldn’t wait to hear what his reaction would be. Sally could be very mischievous when she wanted to be. He did notice the House ghosts had settled down, so she must have talked to them and calmed their fears about her being here.

Lunch ended and the Gryffindors and Ravenclaw Mutineers got up and meet at entrance to go to the library. The Hufflepuffs and the Slytherins had had the first period off and now they had to attend the one more class. They would all meet later at the Hufflepuff table for studying.

Gary went immediately to his brother and gave an exciting rendition, in their mental talk, of what happened in History. The two boys laughed at Sally antics, and made their way with the group to the library, where everyone quietly went about getting the books they needed for homework.

It wasn’t until an hour later they heard what the Headmaster’s reaction was. The third year Gryffindor and Slytherin class had been interrupted by the man and the twins told the tale.

“You should have seen,” started Fred as he sat down next to Harry.

“how mad he was, when,” continued George sitting next to his brother.

“he came storming in the class. He”

“heard what she was teaching us and”

“started commanding that she stop. It must”
“have been the same lesson she taught you, Gary,”

“all about the Grindelwald war.” They finished together grabbing treats that were left out for the students.

“Yeah, I think she is going to teach everyone that,” Gary said as he nodded. “Fred, tell us what happened. It’ll go faster without the twin-speak.”

Fred nodded, sipped the juice he just poured and took up the story, having everyone’s attention. “Well, like we said the Headmaster came into the class, and when he heard what she was teaching he demanded that she stop. She just laughed at him and told him that no one can stop history. He then told her to leave, that he was in charge of staffing and he hadn’t hired her. She laughed again and said she came to be here on a higher authority. Said something about some bird named Sally,” he said waving hands and arms for emphasis.

The Potter twins exchanged knowing looks, which was missed by almost everyone, and those that did notice just figured it was a twin thing.

Fred had another sip of juice and continued, “Dumbledore got even angrier and tried to banish her. Professor Watts just stood there defiantly and let him try. He couldn’t do it,” the young man said with a shocked look on his face. After all this was Dumbledore. “Then Professor Watts pointed out that he was in the middle of a class of students and that then might not be the best time to be having an argument. The Headmaster seemed to shake himself back to the present, nodded and stormed out of the room.” George was nodding along with his twin.

“Hmmm, well that went well I guess,” Harry laughed. He knew that Sally would have made it so any ghost she placed in the castle couldn’t be banished by anyone but her.

“I kinda feel sorry for the man,” Padma said ignoring the snorts from a large portion of the group. “I mean, some of his secrets are out in the open now. I would hate for secrets I had kept for years to be sudden public knowledge, not that I have secrets, just saying,” she completed with a shrug.

“I, on the other hand,” said her twin with a dazzling smile, “think this is fabulous, not even here one day and all sorts of juicy gossip is milling about.”

The talks went on quietly through study hour and then the students got up to go to put away their books and get ready for dinner. Anticipation filled the air as they remembered the mirror calls from parents and guardians that were received that morning.

It was during dessert that the doors slammed open and the Minister, Madam Bones with twenty red robed Aurors, five men in blue robes, and a large group of angry parents marched into the Hall. The professors were shocked, though not most of the students. Harry did wonder how that bit of gossip never made it to the Staff Table, or maybe it had and they just blew it off as a lie or tall tale.

A medium tall, pudgy man, dressed in a revolting green suit covered with an equally hideous green robe, carrying a lime green bowler hat, was in the front of the group. The Mutineers knew this to be the new Minister of Magic, Cornelius Fudge.

“Dumbledore, what the blazes is going on here?” Minister Fudge said, rotating his bowler hat between his hands, “I’ve been receiving owls and Floo calls all day, even the Muggle Prime Minister’s portrait has been bugging me. I am a very important man, Dumbledore, and I don’t have time for your games.”

“Ah, Minister, Governors, Madam Bones and the rest of you good ladies and gentlemen, whatever
this issue is I am sure we will sort it out. I have everything here under control. I am concerned that the students felt it necessary to contact their parents and get them into hysterics over nothing,” the Headmaster said sweeping his disappointed look over his half-moon spectacles towards the entire student body. He noticed that most were cowed, though a surprising number of first years looked on defiantly. He cursed himself for not remembering the mirrors, he had tried to get them banned, but was overridden by the Board.

Amelia Bones in her role as Susan’s aunt, stepped forward and stated in a very firm voice, “Don’t you pull that on us, Headmaster. Telling children not to go somewhere is like giving them candy and telling them not to eat it. I will tell you right now, if my Susan had been hurt or killed by a ‘painful death’. I would have hunted you down and shown you just what a painful death was,” she said and the look of such a promise was clear on her face, many of the parents behind her had similar looks.

Then switching roles to Head of the DMLE she then turned to her Aurors and said, “You three,” pointing to the closest, “go find out what is on the third floor and get rid of it. Check to make sure that there is nothing else that will harm the students. The rest of you inspect this castle from top to bottom, if you find anything that should not be here, confiscate it and take it to the Ministry.” The Aurors indicated, dispersed to do as they were ordered, three stayed behind to protect the Board and Minister. Amelia turned back to the front of the room to watch the fireworks, a satisfied look on her face.

Many of the parents and officials noted the looks of apprehension on Snape’s, Dumbledore’s and Quirrell’s faces; though Quirrell seemed to be the most concerned.

Once the Aurors took off all of the parents went to check on their kids. The Board, the Minister and Amelia were in the front of the room arguing with Dumbledore, behind a silencing charm, Snape was at the headmaster’s side. The rest of the professors were sitting in the confusion not sure what they should be doing. The two adult Potters, Sirius and Remus went to the Hall doors and motioned the twins to join them.

“We have a plan,” the mother whispered while giving a hug to Gary. “I’ve been working on it all day. There is a powder that will expel a spirit from a person who is possessed. It won’t kill them, but they may be in a coma for a few months. What we need to do is get close to Quirrell. I want you two to sit here and wave your arms about and then point to him, like you are either mad at him or disappointed,” Lily suggested quietly after rising from the hug and a concerned look upon her face.

“After that me and your mum will go towards him looking like we’re troubled. You two go back to your tables with your godfathers and friends and no matter what —stay there. I’d tell you to go to your dorms, but I think Amelia wants everyone to stay here until the Aurors are done searching,” James said also giving the boys an anxious look.

The twins nodded and did as suggested, they started to complain about the stuttering and Harry pointed to his scar on two occasions all the while pointing at the ever scared professor. The Potter parents glanced up to see Quirrell pale even more when the boy pointed to his scar. And just when he rose from his chair and it looked like he would run, the two adults turned as one and with a determined look on their faces moved to the front of the room. Their looks pinned the stuttering Professor in place.

Other parents watched them go and some were tempted to join them after hearing their own children’s interpretation of the DADA class. One or two did get up and start forward. The Potters stopped and waited for the other parents and then started forward again. They didn’t want to be the only ones around the professor when the spirit left the body. Each godfather stayed with their godson to make sure they didn’t run off to help their parents.
Unnoticed by everyone, a small cloud of clear dust was being pushed forward in front of the Potters, James utilizing the little wandless magic he was capable of. You would only notice it if you were looking for the very slight shimmer the dust created, which would be confused with any other gust of dust. The dust won’t hurt anyone who is not possessed, though it might make them a little yellow-skinned.

The turban wearing professor stood nervously by his chair, hands twisting around themselves, shifting his feet back and forth as if undecided whether to run or not. The parasite on his head wasn’t worried, he felt these people below him and that nothing could touch him in the state he was in. Voldemort cared little for the man he had taken unwillingly —Muggle Study Professor indeed. The self-claimed Dark Lord’s only concern was getting the stone, so he ordered the wishy-washy man to stand still and listen to the parents’ rant, just like any other professor would do.

Just when Quirrell opened his mouth and raised his hands, to try and calm the parents coming toward him —the cloud hit. With his mouth opened he inhaled some of the dust and the rest settled on his face, hands and clothes. A high pitched scream was heard throughout the Hall, a second scream joined it. Everyone turned just in time to see the turban fly unaided off of the screaming professor, a dark wraith was being expelled from the back of the poor man’s head and you could feel the Dark magic coming for the ugly distorted face.

Many children scrambled under the tables, yells of fear echoed everywhere. Others clung to their parents crying that they wanted to go home. Still others pulled their wands; shield spells were popping up everywhere as the upper-years were trying to protect the younger ones around them. Parents started to do the same.

The Professors all jumped from their seats when the second note of the screams hit the air and were forming a circle around the falling professor. When they saw the specter, they too put up the strongest shields they knew.

The parents that had been moving forward to talk to the man, all had stunned looks upon their faces; they knelt down away from the screaming form, all of them quickly duck-walking to their children.

Dumbledore, Amelia and the Board also had their wands out, but they’re lips were forming counter-curses to protect the rest of the Hall.

The Minister was hiding under the Staff Table; the three Aurors were surrounding him in battle ready stances.

The wraith of Voldemort looked around and seeing he was vastly outnumbered and there was no way he could possess someone without being seen, fled through the owl-post hole to parts unknown. He was screaming his revenge on the entire way.

Madam Pomfrey ran to the downed man and quickly started doing diagnostic spells. She looked up to the staff and gave them a nod of her head letting them know that he was alive. Amelia came forward and put unbreakable cuffs on him just to be sure and indicated that the nurse could take him away for treatment. She motioned one of the Aurors that had been assigned to protect the Minister to accompany the nurse.

A large sigh of relief was heard all around the Hall, as was the scraping of beaches and tables as the children, the Minister and some parents slowly climbed out from where they were hiding. The crying slowed and screams stopped and after about ten minutes whispers, excited voices started filling the air. You could see that a vast majority of the school was still scared, that had been Voldemort after all. But the danger was over for the time being and in the form he was in he was mostly harmless, barring another possession.
Malfoy Sr., who was part of the Board, had a calculating look upon his face. The fear in his eyes could also be seen, he had worked far too hard to get where he was to just go back to bowing to an evil man and if his son’s reports on rumors (spread by the Mutineers on the train) was anything to go by—a half-blood. He would have to make plans and soon. Everything else was inconsequential as of now.

A loud bang was heard and all eyes turned to the front of the Hall and landed on the imposing figure of the Headmaster. His face recomposed into the gentle grandfather façade he liked to portray. “Now that the excitement is over everyone please take a seat and enjoy the desserts that the Hogwarts house elves are famous for. When I am done reassuring the Board and Madam Bones that all is well at Hogwarts, the children can toddle off to bed. It is a weekday after all,” he said with his gentle smile and eyes twinkling away as if the wraith of Voldemort was an everyday occurrence and absolutely nothing to worry about. He then turned back to the people surrounding him, put up a silencing charm and started the argument anew, with his kind and gentle face still in play.

Many parents, forgetting what they were originally here for, took the Headmaster at his word and started to reassure their children. It wasn’t until an Auror came running into the Hall and up to Amelia, whispering in her ear what they had found on the third floor that they remembered why they were at the school in the first place. Still, they wanted their children to not be frightened, so instead of using the Headmaster’s words, they used the actions of the Ministry. Soon the satisfied families were enjoying the dessert and chatting about the new ghost teacher.

Once again the Marauders and Lily went to the front of the Hall and motioned the twins over.

“Are you guys okay?” asked Padfoot, his eyes taking in every facial expression that went across the boys faces.

“Well… we certainly weren’t expecting that, but now that he is gone, yeah we’re alright,” Harry answered for them rubbing his forehead to dispel the pain in his scar. And it as true, Quirrell had been their primary concern. The third floor could have been avoided, but the professor couldn’t.

“Okay, that’s good, I’m glad you two are okay. That was kinda scary, huh pups?” Sirius said ruffling the hair of the twins, trying to lighten the mood.

Lily smacked him upside his head, giving him a smile to show she wasn’t angry and appreciated his efforts. She then knelt and hugged the boys for a job well done. The way they pulled this off couldn’t be tied to the Potters. There was nothing on their persons that would indicate they had anything to do with the expelling of the Dork Lord. They had confined the dust in a magic bubble, which had hung over James’ head the entire time he was with the group that had descended on Hogwarts.

“Mum, Dad, you guys have to be careful. Susan said her aunt doesn’t trust you all the way, because you are keeping her out of the loop. So she said the Madam Bones is going to be watching you. Just keep on the lookout, alright?” Gary whispered urgently in a worried voice.

“Don’t worry, sweetheart, after what happened with Rita, we’re being extra careful,” Lily soothed petting his hair back into place. They then joined the rest of the children and their families until they were told by the Head of the DMLE that they could go home, or to bed, as the case may be.

It wasn’t until the next day that anyone knew what was on the third floor, or how Dumbledore was reprimanded.
Gossip Runs Amuck

AN: flying solo on this, no beta. So any mistakes are of course my own. I do read over the chapter's three times, sometimes more, but I know I don't catch everything. If you see something that doesn't make sense or is a plot hole, feel free to tell me.

Just a quick explanation, I am having the only two traps ready, those being; the Cerberus and the Mirror. I am thinking that Dumbledore wouldn't think that ‘Gary’ was quite yet brave enough to go to the forbidden corridor, but doesn’t want Voldemort to get the stone either. So the mirror is there already, he would have just moved it during Yule, removing the stone first.

Disclaimer: I don't own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belong to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her.

Hphphp

September 3, 1991

It was during the Harry’s first break that he heard his first bit of gossip. He was walking down the corridor to the Great Hall, to grab one of the snacks that were ever present on the tables when no meals were being served, when he heard Dumbledore’s name. So he slowed down and leaned on the wall just around the corner from where he could make out two female student voices.

“So I heard that Dumbledore is on two years’ probation,” said an older female student’s voice whispered in such a way that gossips do, where anyone within ten feet can hear them quite clearly. “If anything else happens in the school then he will be retired. They said that since he has been here so long without issue that they are giving him a second chance.”

“Yeah, dat’s what I ‘eard too,” came the reply.

“Did you hear what they found?”

“No, tell me.”

“Well I heard from Steven, who heard from Penelope, who heard from Jacob, that they found a Cerberus,” the first girl said and an awed and frightened voice.

“No, really, a Cerberus! Why on earth would one of those be in the castle?” came the shocked reply.

“I don’t know, but that’s what I heard. Then they said that there was a trapdoor it was guarding. Under the trap door was some baby Devil’s Snare. They went down the hall leading away from that and found a room with keys all over the floor. Jacob said it took a while to find the right key to open the door that was at the end,” said the first person, you could hear the excitement in her voice.

“What ‘appened den?”

“Well, inside the door was a large room with a chessboard in it. It looked like it was growing. So they walked past it and found an empty room. They went into the next chamber and fire came up from the floor on both sides, but that’s all there was. A freeze flame spell later and they came to the last chamber and in the middle was a large mirror.”

“Do dey know what i’ were fer?”
“Yeah one of the Aurors looked in it and suddenly he had the Philosopher’s Stone in his pocket. So he took it to Madam Bones. And from what I heard she was as angry as a wet cat. I heard she chewed the Headmaster out but good and she took the Stone and was going to send it back to the Flamels. I hope she gets it to them before the Unspeakables come for it. I would hate to see them…” the first person’s voice trailed off and Harry could hear them walking away as their voices got harder to hear and their footsteps echoed faintly in the hall.

With a smirk on his face, Harry turned and went to his next class. He couldn’t wait to tell Gary.

Meanwhile Gary was hearing his own bit of gossip.

“So Susan told me that her aunt told her that Minister Fudge, even though he saw it with the rest of us, is stating that the wraith we saw wasn’t He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named. He said it was impossible, that You-Know-Who was dead and couldn’t come back,” Pavarti said, in that same gossip whisper to Lavender.

“Did he say what he thought it was?”

“Yeah, get this; he’s trying to blame Dumbledore. He said something about the Headmaster setting it all up to scare the public. Like that makes any sense,” the Indian girl snorted, while her family didn’t like the barmy old man, she didn’t think he would stoop so low as to scare a room full of students. Besides she saw what she saw, and the Potter twins confirmed it from their mother who was standing right in front of Quirrell when it happened.

“Weeelll, everyone knows that Dumbledore has been saying for years that You-Know-Who isn’t dead. So I can see where the new Minister might think that. Not that I’m saying it’s true,” Lavender said quickly holding up her hands at Pavarti’s indignant look. “Just that I can understand,” she ended with a shrug.

Just then Professor Flitwick called the classes to attention and started his lecture on the color changing spell they would start tomorrow.

It was in their joint class of Herbology that they heard what the Board decided to do with Professor Watts. They were still repotting Snap-dragons, because Professor Sprout wanted them to be able to do it without getting bit, and then they’d move on.

“Did you guys hear what the Board decided about the new ghost?” Mandy asked in an undertone. All heads within hearing range, glanced her way. Not wanting to be bit by their plants, they only gave her part of their attention, which didn’t help as you could hear one or two “Ow’s” coming from around the table.

“No,” said Harry in a soft voice, “what did they say?” the closest students leaned forward as much as their plants would let them.

“So I heard some upper-years saying that some of the Board attended her class of fifth years. She is still doing the same lecture, I guess she thinks it’s important that everyone knows, anyway, they were there and some of them questioned her on where she got her information. When she could site three different books, they decided that she knew what she was talking about and welcomed her to the staff. I heard that the Headmaster was very upset by this. I also heard that it was one of the reasons he was put on probation, because while he didn’t hide it, it wasn’t something the Board knew when he was hired. If it hadn’t been for years of good service they would have fired him on the spot,” Mandy said as softly and quickly as possible, not wanting to loose points for talking in class.

Harry nodded his head indicating that he heard and with another inner smirk went back to his
assignment. It would be lunch soon and then study time; he would mental talk to Gary then. They
didn’t like to do it while classes were in session, in case someone was doing something dangerous.
They were still working on being able to mental chat and concentrate on the outside world at the
same time. The Weasley twins made it look easy, blast them.

It was during study hall that Professor McGonagall came to Gary with a note stating that the
Headmaster wanted to see him.

“Professor, is it possible for you and Harry to join me? My mum doesn’t want me to see the
Headmaster unattended, because he tried to take me away when I was little,” Gary said putting a
little bit of fear in his bright green eyes. He was hoping that his Head of House knew the history
between the Potters and the old man.

“I don’t see a problem with me coming with you, Mr. Potter. However, your brother was not invited.
So I’m going to have to decline that part of your request,” she answered her lips pursed. As much as
she admired Dumbledore, she never approved of him trying to separate the Potter twins.

“I guess that’ll have to do, ma’am. Thank you,” the younger twin stated with a nod of his head. He
got up and gathered his books and papers. He then said his good-byes to the Mutineers, who were
looking on in various states of confusion and worry. He left to a chorus of “See ya, later’s” and
“Keep calm’s” as he followed his professor out of the Hall. Harry said in his head ‘Pull up your
Occlumency.’

The student and professor continued silently through the halls to the third floor where they came
upon a gargoyle. The Transfiguration Professor gave the password of “Toffee Éclair” and the stone
statue moved aside revealing a winding staircase. The stairs moved on their own and soon the two
were at the top.

“Enter,” came the gentle voice of Dumbledore. “Ah, Minerva and Mr. Potter, come in, come in.
Thank you, Professor, for seeing Gary here. You may go now,” he said from behind his large and
cluttered desk. “Gary, my boy, take a seat. Would you like a lemon sherbet?” he asked waving to the
chairs in front of his desk and then to the dish of candy that was on the corner of said desk.

“No, thank you, I just had some biscuits in the Great Hall,” the messy haired boy answer.

“Mr. Potter has asked me to be here,” McGonagall stated her lips thinning as if waiting for
Dumbledore to contradict her, “and with the history of your interaction with his family, I don’t blame
him. I will be staying,” she said in finality.

“Very well,” conceded the Headmaster though you could tell by the dimming of his eyes he was not
happy. But, there was very little he could do, she was his Head of House and had every right to be there.

The professor and student took the seats indicated in front of the desk.

“Now, Gary, tell me how your first few days of Hogwarts had been. Are you happy you came?” the
old man asked. Gary could feel the brush on his mind, but choose to ignore it. Although he did look
away from the man’s twinkling blue eyes and settled on looking at his bushy eyebrows, which
furrowed with the shields that met his Legitimacy.

“Oh, yes sir, me and Harry are having a lovely time being with all our friends. We’re very happy to
finally be able to study magic. The Muggle school was so helpful in us learning to study harder and
learn faster. All of us are extremely happy to be here,” Gary gushed like the eleven year old he was.
It was part of the plan to portray themselves as young as possible, it would throw the old man off and
make him think that Gary would be easy to control.

“Indeed,” Dumbledore said in a slightly strained voice, he had not been in the Study Hall so he didn’t know that all of the Mutineers were studying together. He had hoped to break up that group when they all got sorted into different Houses. “Well, that is indeed wonderful, I am delighted to know that you are not letting the tradition of separation of Houses waylay you. I did wonder if you would be joining the Quidditch team next year. I hear your brother is also very good on a broom. It is likely, you will both be chosen for your House teams.” He figured he would start small, maybe set it up so Gary would get on the team this year and then Harry would get jealous of his brother and the riff could start from there.

“Oh no sir, I have no ambition to be on the Gryffindor team. Even if for some reason I was offered to play this year, I’d have to turn it down,” Gary said with a vigorous shaking of his head. “Studying is much more important,” he said solemnly.

“Well, that is very smart of you, my boy,” the voice got tighter still. Silence entered the room; the only noise heard was the snoring of the paintings that hung behind the desk.

“Well, Headmaster, if that is all I have homework to complete. Should I tell my friends you’re going to call them up too? Wouldn’t want them to think you’re treating me special or anything,” Gary asked with as innocent a look on his face that he could pull off while laughing inside. He peeked to the right and saw his Head of House’s lips quirk.

“Alas, my boy, I am a very busy man. You may tell your friends that I inquired about them through you,” the old man sighed his shoulder slumped slightly with defeat.

“Okay, sir, thanks for seeing me. Good-bye.” And with that Gary and McGonagall left. Gary mentally relayed what happened to Harry and they both had a good chuckle, it was good to see their tactics working.
More Rumors Help

AN: flying solo on this, no beta. So any mistakes are of course my own. I do read over the chapter three times, sometimes more, but I know I don't catch everything. If you see something that doesn't make sense or is a plot hole, feel free to tell me.

AN: Yah!! I didn’t add anything to the last chapter, go me. Anyway, another filler chapter that will confirm more rumors and what other people are doing. I am trying to keep everything in the Potters point of view, and all but one conversation that I recall so far has done that. So everything you hear will be second or third hand.

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Hphphp

September 17, 1991 Potter Manor

The Hunters gathered together to discuss where they were on their searches and research. Sitting in the dining room with high tea served, they all got comfortable and James started the meeting.

“Okay, welcome everyone. Let’s get started shall we? Augusta why don’t you go first and tell us what you’ve heard so far and when you’re done Lily and I might have something to add that could give you a helping hand in your goss… umm… teas,” James said from the head of the table. It had been decided that he would be the commander of this group. Mostly because he was the one to start the whole thing all those years ago, when he got all the kids together and he and his wife kept everyone together when times got rough.

“Well, so far, most of the people I have talked to have not made the connection that You-Know-Who and Tom Riddle. I have tried to show it to them, but they are not listening and when You-Know-Who came back from wherever he went, he didn’t look like Riddle anymore, all that Dark magic, you know. Since I have no evidence then I cannot sway them. I do not know if it is fear or senility, but they are being hard headed,” the oldest Longbottom said with an exasperated sigh. She had had such high hopes of being helpful, but she was being met with resistance that she hadn’t anticipated.

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“And here is where we might help. Did Neville tell you about the new history professor?” James asked and waited for her to either confirm or deny. When she nodded her head that her grandson had, the messy haired man continued, “Well she gave a lecture about Riddle last week, told the whole student body who he was. In that lecture she cited two books that confirmed what she was saying. One was Legend of the Founders and Who They Sired, which is a self-updating family tree of sorts for all four founders. And the other was Paths of the Dark Lords and Ladies, which as the title suggest is a history of all the Europe’s Dark Lords and Ladies, including of course the most recent. So you might want to pick up a copy of these two and carry it with you to your… teas,” he finished with a smirk.

“Oh, my, yes that will be very helpful, indeed,” Augusta said with a titter, glad to finally have something to back her gossip up.

“Lily, what news do you have for us?” he asked turning to his wife.

“Well, off subject for a minute, I heard from Severus that Malfoy Sr. contacted him and wanted to see if they could find a way to get the Dark Mark off their arms. He asked if I could look into it when
I have the time. I told him I would do what I could,” she answered ignoring the Marauders, she was quite use to them making faces whenever her friend’s name was mentioned, however, since they never did anything about their dislike she let them be. “I thought we should know that there are some Death Eaters not willing to bow before the bastard when he returns. And while I don’t believe for a minute they will turn ‘good’, it will still be one less person to face in a war,” she finished with a shrug.

“Right, well, that’s good, I guess. Anyway, how is the research coming?” James asked quickly to get away from that touchy subject.

“We’re close to finding what we need to rid the containers of their soul pieces. That powder you two used on Quirrell is a good start,” Albert answered enthusiastically. He was happy with how far they had come. They had even utilized the Potters' computers in their research and found a few fantasy sites that might be helpful. Who knew Muggle fantasy was so close to wizardry.

“That’s wonderful,” James said slapping his hand on the table, also getting excited. That would be a big step in protecting the kids and making the Dark Bastard easier to take down. He then turned to the three hunters that weren’t Marauders simply named Team One. “Have you guys found anything? Or heard anything?”

“Not yet,” came the frustrated reply from Keaton, “but we really didn’t have anything to go on. Now that we know where Riddle came from, thanks to those books, we have a place to start. We’ll continue in Little Hangleton tomorrow.”

“Is the crystal working for you then?” Sirius asked leaning forward, he wanted to know because he had made the copy crystal, since Lily was doing her own thing and they hadn’t decided to split up until after the first meeting.

“Yeah,” Wayne Sr. said pulling out the crystal and an object that looked normal, but when he placed it on the table the crystal vibrated, “we took it around my house and discovered a hidden compartment in one of the walls. Someone, at one time, had put this Dark artifact in it. I never even knew it was there. It’s not mentioned in any of the family journals. So that was disturbing, but a good test.” He put both items back in his satchel. It was something to take care of outside of this meeting.

“Great,” Sirius said and clapped his hands together once then rubbed them in anticipation, “my turn. It seems that dear old Mum left a portrait on the wall of Grimmauld Place and it has been giving orders to the old house elf named Kreacher. When we went to check the house out, the damn thing tried to attack me. Me! It’s master. Well that didn’t go over well. Anyway, I gave it the order that it was never to come within one hundred feet of me, Remus or you Potters. That’s all I figured I’d get away with. Then I banned it from the house and told it to go to Narcissa and stay with her family,” he said with a cackle, he really hated his family and that vile creature was just as bad. He took a deep breath to start again, but was stopped by Remus.

“Anyway,” Remus interrupted his friend’s tangent, “we went to the house, used the crystal and found a horcrux.”

There were gasps heard from the unexpected news and then they all started talking as one about what should be done with it and where to store it.

“Wait, stop, come on guys settle down or we’ll never get anything decided,” James said standing up, raising his voice to be heard and rapping his knuckles on the table. He waited until everyone quieted down and then sat and sighed. “Okay, that’s an oversight on our part. We never figured out what to do with these… things when we found them. Suggestions?”
“Well, at first I thought we could put them in the magic null rooms, but that might cause the soul pieces to separate and join the main soul. I don’t think we want that to happen,” Gifford said, he had been quiet until now mostly taking in and thinking about all the news that everyone was bringing to the table.

“You’re probably right,” Lily said with a sigh, “maybe a lead box?”

“That might work, but where would we get one? Not much call for them in the wizard world. If you are seen buying one then you are marked as someone with something to hide,” Sirius said and he would know growing up as he did.

Lily waved his concerns off, “Really, Padfoot, you should know by now that what you can’t get in the magic world you can always find easier in the non-magical. I’ll take care of it. Until then let’s wrap it up and put it in the freezer.”

“I have one more thing to say before we break up for the night. Amelia wants in. She said after the fiasco of the first day of school, she no longer cares what Dumbledore thinks,” Albert said having been the one she approached at the Ministry. “I think it would be a good idea.”

“I don’t know, she was pretty harsh on us up until that point,” James said with a shake of his head. “Don’t get me wrong, I like Amelia, but we were warned to keep an eye out for her, that she didn’t trust us.”

“That may be so, but did you ever think that is because she is an Auror and they hate not being told something. I know you had your reasons, and I agree with them, but the tide has changed and we can’t afford to make an enemy out of someone that high up in the Ministry.” Albert argued determined to make them see they needed all the allies and supporters they could get. Yes, it was a large strong group they had. But, if war came then they would be fighting —literally (the Dark) and figuratively (the Light) — two sides so no one could really be turned down.

“I think,” said Remus considerately, “we should all take oaths. In this case it is not a matter of trust, it is a matter of not letting history repeat itself. Everyone remember how much we trusted Peter.” It was a statement there was no question in that sentence.

Angry and thoughtful looks filtered around the table as everyone remembered the traitor. Nods were given and soon an oath was drawn and everyone around the table took it. History would not be repeated in this group.

“Okay,” sighed Lily, bringing the topic back to Amelia, “if she takes the same oath, then we’ll bring her in. Who knows, she might be helpful, she does have connections that we don’t.”

So it was agreed and the group idly chatted for a while and then broke up and returned to their homes.

**Short narrative on what was happening at Hogwarts**

It had been a rough two weeks for the Potter twins. Somehow, and they were sure how, but couldn’t prove it, it had gotten out that Gary would turn down playing Quidditch, so he wouldn’t upset his non-celebrity twin. This had different reactions among the student population. Some were glad that he wasn’t an attention seeker who used his fame to break the rules.

The Gryffindor team, sans the Weasley twins who stood by Gary, was upset that he wouldn’t play. Oliver Wood was adamant that Gary should give up on his studies and join, his twin’s feelings be damned. Unfortunately, for the Keeper, he said it in front of McGonagall. Who promptly told him if
she ever heard him again try and bully anyone on to the team; he would be kicked off and put on academic probation.

Other teams, after hearing that the Potter twins were that good on a broom, were glad he didn’t want to play. They had enough competition with the Slytherins cheating all the time. Though they did try and talk to Harry about joining the Ravenclaw team, however, that house was more sympathetic to his want to study. So they understood when he said no.

Both boys said, if they did well this year on their end of the year tests, they might tryout next year. That seemed to placate everyone. It was also through the valiant efforts of Parvati and Lavender that these rumors were turned around in their favor.

The study group had grown; Daphne and Tracey had brought the twelve half-bloods, of all years, they found in the Slytherin House to the group. Susan and Hannah had brought a few upper-years and most of the first years of Hufflepuff. All of the first year Ravenclaws and some of their upper-years joined in, because hey, it was a study group. A few more studious Gryffindors also joined in. None of them were part of the core group of the Mutineers, just sat at the table with them to complete homework.

Sadly this brought about the split of Ron and Seamus from the group. Ron was highly upset that his friend wouldn’t give up studying to play for the team. And Seamus followed along with his best friend. They never noticed that they could no longer talk about the Mutineers. They only knew there was a study group they didn’t want anything to do with. It made the Gryffindor dorm room a frosty place to be.

Dean was torn between joining the larger group or sectioning himself off with a smaller group. After a week he decided that, though he enjoyed sports as much as the next guy, he needed to pass his classes more. It would make his mum happy.

Hermione hadn’t liked the fact that she was not able to help most of the people in the study group and so befriended Ron and Seamus (who needed a lot of help), which saddened Gary, because they could always use smart people in their quest.

The Weasley twins and Percy were studying with the group. The Fred and George took the Potter twins aside and said they wanted in on the side group they knew the Mutineers had. The boys said they would bring it up with the rest of the Mutineers and take a vote. Susan approached them for the same reason and was told the same thing.

With all these added people they took up an entire table. It was quite a feat to keep the large group on track with studying.

Sally kept them up-to-date on the movements of Voldemort, via her minions. After what happened in the Great Hall she had ordered them to question any magical person passing over that came from the UK to try and track him down. He was staying in Britain, for now, probably hoping to find one of the more susceptible Death Eaters to help him regain a body. Now that the stone had been returned to the Flamels (who quickly disappeared) that avenue was closed to him.

Mirror and crystals were used every night by a large part of the student body and Dumbledore was finding it harder to manipulate anyone. Since the crystals were a form of guided self-help meditation; more and more of what used to be sheep were now becoming free thinkers and were finally seeing that maybe, just maybe, the Headmaster was getting too old to be in charge.
AN: another quick filler chapter. I am still debating on adding an additional trial for first year or keeping it like this. Thanks to *Philosophize* whose review inspired this chapter.
Halloween

AN: thanks to my betas, darrelleam and alix33, checking this over. All mistakes are my own, especially since I have a bad habit of adding things and not sending it back to them.

Disclaimer: I don’t own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belong to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her.

Hphphp

October 31, 1991

Halloween was a time for celebration with the Potter family, they felt this was the day that they survived and became a stronger family for it. They also knew that it was the day that they gained a very special friend in Sally. So when the day started the Potter twins delved into it with gusto. They attended their classes and had trouble sitting still, they were so excited. They would chat with their parents and Sally this night and share stories about years gone by. It was an annual tradition.

It was at lunch that a kink came up, that made the excitement a little less. A special edition of the Daily Prophet came with the headline:

The Boy-Who-Lived Turns Down Quidditch for Lesser Brother

By: Rita Skeeter

The article that followed blasted the Potters for the way they raised a selfish child and made the reader think that Gary didn’t care about anyone else —except Harry. It was written in such a way that it made you think that you would turn on your own family if necessary and that their boy hero wouldn’t. Rita had a way of twisting words to make you feel as if you should be more important than anything else and that celebrities should be thinking of only you and not their fame or family. It had quotes —all anonymous of course— that stated that Gary was a stuck-up brat that only thought of himself and Harry.

This was only a minor bump in their day, the twins knew that their parents would sue the pants off this woman and the suit would make her look like a liar. Gary looked around the Hall and could see that a large majority of the student body were outraged on Gary’s behalf. He could only think that it was thanks to Pandora’s crystals that they were thinking for themselves and not being led like sheep.

“Wow, she is really going to get in trouble for this one,” Gary thought to his brother. He could feel Harry laughing his arse off through the link.

“You should hear what Padma is saying. That girl could peel rust of a pipe with the words coming out of her mouth,” Harry sent back still laughing. “Look at Dumbledore, he looks happy about this. I’ll bet he was the one to leak the story. Too bad he probably did it via an unsigned letter and we’ll never know.”

Gary looked at the Staff Table and Dumbledore did indeed have a smug look about him. The Headmaster turned his gaze to Gary and his face morphed into one of pity, like he was feeling bad about the article instead of satisfied. So Gary gave him a hurt look, like the paper had did what the headmaster was hoping for and made a dent in his bond with Harry. “If he looks at you try and look weak and pathetic and that you feel guilty for holding me back.”
“Yeah, I can do that,” came Harry’s smug reply and his face took on such a look, to the confusion of the Mutineers around him. He just shook his head slightly and lipped ‘later’ so they would understand.

These actions actually garnered them more support. The students that saw the forlorn faces of the twins felt that the poor boys were being prosecuted unfairly and swore they would try and make them feel more welcome. The article had a strange effect on the Gryffindor and Ravenclaw Quidditch team captains, making them feel guilty of trying to cause a rift between the two firsties. There, of course, were some that supported the article 100% and felt that their hero should give up everything to protect them and not worry about some useless brother. Some people took sports far too seriously.

The rest of the day was spent fending off supporters on both sides; Gary was getting tired of having to defend himself. He was happy to hear Hermione berate Ron and Seamus for thinking exactly what Rita wanted them to. It was sad that someone who had been his friend for so long could think so little of him and his family.

He had to wonder just what was said between the parents in the Weasley household that could make such an impression on their kids. They were like complete opposites, the Weasley twins were supporters of the Potters and Ron and Percy were supporters of Dumbledore. Even if Percy studied with them he still spouted off that Dumbledore was the greatest wizard of the age. To Gary it only made sense that the adults in that house were equally divided. If he had to guess it was Mr. Weasley that thought that maybe the Potters were right and his wife would be the one taking the Headmaster’s side. Gary just hoped it wasn’t important enough to split that family completely.

Harry was equally as tired of play acting for the Dumbledore followers in the school. He was happy that the Mutineers defended the twins’ right to choose what they wanted and the rest of the wizarding world could just bugger off.

Study Hall was a noisy affair and very little work got done. Gary slipped out early so he could get some peace and quiet and was wandering the halls, when it came to him that Rita must have been in the school, yet he never saw her. Being the smart boy he was he automatically figured out that the woman was an Animagus and made a mental note to tell all the Mutineers to check their maps daily to keep a look out for her. He was pulled from his thoughts when he heard his name called.

“Potter,” came a male voice from behind. Gary’s hand was at the ready to cast a defensive wandless spell, if needs must.

He turned to the voice and saw an upper-year Slytherin approaching him. The boy stood a good two heads above Gary. He had dark hair and eyes, his face chiseled giving him a hard appearance and making him look threatening, making Gary more cautious. He had nothing against Slytherins, but he knew that some of them were not to be trusted.

“Yeah?” Gary asked, trying to look innocent. His hand still charged with magic just in case.

“Forgive me if I startled you. I just wanted to introduce myself and give you a belated welcome to Hogwarts. I was hoping that we could be… friends. My name is Adam Goddard, please to meet you,” the older boy said holding out his hand.

Gary looked on the young man’s face and saw no falsehoods. So he released the magic back into himself, relaxed and took the offered hand. “Gary Potter, glad to make your acquaintance” he said with confidence as he shook with the boy, much like he had with Draco, in a firm business-like manner, making sure to speak formally. “I would like it if we were at least not enemies. However, due to my very unwanted status, I am ever cautious about making instant friends. You are more than...
welcome to join our study group and if you get along with everyone else, you will be welcome to the Potters as a friend of the family.”

Being the pure-blood that Adam was he knew just what the young man was saying about making immediate friends. It was much the same as his father told him over the years. So he shook the hand in the same manner and nodded his head in understanding.

“I will be more than happy to take you up on that offer. I wanted to make sure that you knew that not all Slytherins were out to get you. And that some of us would like to be in your… group. We feel that the House rivalry has gone on long enough. Some of us know that it has not always been such and want it to go back to the way it was before this great rift started,” Adam stated hoping to convey that not all Slytherins were evil, like the rest of the school thought. To his surprise Gary chuckled.

Gary shook his head to ward off the hurt he could see in the upper-year’s face and said in a much more casual tone, “No, no, I’m not laughing at you. But, didn’t you notice that there are over fifteen of your house-mates in our study group? We welcome all students as long as they get on well with one another. Hey, do you have one of the guided meditation crystals? I can hook you up with one if you want,” he said as a peace offering for laughing at the boy.

“No, my father felt they were useless. However, I would be more than happy to take you up on that.”

“Sure thing, come to the study group tomorrow, bring your friends, and I’ll have a few I keep handy as gifts,” Gary offered and gave a final nod of his head and said, “I have to get back to the group, they’ll send out a search party for me sooner or later.”

“Thank you for taking the time to speak with me. To tell you the truth, from what the paper was saying, I didn’t think it would be this easy,” Adam replied and with a nod of his head. He then turned and went back the way he came.

‘Well that was different,’ Gary thought to himself and with a shake of his head started back to the Great Hall.

It was later that night that the Feast began. The tables were laden down with all sorts of sugary treats, all made to look festive. There were: Lady’s fingers with sugar bandages, pumpkins filled with candy, grape eye balls that moved, witches hats that laughed, candy made to move like bugs, orange spiced biscuits shaped like pumpkins and bats, the occasional fruit bowl made to look like wiggling body parts, chicken legs made to look like zombie legs, ham cut in the shape of jack-o-lanterns, pasta made to look like either snakes or worms and other Halloween styled food. All this moving food was disconcerting for the Muggle-raised, but seeing the wizard-raised not batting an eye at it, they soon relaxed.

The Hall was decorated with large jack-o-lanterns instead of candles, bats were seen in the light of the sky like ceiling and every ghost in the castle was wandering about the tables telling tales of Halloweens past. Children’s laughter filled the air. Stories of deceased relatives were passed along; as it was wizard custom to honor the dead on this night. The magic was so encompassing that everyone could feel its warm embrace. The castle seemed to literally sing with the song of happiness. All and all it was a magical night.

After the feast the Headmaster stood to give a speech. He waited until all heads turned his way and started. “Now that we have eaten our fill, a toast to Gary Potter, who on this night rid us of an evil Dark Lord,” he said and raised his glass towards Gary.

Gary blushed, shook his head, stood and held his hands up to stop the cheering. “No, don’t toast me.
I didn’t do anything that warrants it. If you must toast anyone toast my mum, it was she that cast the spell to protect the children she loves. Toast the people who died in that war. Toast the people who fought in that war. Toast the citizens who rallied together to support the Aurors. Toast the Aurors whose jobs it was to protect everyone in the wizarding world. But, don’t toast a child that did nothing but sit in his crib and simply didn’t die,” he said in his loudest most passionate voice, conveying that he meant every word he uttered.

As one the Mutineers all stood and raised their glasses to the dead. Slowly others followed and soon statements such as “To Mrs. Potter who…,” and “To my Uncle Stuart who…,” or “To my Mum, Alexia Bones who died…,” filled the air and toast were made to those living and passed. Gary nodded his head and joined in, glancing at the very disgruntled headmaster, and internally smirked.

After the toasting was done a strange music surrounded the Great Hall. Everyone looked around to see where it was coming from. Then in the front of the Staff Table twenty-two ghosts appeared, some were recognized as relatives that were killed in the war. Others wore clothes or uniforms of old. You could see battle wounds and reasons for death on all of them, though none too gruesome.

The ghosts were formed in tiers, like a choir, and they started to sing. They sang about love and devotion to family. They sang about wars gone by. They sang and sang until smiles and tears were on most everyone’s faces. Their voices were so beautiful that none of the staff tried to stop them.

Harry and Gary noted that Sally was standing in front of the choir waving a baton and guiding them. They would ask her later what was going on.

After the choir was done the spirits that had family in the student body moved off to join them. The others dispersed around the Hall and talked to whoever asked them a question. Dumbledore was talking to Professor Watts, trying to find out how these ghosts appeared in his castle. Since they came the same way she did, he felt she would know. He regretted the fact that he couldn’t read the minds of ghost. Professor Watts just kept shaking her head and stating she had nothing to do with it.

Soon enough the feast ended and the students went to their dorms, all excitedly chatting about what occurred.

After doing his nighttime rituals; Gary went to his bed, cast a silencing charm, got his mirror out and activated the security —one can never be too careful. “Harry Potter.”

“What’s up, Gary?” his brother said appearing in the mirror, in much the same manner of dress.

“Did you know Sally was going to do that?” Gary asked as he nestled down into his pillows, it had been a long day.

“Nope. Not a clue. She isn’t there with you?”

“Nope. I was hoping she was there with you since it is your night. That’s way I’m on the mirror. I wanted to ask her what the ghosts were all about,” he answered.

“Hmmm, I wonder if she is keeping those new ghosts here.” Harry asked also snuggling into his pillows.

“Don’t know, I hope so, maybe she is thinking they could be spies for us,” Gary said thoughtfully.

“And you would be correct,” Sally said as she appeared sitting cross-legged on Gary’s bed.

“Are all of them from this past war?” Harry asked.
“No, some of them are from Grindelwald’s war. They wanted to come and confirm what Isobel is teaching you guys. There are even some who knew Tom when he was here in Hogwarts,” she replied bouncing in place making her pigtails bob up and down reminding Gary what he wanted to talk to her about.

“Hey, Sally, I was wondering. Do you always look like a six year old?”

“I can change my appearance to whatever I want.”

“Oh, I was thinking you could, ummm, you know, age with me and Harry. Or even a few years older. I mean I love you to death, no pun intended, but it is hard to take training serious when you’re taking orders from a six year old girl,” Gary said quickly hoping he didn’t offend her.

Sally got a thoughtful look on her adorable little face and slowly aged right before Gary’s eyes. She still looked like an innocent child, but now appeared to be the age of the twins. Her tiny pigtails grew longer and didn’t bob quite as much. Her dress, while still in a baby-doll style, became longer in the skirt and straighter in the blouse, not quite as many ruffles. Her shoes and stocking remained the same.

“How’s that?” she asked with a cute little scrunch of her nose.

“Much better, now I feel like you’re equal to me and I’m not beating up some little kid,” Gary answered and turned the mirror so Harry could see the changes.

“Yeah,” Harry added his two Knuts’ worth, “you look like someone I’d date, you know, if I was old enough.” His cheeks reddened with embarrassment.

Sally just laughed and shook her head. “You mean if I was young enough. Remember, even though I look eleven, I’m as old as the earth,” she said, reminding them just who she was.

The boys nodded sagely and Gary brought the topic back to the ghosts. “So those new guys are your spies?” he asked with a tilt of his head.

“Yup, they wanted to come back and look after the kids. They said if Isobel was given the chance they wanted one as well. I tried sending Moaning Myrtle on, but she wanted to stay. I did learn some of her secrets though. I’m going to have Isobel give a lecture on those tidbits of information —next year,” she replied with a conspiring wink.

“Not fair,” came the twin replies. “You can’t give us info like that and then make us wait. That’s cruel.”

“Too bad, you’re just going to have to wait until next year,” she said smugly.

The two boys talked for a while and then signed off to call their parents. Gary called his mum and Harry his dad. They told the Potters what happened during the day and were told that yes they were going after Skeeter and yes their solicitor told them she was in violation of the restraining order and she would more than likely get a fine and some jail time. They also told the boys that their rebuttal was already on the way to the Prophet and the Quibbler and they were going to do an interview with the Wizarding Wireless.

They all talked until midnight and when the witching hour approached they gave thanks to the dead, then signed off, started their crystals and went to sleep.

Hphphp
AN: Since I am now making this up as I go any and all suggestions are welcome. But, please remember I am keeping the story in the Potters point of view, everything you hear about other people will be in either from them having conversation with them or third hand knowledge. Also I am not a reporter and feel funny trying to write like one, but if you want to write an article based of the paragraph that follows the headlines, I will make sure you get credit for it if I use it. Something to think about.
What a Rat

AN: thanks to my betas, darreldeam and alix33, checking this over. All mistakes are my own, especially since I have a bad habit of adding things and not sending it back to them.

AN: Oops I sent Myrtle on in the last chapter, but then realized I would need her later, so I changed that. Sorry for the confusion.

Disclaimer: I don't own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belong to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her.

Hphphp

November 1, 1991

It was the next night and Gary was sitting on his bed, he had already talked to his parents and Harry. Now, he just wanted to lay down with his crystal and go to sleep. But he couldn’t, it was his night with Sally and she would be here any minute.

“Gary, all your dorm-mates are asleep, come on. Quietly,” Sally said from the doorway making a follow me motion with her hands.

Gary nodded, grabbed his mirror, his map and his wand. He then followed Sally down to the common room. There were still a few people hanging about, one was Hermione. Not wanting to sneak out when the room was occupied, he went and sat across from her and gave a nod in greeting.

“Why are you up so late?” the bushy haired girl asked, laying down the book she was reading onto her lap.

“Just wanted to sit by the fire. I could ask you the same,” Gary replied making a show of warming up by the blazing fire. It was actually cold in the room so it was a good enough excuse.

“Doesn’t your room have a stove? Ours does and it keeps the room warm enough,” Hermione asked tilting her head to the side in confusion. She thought all the rooms were the same.

“Of course it does, but there is nothing like looking into the flames of an open fire,” Gary defended still looking at the fire. He then turned to her so as to not seem rude.

“Thanks, by the way, for sticking up for me and Harry, about the article. It can’t have been easy to disagree with your friends,” Gary said with a heartfelt voice, sincerity showing on his face and in his expressive eyes.

“Of course it does, but there is nothing like looking into the flames of an open fire,” Gary defended still looking at the fire. He then turned to her so as to not seem rude.

“Thanks, by the way, for sticking up for me and Harry, about the article. It can’t have been easy to disagree with your friends,” Gary said with a heartfelt voice, sincerity showing on his face and in his expressive eyes.

“That is okay,” Hermione said with a blush staining her cheeks. “It was no bother. I just don’t understand why Ron is so adamant that you play Quidditch. I can’t seem to make him understand that studying and family are important. You’d think with a family as large as his he would understand that.”

“I don’t either; I never showed that I wanted to play. Me and Ron have been friends for years, well we were. We went to the same Muggle school, he used to hang out at our house and play with me and the gang. I’m not sure what happened, but once we got to Hogwarts he, and Seamus, just stopped hanging around us. I think it has something to do with some of the people in our study group
being from Slytherin,” he said with a shrug, knowing full well that that was the reason, but not wanting to bad mouth his ex-friend to Ron’s new friend. He still felt bad about losing two Mutineers.

“Well that’s just stupid,” Hermione said flopping back on the chair and crossing her arms at the absurdity of boys.

“You didn’t answer my question, why are you still up?” Gary asked changing the subject.

“Oh, well I didn’t know it was this late until you came down. I must have got caught up in my reading. I’m reading one of the books Professor Watts recommended the one that tells of the Dark Lord, you’re in here you know. Only a sentence or two, but it is your name,” she said excitedly bouncing in place; she always wanted her name in a book.

Gary looked at her blandly and said, “Yes, I know.”

“Aren’t you excited that your name is in print?” she asked in a very confused voice.

“No,” he answered.

Hermione’s face took a crestfallen look. She looked thoughtfully at the book, then at Gary and wondered why he would react like that.

“Look, I’m sorry I was short with you, but fame isn’t everything people make it out to be. Besides, my parents have been trying to tell people for years that they have no idea who got hit with the curse that night,” he explained not wanting to further alienate the girl.

Hermione perked up at this bit of information. “Really, well then why do all the books say it was you?”

“Dumbledore,” came the short answer, like it was supposed to answer everything about the situation. It did; to the Potters and the Mutineers, but not to an outsider.

“Well, if he says it must have been you then maybe he knows. Why would he say it unless it was true?”

“He wasn’t even there. Look, I don’t want to talk about this anymore, just don’t believe everything you read about me, okay?” Gary said, looking back to the fire and ending the conversation.

Hermione harrumphed, grabbed up her book and stomped up the stairs to the girl’s dorm.

Gary glanced around the red and gold common room and noticed that everyone was getting ready to go to bed. Percy reminded him not to stay up late as he too went up the stairs.

Gary waited a good ten minutes before he followed Sally out the door. They made it to the Room of Requirements. Sally had found the room with the help of the Founders and she and the boys used it for training.

The room they chose was nothing special, just a large open room with gym mats on the floor and walls. There were various items scattered about; like chairs, books, rocks of all sizes and statues, to use as shields or weapons.

Sally would stand to the side and watch as the room formed a dummy to start cursing Gary. She would shout encouragement or instructions on whether to duck or fight, which spell to use or which item was best to use as a shield. Gary would wandlessly and wordlessly call the items to him or banish them to the dummy. He would dodge the spell fire or send spells back if he saw an opening.
They worked out for about two hours and then Gary asked the Room to provide him with a shower. After he relaxed and cleaned himself off he stood at the door and pulled out the map. It was way after curfew and he didn’t want to get caught. He took an extra careful look at the map tonight after his revelation about Rita yesterday and looked for yellow dots. Looking at the path to his dorm he saw it was clear, and then he noticed it—a yellow dot, with the name of Peter Pettigrew.

It was in his dorm. He racked his brain trying to figure out how. Ron’s rat. Why hadn’t they noticed before? Well Ron never brought the rat to his house, so they would never had suspected that Scabbers was actually Wormtail. And they hadn’t really been looking for Animagus before.

Gary slowly, as to not drop it, pulled out his mirror with trembling hands. “James Potter” he whispered in fright, not wanting to talk too loud, like Peter was in the same room as him. For all their training, the boys were still only eleven years old and they knew they were not trained enough to take on an adult wizard.

He had to repeat himself three times, getting louder with each call. Finally his dad answered.

“Gary?” the sleep worn man asked and then he gave a big yawn. “Why are you calling this late?”

“Dad, you need to call Madam Bones,” Gary said shakily, the mirror vibrating in time with his unsteady hands. Now that he had his dad on the mirror, his knees gave out and he sank to the floor.

That got James’ attention. “Why? Are you and Harry alright? What happened?” he asked waking his wife to call the Head of the DMLE.

“Pe… Peter Pettigrew is in my dorm,” he answered a bit calmer now that he was sitting and had his dad talking to him. His parents will take care of this.

“What?” James shouted, startling his wife, you could hear her asking what was wrong as she tried to wake Amelia.

“Yeah, I was on my way back to bed, after training with Sally, and I remembered yesterday that Rita Skeeter might be an Animagus, so I was keeping an extra look out for that. That’s when I saw Peter’s name. Dad, I’m too scared to go to my room. But, I can’t stay here or someone will notice and ask why I’m out of my dorm,” Gary explained his voice still a little wobbly, but better, and his hands were steadier with each passing second he talked to his dad.

“Take a deep breath, son. Attaboy, just breathe deep,” James coached him through until the color came back into his son’s face. “Look at the map, is the coast clear?”

Sally was behind Gary this entire time, rubbing his back and giving words of encouragement.

“Yes, there’s no one on this floor. Snape is two floors down and Filch is three floors up,” Gary answered, his eyes trained on any part of the map not his room.

“Good, be quick and go to your common room. If you hear someone pretend you were asleep on one of the couches,” James softly ordered.

“Okay, okay, I can do this,” Gary said out loud to himself, standing up and taking another deep breath. He put the mirror in his pocket, still activated and he glanced at the map once again. He then quickly made his way to the dorm. He glanced around the halls, as if, any second now, the wanted man would jump out of the shadows and kidnap him.

“You’re doing great, Gary. Quickly now,” came the muffled advice from his pocket, even though his dad couldn’t see a thing.
Gary made it to the portrait of the Fat Lady, who guarded the Gryffindor dorm, gave the password and ignored her inquiry as to what he was doing out so late. He scrambled in the door and swiftly made his way to the couch he sat on earlier, taking deep breaths to calm his shattered nerves.

“Gary,” came his mother’s voice.

“Oops, sorry Mum,” Gary said pulling the mirror from his pocket and then remembered to put the security on.

“Gary, Amelia wants to know how we know, so we had to tell her about the maps. Don’t worry she has taken a vow not to reveal any of our secrets. Now, I want you to call her and show her his name on the map. She is waiting for you. When you’re done call us back and we’ll keep you company until someone gets there. We can’t come; there is no logical reason that we can come up with for us to be there that we can give to the headmaster. Amelia can always say she got an anonymous tip, we can’t,” Lily said all in one breath.

She knew sending the kids to Hogwarts would turn out to be dangerous. She was grateful for all the help and aids they came up with to protect them. She was also thankful for the years of logic training that made her son call them instead of rushing off to face someone he knew little about. Because, though Padfoot and Moony told tales, they tried to leave Wormtail out as much as possible or downplayed his abilities. Peter had fooled them all before, so who knew just what he had hidden. She didn’t want her baby to go against an adult, not yet.

Gary took a deep breath and said, “Okay, Mum. I love you.”

“I love you too, be careful. Call us right back. Done.” And the mirror went blank.

The poor, still slightly nervous, young man once again activated the security on the mirror. “Amelia Bones,” Gary called and noted it was answered immediately.

“Mr. Potter, I hear you have a man that my department is looking for in your room,” Amelia said with a raised eyebrow. You could tell she was roused from her bed as well. Her hair was out of the tight bun she usually wore it in and she was still dressed in her night clothes.

“Yes, ma’am.”

“Your parents told me you could show me his name on a… map?”

“Yes, ma’am,” he said again and pointed the mirror to the still activated map and showed her everyone’s name in his room. He then showed her where the headmaster was so she would see it was not a trick.

“Thank you, Mr. Potter. I’ll take it from here. I want you to call your parents back. Stay in the common room. Don’t go upstairs for any reason. Do you understand?” She ordered in short and clipped sentences, already getting up to prepare to get a team together and go to Hogwarts.

“Yes, ma’am. Thank you, ma’am. Done.” The mirror went blank once again and Gary called his parents. They had sat and talked for about a half an hour when Sally told Gary that people were coming. He said a hurried goodnight to his parents, told them he would call them when it was over, signed off, hid the mirror in the special pocket, laid down and pretended to sleep.

The portrait opened and you could hear quiet arguing voices drift through.

“My dear, I assure you there are no hidden criminals here at Hogwarts,” the Headmasters voice stated as he, Madam Bones, Professor McGonagall, Professor Snape and six red robed Aurors came
through the hole. “The wards would have let me know,” he argued, and Gary could tell he was telling the truth. Maybe it was time to update the wards.

The Headmaster and Snape were still wearing the clothes they wore that day, so Gary could tell they hadn’t been to bed yet. McGonagall, on the other hand, was dressed in an old-fashioned nightgown, with a long and heavy robe, her feet covered with slippers and a sleeping hat upon her head. She did not look happy about being here at this hour.

“I’ve already told you, Albus, I have to investigate. I received a tip that a wanted man was here and I must clarify that,” she loudly whispered back, you could hear the frustration in her voice, like she had been repeating the same thing since she got to the castle, and knowing Dumbledore, she probably had.

“Albus,” the Transfiguration Professor bit out, “it will not hurt to take a look. Do you really want to take the chance with the children’s lives?”

Dumbledore sighed in defeat and waved his permission to Amelia.

Gary made a show of stretching and loudly yawning as if he just woke up, in that playacting way that only kids seemed to be able to pull off. “What’s happening?”

“Mr. Potter, why are you in the common room and not in your bed?” his Head of House asked.

“I must have fallen asleep watching the fire,” he said blinking tired green eyes at her.

“Well,” Gary said tapping his finger on his chin as he pretended to think, an innocent yet confused look upon his face, “Ron has a pet rat, but I don’t know if anyone else does. Why would you be looking for a rat?”

“That is none of your concern, young man. You stay right here and let the adults do their job,” Amelia softly ordered, with a sly wink.

Gary’s face just got more confused, but he slowly nodded to show he understood.

The Head of the DMLE then turned to her men. “I want every nook and cranny covered, we’re chasing a rat. Seal them with magic, if you know how. If he runs try and stun him. No lethal spells. We’re around children. If a student gets in your way let the rat run to the next Auror. I want him alive,” she ordered in a harsh whisper. “You three, with me, the rest of you stay here in case you’re needed. If the children get up and come downstairs corral them into one part of the room, away from the portrait. If this is who I think it is, then he might use the children as hostage. Don’t let him get the chance.”

“Yes, Ma’am,” came the response from all six Aurors, wands at the ready.

“Is this really necessary?” the Headmaster questioned —again.

Amelia just rolled her eyes and started going quietly up the stairs, wand ready and her Aurors at her back. The Headmaster and the Professors followed.

Gary didn’t know what was going on upstairs, but after a few minutes there was shouts of “He’s running,” and “Don’t let him get way,” the students were heard saying “What’s going on?” and the running of feet sounded throughout the tower. Soon enough students started coming down the stairs
and were told to go to the far corner, Gary joined them.

Ron’s rat, Scabbers, scrambled down and stopped in fright at the sight of the three Aurors, who had already sealed the common room. The students looked at the scene, whispering in confusion and when Percy started forward to pick up Scabbers he was ordered not to touch it.

Seven shots of red light were seen going towards the rodent, but it moved just in time and headed to the kids. Who, even though they didn’t know what was going on, all shuffled to the side to keep the rat from getting in the middle of them. Many of the older students had their wands out as well. Gary quickly wordlessly and wandlessly shot off a lightless stunner. A barrage of red light flew towards the moving target. Students and Aurors, plus Gary, all fired stunners at the same time.

Both his and one of the other stunners finally hit the rat and it dropped to the floor in mid jump. Gary smirked, that’ll leave a bruise. McGonagall transfigured a pillow into a cage and Amelia floated the rat into it.

“Well, now that is enough excitement for the night,” Dumbledore said, turning to the still confused students. “I think, perhaps, it is time for you to return to your beds. I will make an announcement at dinner tomorrow to inform you of what you need to know.”

The students all went up the stairs grumbling and moaning that they once again didn’t know what was going on. Gary went to his bed and gave a full body shudder as to what he had been sharing his room with all this time.

“Why did they take Scabbers? I mean, what could they want with a common garden rat?” the poor confused Ron asked, looking forlornly at his bed, missing his pet already.

“I don’t know,” Gary lied his innocent mask firmly in place. “I was asleep when they came into the common room. I think I heard something about a wanted criminal, but I’m not sure.”

“That doesn’t make sense,” Ron said shaking his head.

“Well, Ron,” Neville said thoughtfully, looking out of the corner of his eye at Gary and receiving a slight nod in return. “you know that the Marauders were all Animagus, right?”

“Yes, what about it?”

“Ron, think… what type of animal was Pettigrew? And who would the DMLE be looking for in a rat form?” Neville asked shaking his head at his ex-friend. They had all heard the story about the group of friends that terrorized Hogwarts with their pranks. So it was not hard to come up with that conclusion.

“You can’t mean that I’ve been sharing my bed with Pettigrew?” the redhead all but shouted, his face and ears turning an alarming shade of red.

“I don’t know for sure, but that’s what I think. It makes sense,” Neville answered with a careless shrug and once more climbed into his bed. “Just think about it. I’m going to bed.” And with that he closed his curtains and was seen no more that night.

“I’m too,” Gary mumbled not offering his unwanted opinion, making sure he stayed as far away from the rumor mill as possible. He closed his curtains, pulled the mirror out of his pocket and called his mum. “Lily Potter.”

“Oh, Gary, are you alright?” she asked quickly scanning her baby boy’s face.
“Yeah, they got him. I stayed in the common room like you guys told me to,” he answered with a yawn.

“Okay, sweetie, thanks for calling us and letting us know. Go to bed its late, remember to turn on your crystal. You probably really need it tonight,” she said softly, relieved that it was finally over.

“Okay, Mum, tell Dad I love him. Love you, goodnight,” the tired young man replied as he rolled towards the crystal set up on the night stand. Casting a silencing charm, he started the crystal and as Pandora’s voice filled the air he heard, “Love you too, sweetie. Done.” The mirror dropped on to the bed and Gary fell asleep almost instantly.

The next day at dinner the Headmaster did indeed make a short announcement. “I know some of you had a fright in Gryffindor tower last night. I just wanted to say that the Department of Magical Law Enforcement has everything under control,” he said after he got everyone’s attention. He then sat back down. One thing the old man didn’t seem to realize is that the less information he gave, the more children’s imagination ran wild and the scarier the rumors became.

Those same rumors said that because it was the wards that were at fault and not the Headmaster, then he was not to blame and was still just on probation.

Gary had already told Harry what had happened as soon as he woke. They would mirror call the Mutineers tonight and start a daisy chain letting everyone know what really happened. Also making sure that because of this they really needed to keep a closer eye on those maps. They would let them know Gary’s theory about Rita so that they would not be caught unaware if she was around. Maybe, they should set up a schedule so that at least one Mutineer was watching the map at all times. It was something to vote on.
The Ongoing Hunt

AN: thanks to my beta, darrelleam, for checking this over. All mistakes are my own, especially since I have a bad habit of adding things and not sending it back to him.

Disclaimer: I don’t own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belong to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her.

Hphphp

December 3, 1991

Once again the Hunters gathered at the Potter manor. And once again the meeting started with Augusta.

“I have learned a lot about Tom Riddle. I know that he graduated at the top of his class and received an award to the school for turning in Hagrid for opening the Chamber of Secrets. The poor man never even had a trial, they were just so happy to find a scapegoat, for the death of young Myrtle, that they simply expelled him and snapped his wand,” the Longbottom Matron said, you could actually hear the pity in her voice. “I was out of Hogwarts by then and only heard rumor that there was a death and that the person responsible was caught. If I had known I would have fought for a trial.”

Lily reached across the table and gathered the withered old hand of the slightly distraught woman. “You couldn’t have known,” she said in a consolatory voice, gently patting the hand. “I don’t think anyone did. Besides, it probably wouldn’t have done any good. Anyone with half an eye can tell Hagrid is a half giant. If you had asked for a trial it would have been denied.”

“I know, I know, I just feel like I should have paid better attention. Now that I think about it, and knowing what I know about Tom, it was almost without doubt that he was the one to open the Chamber,” Augusta said, pulling her hand back and dabbed her eyes with a handkerchief. “Anyway, after Tom graduated he was offered all manner of jobs in the Ministry and to everyone’s surprise took a job at Borgin and Burkes. Well this was after he was turned down for the professorship of the DADA. Headmaster Dippet said he was too young and told him to reapply again when he was older;” she continued more composed now. She stopped to sip the ever present tea. “Which he did, right before he disappeared, but Albus denied him the position; I don’t know the reason why. Rumor has it that he was the one to cast the curse on the position.”

“Can you imagine us or our kids being taught by Voldemort?” James said with a full body shudder, just thinking about the horror that would be. The school might as well change its name to Durmstrang.

“Ahhh,” Sirius said a look of mock terror on his face, “I can only think about how I’d’ve been treated, going against my family and all.”

“Good thing that didn’t happen then,” Remus said. Then after a minutes thought he added, “I would think that either I wouldn’t have been invited at all or more weres would have joined the student body.”

They all got thoughtful at that and after a few minute shook themselves and went back to the discussion.
“Yes, well, all I know is that after some shady deals that lead to a few deaths, he simply disappeared. No one I’ve talked to knows where he went. Then after about twenty years he came back, but he wasn’t Tom anymore. No, now he was Voldemort. He kept a low profile for quite a while. There were some mysterious deaths and disappearances, but nothing the Ministry could pin on him. Then you know what happened after that,” Augusta finished sitting back indicating she was done.

“Well that’s more information than we had,” Albert said writing it all down. “Try and find where he went if you can. We know his family comes from Little Hangleton. And if I am not mistaken Team One has already been there,” he said looking at the fore mentioned team.

“Oh, we went, alright. Damn near lost our lives going there,” exclaimed Wayne as he took out a lead box and placed it in front of him. Lily really came through on procuring those. The box gave off a Dark aura and no one wanted to touch it. “That hovel his mum grew up in was riddled with traps. It took us five hours just to get this ring out.” The rest of the team nodded in agreement, they hoped the rest of the horcruxes weren’t as secure.

James leaned over the table and brought the box to him. He didn’t look inside; he just set it next to his plate and continued with the meeting. “So we now have two of his soul pieces, the necklace and the ring. Augusta see if anyone can tell you if he tried to get heirlooms or special pieces that wouldn’t really fit with Borgin and Burkes merchandise. It might give us clues as to what else we are looking for. Amelia, do you have a good standing with the goblins?” he asked turning to the Head of the DMLE.

Madam Bones had joined the group shortly after the fiasco with Quirrell and the stone. She realized that she had been mistaken about these people and took a vow, along with the rest of the group, to not reveal their secrets. “Yes,” she answered with a nod, “it is amazing how much respect you get with goblins if you show that respect first. I am not at the top of the tier, so to speak, but I can get in touch with some of the higher ranking goblins if I need to. Why?”

“I’m thinking that Voldemort might have sent some of these horcruxes with his followers. Do you think you can tell them that there might be cursed items in those vaults and see if they can retain them or destroy them? I know in my agreement for my vault I stated that I would never put an item in it that could harm the goblin nation. If what Lily says is correct there is a possibility that one of these can possess a person and drain their soul and life to… I don’t know… create a new Voldemort, then there would be two Dark Wankers running around,” he explained and glanced around the table. The rest of the team nodded their heads in agreement, they had been warned it could happen and were taking all precautions to not touch the horcruxes if at all possible.

“I’ll warn them and ask them to let me know of the outcome,” Amelia replied already going over who to talk to and what to say without breaking her vow.

“That’s a start,” James said with a nod of his head. “Okay, Lily has some great news for us.”

“Well, as you know, we’ve been studying how to get rid of these things without being possessed ourselves,” Lily started, going through her notes. “We think we’ve found a way using the dust we used to expel Voldemort from Quirrell. The problem we were having is what happens to the soul piece once it’s out of the container. The research I have says that once the container is destroyed the soul piece dies—unless there’s someone or something around for it to possess. Which was the main problem, how to kill the piece and not get taken over at the same time.”

“Did you find a way? I mean we can destroy the containers and that would be a shame seeing as how they are ancient artefacts, but we can do it. I, for one, don’t want to be the new Voldemort,” Sirius laughed, though no one else did, so he stopped.
Rolling her eyes at the prankster she continued, “We’re thinking of putting the container in a warded room and using a fan to blow the dust to it. That way when the soul piece comes loose it will float around for a few seconds, get caught in the wards and die soon after.”

“That, my dear wife, is simply brilliant,” James said getting up and hugging and kissing his wife. “You too, Albert, simply brilliant, but I’m not kissing you.” Everyone laughed for a minute and then got serious again and he retook his seat.

“Oh another topic, what are we going to do about Skeeter? The second trial was a good start and she’s backed off, for the moment. But, we all know she will be back with a vengeance,” Remus asked, always worried about his family.

“I don’t know why that woman hates us so much,” Lily said in disgust, nose wrinkled as if she smelled something bad. “I mean we’ve never done anything to her.”

“You denied her a story,” Augusta said simply. “How many times did you turn her down before she started printing untruths about you?”

“But, after what they said about us, we turned down everyone,” Lily said in a defensive voice. And they had, well after they realized that no one was listening to them in the first place. They had given a few interviews about what happened that night and were vilified in the paper as an unreliable source. They even gave one to Skeeter at the beginning and her story was the most vicious.

“Ah, but, our dear Ms. Skeeter feels she is special and should never be denied a story. That is why she makes things up about people. Her column was well sought, before the crystals were sold, her words were taken as truths. Now, after your lawsuit and the people are now thinking with more rational minds, she is on the low end of the totem pole. And she blames you,” Ms. Longbottom stated tapping her finger on the table to emphasize her point.

“Well, back to what we do about her, Gary thinks she’s an Animagus. He has all the Mutineers looking out for her at Hogwarts,” James said in a proud voice. He then turned to Amelia and asked, “Is there anything you can do?”

“But unless we catch her. I don’t have a way to check everyone who comes into the Ministry to see if they are illegal Animagus. Besides isn’t that the pot calling the kettle black of you and your friend here?” Amelia inquired with a raised eyebrow, looking between the two Marauders.

James and Sirius blushed at the question; it was true they still hadn’t registered. And now that they had important work to do they didn’t plan on it. Padfoot would be invaluable at getting into places humans can’t. Prongs might not work quite as well, but you never know. Remus just chuckled; he had warned them ages ago that their secret might get out. It was a good thing they all took that vow.

“Yeah, well, ummm, we promise that once Voldemort is gone for good, we’ll register,” Sirius said seriously. He knew it had to come to that and he didn’t want his friend in the DMLE to be caught ignoring the law.

“Thank you,” was all Amelia said.

The meeting broke up soon after with no way of controlling Skeeter. They put the problem with Rita on the back burner and all decided to ward their homes against Animagus so as to not be caught unaware. As they were leaving James reminded them of the party the Potters were throwing on Boxing Day. He got the confirmations and the group soon left.

*The same day Hogwarts, study hour in the Great Hall.*
The Mutineers and all their study-buddies were at the Hufflepuff table doing their homework. Harry and Gary were sitting with the Patil twins, Susan and Hannah. They were talking about the DADA professor who had taken over for Quirrell, since he was too traumatized to teach.

Her name was Professor Lauren Steele; she was a retired Auror, who only agreed to teach for this year. She was a very pretty older lady of forty-five; slender with blonde hair and blue eyes. She had retired early due to injury and was quite happy in her solitude. She was actually pretty good and they were learning a lot. The problem was that she was a Boy-Who-Lived fan and would treat Gary special. Said boy was getting tired of it and complaining.

“I can’t seem to make her stop,” Gary grumped, slouched in his seat and arms folded across his chest. “I’ve tried and tried to get her to see that I’m just a student, but she keeps going on and on about how powerful I must be to have taken on such a powerful Dark wizard.”

“Poor Gary,” Susan said mockingly patting him on the head. While she did sympathize with her friend it was funny to watch the woman fawn all over him in class. “Whatever will you do, a pretty woman praising you over your every word and movement?”

“You think it’s funny, but have you seen some of the looks I’m getting from some of the other students. They’re starting to think I’m not earning my grades. It’s embarrassing,” he defended himself. This was just the type of thing that he and Harry were hoping to avoid; it could only end badly in the long run.

“Maybe you should talk to McGonagall and see if you can’t get independent grading. She can make an announcement or something,” Padma suggested. She too had seen the glares thrown Gary’s way during study hall.

“Maybe, but I think Dumbledore will try and stop that. He seems to want the world to think I’m all powerful and stuff,” Gary said thoughtfully. ‘What do you think, Harry?’

‘I think you should at least try.’ Harry glanced his way with an encouraging look.

“Or, maybe, you can get one of the new ghosts to haunt her and give her lectures about harassing students,” Hannah giggled at her own suggestion. That would be a sight, a ghost following a professor around and preaching about proper teaching.

The rest of the group around her chuckled and giggled at the image.

“Seriously though, what am I going to do? I don’t want people thinking I’m getting privileges that I’m not. Then again I have no idea if she is grading me up or not. Should I complain to the Board? Or my parents? Can they do anything? I’m getting tired of it. Plus, she keeps bad mouthing Harry, in front of the class. She keeps telling me that I’m letting him hold me back, which she can’t prove, because his grades are as good as if not better than mine. He is in Ravenclaw for crying out loud,” Gary continued his rant, pouting and wildly gesturing the whole time.

The group could tell this was really bothering him, but didn’t know what to do, except tell McGonagall.

“Maybe a letter to the Board wouldn’t be a bad idea. You will just have to word it correctly,” Padma said, thinking about just how to do that. “Be professional and try not to sound like you are whining.”

“I can do that,” Gary said with resignation. He hadn’t wanted to write to them, because no matter how he worded it, it would come off as asking for a favor. “I think I’ll go to McGonagall first, she seems to want to help.” He gathered his books and notes and stuffed them into his bag and went to
his Head of House’s office. He knocked on the door and went in when he heard “Enter.”

“Good afternoon, Professor,” Gary greeted her as he took the chair in front of the well-organized desk his teacher was sitting at.

“Good afternoon, Mr. Potter. What brings you to my office?” McGonagall asked after putting her grading aside.

“I’m having a problem, which really isn’t a problem. You see Professor Steele is giving me special treatment in class and she’s bad mouthing Harry. I need it to stop. It’s causing me difficulties with the other students,” Gary said after he put his bag on the floor. “One of the reason’s it is causing issue is they think I’m not being graded fairly. She goes on and on about how good I am when I don’t even do any better than the rest of the class. Is there anyway her class can be… I don’t know… monitored in secret or something? I mean, I know she’s only here until the end of the year. But, she is creating a breach with the rest of the first years and I don’t know how to fix it.” He was actually close to tears with frustration.

“I had heard something along those lines, and heard Professor Steele claim what a good student you were, however, I didn’t know she was quite that… biased,” McGonagall said, her forehead crest with worry over one of her cubs. “I’ll see what I can do, but I can’t promise you anything. Fortunately, your class is in one of my off periods. I can monitor it, because I am the Deputy Headmistress. I want to thank you for bringing this to my attention and not trying to fix it yourself. Your parents will be proud,” she said with a nod of her head and a slightly pitied look in her eyes.

“Okay, thanks Professor. I’ll wait and see what happens, but if you can’t solve it I’m taking it to the Board,” the messy haired pre-teen stated firmly.

“Off you go, back to study hall with you. Leave it to me, Mr. Potter,” The Deputy Headmistress state firmly, not wanting any more issue with the Board.

“Bye, Professor,” Gary said as he gathered up his bag and went out the door. He headed back to the Great Hall and rejoined the group. He relayed what she said and with nods all around they went back to their homework.

The next day during the DADA they were working on the tripping jinx. Everyone was still trying to get it right and Gary was downplaying his ability, especially in this class and was fumbling right along with everyone else. After about ten minutes three other students got it correct and were awarded two points each. Gary felt this was a good time to do his right, so he did and was awarded ten points, with the added comment that his brother was holding him back or he would have been first. The glares he received made him blush with embarrassment. Then out of the shadows stepped Professor McGonagall.

“Never in all my years of teaching, with exception of one other, have I seen such a blatant act of bias. Tell me, Professor Steele, why did you award Mr. Potter more points than the other students? He was not even the first to achieve the goal. And why are you bad mouthing a student that isn’t even in your class?” She asked looking over the top of her glasses and tapping her feet in agitation. She thought Gary was over-exaggerating. But now she could see he was not.

“He is the Boy-Who-Lived, he deserves the extra points. His brother must be the reason he is not doing well, it was in the Prophet after all,” the woman said, truly confused as to why that would even be questioned.

McGonagall sighed. “Mr. Potter is a student —nothing more. If this is how you award points to him, all of his test and homework will need to be re-graded, to make sure he is receiving correct marks.
His brothers as well to make sure you are grading him fairly. You will desist awarding him points at all unless he is the first to achieve whatever task assigned. You will leave his brother alone. I will be monitoring the award sheet from now on.” The Transfiguration professor glared at the younger woman.

Gary gave a huge sigh of relief and said, “Thank you Professor, I’ve been telling her that for ages.”

“It is not a problem, Mr. Potter. It is good you came to me to discuss this. The rest of you should also go to you Head of House if you see something like this happen again. Mr. Potter has expressed time and time again that he, and his brother, wants no special treatment. You should heed his words and not words of gossip,” the Head of Gryffindor chastised the class. Some bent their head in shame they had heard him complain about the special treatment he was receiving, but figured he was doing that to save face.

“But, but, he is the Boy-Who-Lived. He saved us all,” the flabbergasted reply came. Professor Steele did not understand why her hero wasn’t being treated as he should.

“Professor Steele, please keep your worship out of the classroom,” McGonagall could see this was something that went far beyond a little bias; this woman could start a cult if she wanted to. It was a good thing they only had to put up with her one more term, Christmas was coming soon. Maybe, she could talk to Albus about finding someone else.

The Professor’s proclamations also showed the other students just how nuts their teacher was. They decided to start looking beyond the gossip from now on.

Gary’s and Harry’s test and homework were re-graded and Gary lost a few marks and Harry gained a few, but nothing too bad. The professor continued to lavish praise on his poor head. However, she couldn’t award points, because Gary made sure he was never first. She never spoke ill of Harry after being berated in front of her class, she didn’t want to get fired over some mediocre first year.

McGonagall couldn’t get the Headmaster to see that something was wrong with the woman; he seemed to think the boys were being treated fairly and nothing she showed him would sway his opinion. So she resigned herself into keeping an eye out.
A Yuletide Celebration

AN: thanks to my betas, darrelledeam and alix33, for checking this over. All mistakes are my own, especially since I have a bad habit of adding things and not sending it back to them.

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Hphphp

December 26, 1991

It was just after 3 p.m. and the Potters were all dressed up in their finest waiting for their guests to arrive. Lily and Harry were in the Floo room and James and Gary were at the front door. Sirius and Remus were in ballroom to show those who entered where they could sit or what was on the buffet table. It wasn’t the first party they had, but there were a few politicians that were coming that had never been invited before. One was the Minister of Magic, Cornelius Fudge, who had told them he could only stay for a short while, because he was also invited to the Malfoy’s.

The manor was decked out in simple holly, ivy and mistletoe wreathes. There were also laurels and bells swathed along the ceilings. Candles were floating all about the halls and in the ballroom and dining room. Gold and white cloths were draped on all the tables, with food, drink and elaborate Christmas crackers scattered for anyone to choose from. Music crystals filled the air with dance music for those who wanted to make use of the ballroom.

James wore an open front plain black robe over a black suit with white button up shirt and bowtie, which he kept fussing with. Gary and Harry were just as formal in identical dark blue suits with light blue button up shirts and dark blue bowties sans robes. Lily was wearing a floor length formal salmon gown, which was a simple cut of tight bodice and straight skirt, with a lavender open front robe. The Potters were never about flare, they were down to earth folks that once in a while dolled up, but that was it. Finding them out of their jeans and t-shirts was a hard pressed thing to do. Well except for school and going to the Wizengamot, but those were uniforms so they didn’t count.

The way they dressed tonight might offend some of their guests, because though they did look elegant, the clothes they wore were a mix of Muggle and wizard. However, that was the statement they wanted to make so, it was okay if some old biddy’s sensibilities were ruffled. As long as they were polite and didn’t say anything offensive they should be okay.

A few carriages started pulling up, the Floo started flaring, pops of Apparition could be heard and some people were walking up the pathways and there was even a car or five —the guests had arrived. James and Gary greeted each person with a hand shake or kiss on the hand, depending male or female. They would then have a house elf show them to the ballroom. Lily would kiss cheeks and Harry would do the handshakes or knuckle-kisses. After about an hour the door was left manned by Tilly, the house elf, and the Potters joined their guests. The Floo was manned by the other house elf, Taffy.

As they entered the ballroom they took flutes of champagne (or butterbeer) and James cast the Sonorus and said in a soft voice so it didn’t sound like he was yelling, “Happy Christmas and thank you, one and all, for joining us to celebrate. I hope your festivities went well yesterday and that all your wishes came true. Please, feel free to take part in the buffet, the wassail or champagne. Mingle, dance and have fun. Thank you.” He silenced the spell and started to talk among his peers. Lily
joined the mothers that were gathered together and the twins made a beeline for the Mutineers.

“So, how long do we have to stay with the adults?” Spencer asked. He was a quiet boy who had been with the Potters all through primary. He was slotted for Ravenclaw when he went to Hogwarts next year.

“Dad said at least until dinner,” Harry answered and was greeted with a lot of moans and groans for his trouble. “Good news is that’s in about a half an hour.” This brought smiles to the kids’ faces.

“Yeah, so try not to fill up now. Besides, we’ll get real snacks when we get to the game room,” Gary added with a smirk. “I should warn you that a lot of adults might be coming in and out all night. Not everyone invited has ever seen the room. So no talking about Mutineer stuff,” he added with a wink. Nods or confused looks were given at that little tidbit.

“What kind of Mutineer stuff shouldn’t we talk about?” Leeann asked curiously. She was part of the pro-Dumbledore group so wasn’t privy to a lot of information.

“You know stuff that would bore the adults,” Parvati improvised, “Like our study group or homework. Boring stuff. We should keep it to what’s going on at the school and what’s new in fashion. By the way I love that dress. Where did you get it? I wish I could pull off something like that,” she fawned leading the topic to fashion.

“Or we could talk about what we got for Christmas, but right now we have to be formal and talk with the adults. Padfoot said let them pick the topic and try and stay polite,” Harry said with a bored look. He hated politicians as they always toadied over Gary and ignored him, like an eleven year old would boost their career.

“We should rejoin our parents now and regroup after dinner,” Padma said grabbing her sister’s hand and started weaving through the crowd.

The kids split up and did just that. This time Gary joined his mum and Harry went reluctantly to James. His dad was surrounded by the old geezers from the Wizengamot and Harry knew it was going to be a boring wait.

“Oh, and this must be young Gary,” a portly man holding a bowler hat said as Harry approached. Harry had to wonder why he didn’t give the hat to the house elves.

James took a quick look at the scar and said, “No, Minister, this is his twin Harry. Harry say hello to the Minister.”

“Hello, Minister Fudge. How are you this evening?” came the reply as Harry politely held out his hand in greeting.

“Very well, very well indeed,” Fudge said shaking the hand vigorously. “It is not every day one gets invited to the Potters, no, not every day. A good evening indeed. Thank you for asking, young Harry,” he said not showing his disappointment about meeting the wrong twin. He didn’t want to alienate James, because though he took Malfoy’s money, Potter could drum him right out of office. This man single-handedly had half the Wizengamot in his pocket without spending a Knut to do it. With the greeting out of the way Fudge turned back to James and said, “While, it has been a delightful time. I really must be off. I told Lucius that I would be there for dinner and I mustn’t be late.”

James shook the Ministers hand and said, “It was a pleasure having you, Cornelius, perhaps next year you could stay for dinner with us.”
“Perhaps,” the Minister said and putting on his bowler, he left.

At 4:30 a house elf came and informed them that dinner was served. When you first walk into the room you were greeted with two long tables, dressed up in white and gold tablecloths, with candelabras spaced between every six chairs. Each table could hold twenty-five people. In the back of the room were two smaller tables with glass globes instead of stands. Thank Merlin for expanding charms.

The dishes set around the tables consisted of: roast turkey, goose, chicken, and duck; served with stuffing and gravy, pigs in blankets, devils on horseback, roasted chestnuts, cranberry sauce and redcurrant jelly, bread sauce, boiled, mashed and roast potatoes, Brussels sprouts and parsnips.

Everyone exclaimed over the lovely set up as they took their seats and soon light talk was heard all around the tables. Mothers talked of childrearing, other women talked of fashion and the men talked of work or Quidditch. The kids keep it to fashion and school work.

Soon pudding appeared and this entailed: Trifle, mince pies, Christmas cake and pudding, brandy butter (cream for the kids) and a Yule log.

Soon everyone’s bellies were full and the diners divided into groups and went to separate sitting rooms, while some couples made use of the dance floor, commenting on the handiness of the crystals and the wonder of the beautiful waltzes that were playing. The children went to the game room most lost their robes, jackets and ties upon entering. There were only two or three kids there that weren’t part of the Mutineers and the gang had no problem showing them what everything in the room was for.

Gary, Harry, Padma, Neville, Susan and Mandy were all grouped on the couches. “Thanks for the broom, you guys. You didn’t have to get me one you know, the book on the Amazon Jungle was enough. Besides, I already have two,” Neville said with a smirk. The Potter twins had bought everyone in the Mutineers and Dean, Ron and Seamus a broom.

“You know how it is, one group present and then special ones. We even bought Ron and Seamus one so they couldn’t complain that we were sucking up to their siblings. Well not Seamus, but can you imagine the complaining we would hear if he was the only one in the dorm not to get one. I mean, even Dean got one,” Gary explained with a twinkle in his eye.

“Besides, it’s not like they’re top of the line or anything. They’re only Comet Sweeps,” huffed Harry.

“Yeah, I heard the Weasley twins complain how hard it was to play Quidditch on their old brooms, so…” Gary said with a shrug.

“You two are so thoughtful. I, for one, am glad for the new broom. Auntie wouldn’t let me get one until next year. She still won’t let me take it to school, but I rode it all day yesterday. So thanks from me too,” Susan said as she gave a hug to each boy.

“I really don’t like flying,” Padma said with a small lift of her shoulder, “but I know brooms can be useful, so thanks.”

“Did you enjoy the books we sent you?” Harry asked.

“Yes,” came four responses.

“That one you sent me on Wicca tradition was really good. I was up all night reading it. Even after all we’ve learned on the Internet there is still so much about that religion that I don’t know,” Mandy
said with a bright smile. She was always interested in other cultures and could be found on the computer most of the time. Her parents had to lock the study in their home at night so she would not stay up all night researching.

“I think that is because it is still so new and is still evolving,” Padma guessed tapping her finger on her chin in thought. “I know it comes from an old religion, but they are trying to adapt it to modern times.”

“Let’s not talk religion,” Gary suggested holding up his hands, if there was one thing he learned about parties it was never talk about religion or politics. “I’m going to go and show the two new kids what a computer is for. Why don’t you guys talk about the rest of you gifts?” and with that he got up and wandered over to the two lost looking teens that were just standing off to the side like they were afraid to touch anything.

As he approached the two he held out his hand and greeted them, “Hi. I’m Gary Potter,” he said ignoring the gasp and the quick looks at his scar. “Welcome to Potter Manor.”

“Hello, I’m Lewis Hawkinsonstomp and this is my sister Ellie. Our grandfather knows your father from the Wizengamot. He was ever so ecstatic for being invited,” the tall boy said taking Gary’s hand. “May I ask, what is all this stuff?” waving at all the gadgets, TV’s and computers.

“Well, I don’t know if you were told, but this is a magic null room. It’s where we play games, do our homework, watch movies or just cruise the Internet. Here let me show you the computer,” he said and taking their elbows gently guided the nervous siblings to the computer area. “As you can see we have five computers, we use to have more, but when people started setting up their own rooms we gave a few to charity. Here sit here Lewis and Ellie you stand behind him,” he suggested setting them on the farthest computer away from the other kids.

“Okay, I’m going to turn it on and a picture is going to show on this blank looking glass. So don’t freak out or anything,” Gary said as he pushing in the power buttons then sat in the chair next to Lewis. You could hear the static fill the air as the screen came on, causing the two pure-bloods to jump. “Oops, sorry I forgot about that part. It’s just the screen receiving electricity.”

After a minute a log in screen came to view and Gary put in the user name and password. Then a nice Christmas picture filled the screen, a country house in the snow. “Okay, just let me pull up the Internet and I will show you how cool this is.” Once the Explorer window popped up he said, “Name one thing about Muggles you always wanted to know.”

“Ummm, well, ummm, I always wanted to know how they dressed. So, you know, I can blend in when we go out to the Muggle world. Not that we’ve done that yet, but it might happen,” Ellie said twisting her hands in front of her, not wanting to sound petty to the Boy-Who-Lived.

“Very smart, you’d be surprised at how some wizards dress,” Gary smiled at the flustered young teen. “Okay, so I’m thinking you want modern teen girl fashion. Here let me pull it up,” he said typing away in the search bar.

A few seconds’ later links started to fill the monitor. Gary explained what they were and how to click on them and guided them to one that stated it was for school fashion. After clicking the link the page showed girls in jeans, slacks and casual shirts. Ellie looked on with wonder, leaning over her brother’s shoulder to get a closer look. Then Gary showed her how to get back to the search page and linked her to summer dresses. While she was getting into the clothes, Gary took Lewis to another computer and showed him the Muggle sports.

He watched the two play on the Internet until their parents came and pulled them away. He told them
about libraries and if they couldn’t get computers of their own they could go there.

Gary rejoined Harry and said, “Two more into the fold.”

Harry laughed and smacked his twins shoulder. “Come on, the party is breaking up and we have to put our ties and jackets back on and see the guests out,” he said picking up his jacket and tie.

Gary groaned, but joined him all the same.

This time Lily and Gary were manning the door, while James and Harry were attending the Floo room. Sirius and Remus had already left to go and party at the pubs. Soon enough it was just the Potters and they all climbed the stairs wearily and got ready for bed. Lily went into Gary’s room and sat on his bed.

“Did you have a good night?” she asked brushing the hair from his forehead, wishing he would still let her hug and kiss him goodnight.

“Yeah,” Gary replied tiredly, “I think I got two more pure-bloods hooked on computers.”

“Really? Who?”

“The Hawkinstomps, I think, the boy is in Hufflepuff, a few years above me and Harry. The girl is in Ravenclaw a year above us. They said their grandpa works with Dad.”

“Yes, I remember meeting him tonight and you might be right. He was asking about our Muggle stuff.”

“I’m tired Mum. It is a good thing Sally let us have a few days off. Too bad she doesn’t celebrate the Holidays.”

“Goodnight, Gary. Don’t forget your crystal. Soon you guys will be ready for your Animagus training. Did the Mutineers ever vote on that?” Lily asked still stroking his hair.

“Yeah, we all decided that it was too good of an opportunity to pass on,” Gary said with a yawn as he rolled over and started his crystal. Lily got up and gave his forehead a quick kiss and left before he could complain.

She met James in the hall and leaned tiredly against him. He put his arm around her waist and pulled her close, kissing the top of her head. “Poor, Lily-flower, all tuckered out. It was only a party, how did you get so tired?”

“Do you realize how boring most of those people are? There’s only so much fashion I can talk about. I don’t even like witches fashion,” she complained using her free arm to smack his chest. She gave a yawn and then said, “Gary said they voted on trying Animagus training. I was thinking this summer.”

“I’ll get with Padfoot and we’ll set up a schedule,” James said kissing her hair again. “Come on, sweetheart, let’s get you to bed.”

A big yawn was his answer as he guided her to their bedroom and as he closed the door he couldn’t help but think that it was a successful party.

Hphphp

AN: I once again want to reiterate that I brought the Internet up to modern times, so that the
Potters can do what Gary did.
Harry and Gary were headed to the Great Hall for their normal study hour. Draco Malfoy approached them. He seemed nervous but his pace was sure.

“I’ve been meaning to talk to you two. I received a letter from my father to form a relationship with you. I was wondering if we had any common grounds to start with,” the young blond said in his normal stuck up voice, though you could hear the anxiety in it. It was faint but there.

“Sure, Draco, you’ve done nothing to make us dislike you,” Harry said with a small smile to put the boy at ease. And he hadn’t; after the talk on the train they hadn’t heard anything bad from this pure-blood.

“Well, I know we don’t and probably never will agree about Mud… Muggle-borns. So I was thinking we could discuss Quidditch and whether it is true that you two will be trying out for the teams next year,” Draco said relaxing his defensive stance.

“Well,” Gary said with a side-long look at his brother. “It really is up to whether or not we get good grades. Mum says if we don’t get in the top twenty then there is no way she’ll let us play.”

They had talked about it with their parents after all the rumors had been spread and that blasted article had been printed. It was decided that they should both try out for the same position next year. And even if one of them didn’t get on the team then at least they showed they tried.

“Really?” Malfoy asked getting excited. “Which position?”

“Seeker,” they both replied.

“Me too, Father said the same as your mum. I have to do well in my studies and he would get me a new broom, just to try out.”

“That’s great, Draco,” Harry replied, his parents had said the same. He looked at his watch and said, “We’ve got to get going, how about we talk about this tomorrow at an earlier time?”

“I can’t,” Gary said with a shake of his head. “I promised Dean that I would help him with his Transfiguration tomorrow.”

“It’s okay, Gary, I’m sure me and Draco can carry on a conversation without you.” He smirked at his brother.

“Prat,” Gary said shoving his twins shoulder.

Draco looked on wistfully; he had always wanted a sibling. His father was content with one child though.
The three parted and Harry and Draco did have their talk the next day. Though it didn’t stay with
Quidditch, somehow politics was brought up, but there were only discussions and no arguing. They
agreed to disagree and parted good-naturedly.

It was about two weeks after the break when Professor Flitwick came and gave Harry a note that
stated that the Headmaster wanted to see him after dinner and that he had enjoyed a good piece of
fudge over the Christmas season. Having talked to Gary about the strange note he was told that was
probably the password. He, of course, asked his Head of House to accompany him.

The diminutive professor came to him when desserts were over and they made small talk about
Charms and how Harry was doing in that class on the way to the office. Giving the password and
going up the winding stairs, Harry took a deep breath and knocked. Upon hearing ‘Enter’ both
professor and student went into the office. Dumbledore was sitting, as always, behind his cluttered
desk.

“Ah, Harry come in, come in, have a seat. Thank you for bringing him, Filius, you may leave,” the
old man said, waving them into the office. Harry took the chair on the right and sat straight with no
slouching and not relaxed as his brother had.

“You know better than that, Albus. I will stay with my student,” Flitwick said taking a seat next to
Harry.

“Of course, though it saddens me so that young Harry doesn’t trust me,” Dumbledore said in a
disappointed voice.

“Can you really blame me, sir? After all you did try and make me and Gary squibs,” Harry said and
noted the genuine surprise that flitted across the Headmaster’s face. Maybe he really didn’t
understand magical twin bonds.

“I don’t understand, Harry, my boy. I would never want to hurt you or your brother,” hurt was
predominate in that grandfatherly voice, though there was surprise as well. Dumbledore ran his hand
through his beard and wondered if what Harry said was true, though he had doubts. If so then his
plans would have to be changed.

“If you had listened to my mother when you tried to separate us at a young age, you would have
known that separating me and Gary would have strained our magic. It would have continued to
search for the missing twin, if the distance was great, and had you succeeded then it would have
been, then the strain would have been too much and it would have left us as squibs,” Harry
explained hoping this man finally got it through his head and left his family alone. He doubted it, but
one could hope.

“Would that happen were you to be separated now?” Dumbledore asked then holding up his hands
at the affronted faces in front of him. “Not that I want to do that, just an old man’s curiosity,” he
quickly backtracked.

“It would happen even faster now. Gary and I are very tightly bound,” Harry said in a very firm
voice, his eyes narrowing at that conniving man in front of him.

“Well, on to other topics. I noticed that there are quite a few Slytherins in your study group. Are you
sure that is wise?”

“I thought you wanted the Houses to get along, Headmaster? I don’t understand what the issue is,”
Harry asked, his Head of House also had a curious look about him. Albus had been campaigning for
years on inter-house relations. What was he up to now?
“Oh, I do, I think it is wonderful that you are getting on so well with all the Houses. My concern is that someone may think you are going Dark, after all these are well known families that are not, as they say, on the Light side,” Dumbledore explained.

“Nor are they Dark, all the students’ families in our group are Neutral and have been for centuries. They do their best to stay out of the wars and promote peace,” Harry said defending the students. Most of the Slytherins that were in the study group were half-bloods and had a hard time in their House. The group was a reprieve for them.

“I also noted that you had a conversation with young Draco. Would you care to tell me what it was about?” Dumbledore asked leaning forward, hoping to hear something that would further his cause. He would have to do research on the twin bond, if what young Harry said was true then perhaps he would have to stop trying to separate them, until he could find a way to prevent Gary from becoming a squib. He was still certain that the bond would lessen Gary’s power, the boys’ grades and performance in their classes confirmed his belief.

“Not that it is any of your business, but Draco and I were merely discussing Quidditch and political points of views. He is still under the impression that Muggle-borns should not be invited to the wizarding world, and I tried to dissuade him of that notion. We agreed to disagree and parted amicably,” Harry answered with a shrug. He had actually invited Draco to come and visit over the summer, but was turned down.

“Be that as it may, it might make your brother look bad that he is seen consorting with a non-Light family,” Dumbledore said looking over his half-moon glasses in mild reproof.

“Headmaster, you do not have a say in who my brother and I decided to ‘consort’ with. Most of the people in our group have been friends with us for years and we are not about to abandon them now that they are sorted into Slytherin. All Houses are welcome to study with us. And if we decide that we want to try and make pure-bloods see that they are wrong, where is the harm in that?” It was the note of finality in Harry’s voice that caused the Headmasters shoulders to slump in defeat. Harry had kept his speech formal throughout so that he would be taken seriously.

“Albus, you know better. I would have never thought you would stoop so low as to dictate who any of your students could befriend. It is outside your role as Headmaster,” Professor Flitwick finally joined the conversation.

“Alas, it was not a dictation, merely a suggestion. You are correct and I apologize to you, young Harry, that is not what I meant it to come across as,” the old man said making placating gestures. Though you could see there was no twinkle in his eyes.

“I don’t really trust you, sir, but I accept your apology. I still think you are trying to split me and Gary up, to try and make sure I don’t ‘steal’ his power. If I were you, I would stop trying. It is not going to work,” Harry said and stood up and headed for the door. Flitwick threw a hard look at his employer and followed his student.

Harry told his brother mentally about the meeting and they decided that they would start to hang out together more.

Later that week one of Sally’s ghost scouts came to Harry and told him about what Dumbledore tried to push in the Board meeting.

“He tried to get a rule passed, that none of the Houses could study together outside their own House,” the veteran ghost said. He was dressed in a British type military uniform. You could see the hole in his shoulder where he had bleed out, because he was too far away from any one to get help.
“How did the Board take it?” Harry asked, sitting on his bed in his green pajamas. He had just been getting ready to put on his crystal when the ghost floated through his bed hangings.

“There was quite a bit of arguing for a while. It was Lucius Malfoy that settled it all, stating that they didn’t have the right to do so. And wasn’t the Headmaster going against his own preaching? Never would have thought old Lucius woulda had it in him. He’s usually the one trying to separate the Houses more. Wonder what changed?” the old spirit said, rubbing his chin with long thin fingers.

“Thanks for that bit of information. I’ll let my parents know tomorrow, and we’ll act accordingly. I’m too tired to play the Headmaster’s game tonight,” Harry said turning on his crystal and settled down into his pillow. The ghost said its good nights and left the way he came.

The next day, after Harry told his parents what the ghost said, was uneventful. The Potter adults told him not to worry about it; they’d take care of the Board.

The study group was once again at the Hufflepuff table and there was quite a bit of chattering. Daphne brought up the subject about when they were going to start the practical part of their studies. She felt she had a firm grip on theory and wanted to start casting outside of class.

“What do you think, Harry?” Gary asked when she posed the question.

“Well, one of us should go and talk to McGonagall. She can get us a room or tell us where we can go. I believe she has all the schedules for all the clubs. It’s kinder her job to keep all that organized. I don’t think we should ask the Headmaster, he might try and deny us access,” Harry said tapping his finger on the table in front of him, deep in thought.

“Why would he do that?” Daphne asked tilting her blond head to the side. She was sitting on Harry’s right and Gary was on his left.

“Well, let’s just say a little bird told me that he tried to break up our study group and leave it at that for now,” Harry explained vaguely. He gave Daphne a small wink and mouthed ‘later’ and turned back to his brother. “You should take a few people and ask the Deputy Head. Don’t go by yourself or it might look like your trying to get in a favor. Or wait, we’ll form a committee to see who will go, maybe neither one of us should ask. Make it a group effort with no leader, per say,” he said. After what happened in Defense and the conversation he had with the old man. He didn’t want to give anyone anything that could be used against them.

“That is a wonderful idea, Harry,” Padma said from across from him. She had been following the topic while doing her Potions homework.

“Okay then, Daphne, your handwriting is better, write a note asking the question and pass it down the table. Remember to put that me and Gary will not be going. If anyone asks tell them to mirror call us tonight and we’ll explain why. Try and be discreet,” he said in a whisper.

So she did and soon enough the vote came in that; Susan, Dean, Terry and Tracey would ask for a room. They decided it would be the next day during study period.

That night was filled with mirror calls, first a few people asked Gary and Harry why they didn’t want to join the group going to McGonagall. Then those people called other people and so on. By the end of the night every Mutineer, and then some, knew what was going on between the Headmaster and the Potter twins. Well not everything, but they had a general idea that Dumbledore was trying to keep them apart, again. This action formed a stronger public opinion for the twins and they had many more supporters.
Towards the end of study hour the next day, Susan came and sat next to Gary. “She was real supportive,” she started, perhaps sitting a little closer to Gary than necessary, which made Gary fidget and move away from her a little, causing the young girl to pout. “She said we can use the old Charms classroom, but we have to talk to the professors and see if one of them will be in there with us. She doesn’t want us to practice without adult supervision, though she did say if none of them had time we could ask the Head boy or girl.”

“I say we ask Professor Sprout. She is the most unbiased professor we have. If she can’t then Flitwick. If he can’t then the Head boy,” Daphne said in her place next to Harry.

“Marvelous idea, Daphne,” Harry said with a smile, causing the girl to blush lightly.

The same committee was dispersed to ask the professors and Professor Sprout was happy to help. So the group started working on their practical every Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday before dinner. That left the weekends still open for leisure. Everyone was happy with that arrangement.
A Day At The Park.

AN: Thanks to my beta, darrelldream, for going over this for me. All mistakes are my own.

AN: I’ve never been out of the states, though I have been to quite a few amusement parks in my day. I’ve never been to one quite like Chessington World of Adventures, so I am going off what the Internet says was available in the 90’s and won’t be going into too deep of a description.

Noted: a reviewer let me know that rides are free in the park, so I had to change that.

Disclaimer: I don’t own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belongs to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her.

Hphphp

A short narrative

The rest of the year had been uneventful; no new rumors floated about and the Headmaster left Gary and Harry alone. They didn’t expect it to last the next year, but they had kept their noses clean and gave him no ammunition.

Though their study group had grown quite a bit, there were no new Mutineers. They did invite some of the new people to come and play in the game room and the Hawkinson siblings commended its value. So they had many takers. The Potter manor would see lots of traffic this summer.

Minor pranks were played, nothing too embarrassing just enough to get a laugh out of everyone and keep the relationships they were trying for going. Things like hair color changes or robes shorted. They kept the pranks in-group for now, so they couldn’t be accused of targeting anyone. They even reined the Weasley twins in.

Ron and Seamus grew further apart from the Mutineers, and the twins hoped it didn’t cause trouble in the future. They liked the other Weasleys and wanted them to stay with the group, but if Ron kicked up a fuss then Mrs. Weasley might stop letting her twins hang out with them. Ginny would be coming to Hogwarts next year and while she had gotten over her crush and star struck ways, she still hadn’t shown which group she was more likely to hang around.

The boys finished in the top fifteen of their class, with tie scores (Harry better in Defense and Gary better in Transfiguration), letting some of the other Mutineers get ahead of them. They had planned it that way ages ago. The pro-security group knew why and took complete advantage of it.

Susan and the Weasley twins were inducted into the pro-security. They were given the basics in Occlumency (which Susan already knew) and let in on all the secrets. They were each given a new map and mirror.

Fred gave the old map to Lee Jordan, who was thrilled to have it. Fred had first asked James and Sirius if they wanted it back and was told to give it away and keep the legend going. They were hoping next year that Lee would be a part of the Mutineers; this year they weren’t recruiting anyone, for fear of Dumbledore spies. ‘Always remembering Peter’, was the motto for new recruits. And even though the Weasley twins vouched for him they stood firm by that rule, but told them they would see how the summer went.

Gary had made a few ventures with some of the pure-bloods always treating them as future business
partners. Harry was even approached by a few and gave the same response. Draco had taken it rather well, especially after a letter from his father telling him he did well. They never became friends, just sociable acquaintances.

The Hunters continued to look for the horcruxes, but had yet to find another. They had a rough idea what a few might be, thanks to Augusta’s teas. They knew they were looking for Founder items, they asked Sally to ask the Founders about them, but even the Founder spirits never knew what happened to them after they died.

The Maunders decided to hold off on Animagus training until the youngest Mutineers had at least one year of Transfiguration under their belt.

After a few weeks during the summer, which wizard-raised children and teens came to the house and looked on the Internet, they decided that it was time to take them to the Muggle World. They showed them how to dress and picked a date.

July 11, 1992

“Come on boys, everyone will be here soon,” Lily called up the stairs, it seemed like she was forever saying that. They were all leaving at 9 a.m. and it was 8:15 now. They were taking a large group of wizard-raised kids and their parents to Chessington World of Adventures, along with some Mutineer parents and the godfathers.

The Mutineer kids, except; Daphne, Astoria, Tracey and Susan decided that they would stay home this time and let the Potters and their parents handle it, as long as pictures were taken. They would go on the boys’ birthday. The girls decided that they wanted to join this venture since they were unable to join the birthday celebration this year. Just the kids went as the adults had other plans and they trusted the Potters.

The Potters and Sirius were paying for everyone to get in and food, but if anyone wanted to play the games or buy souvenirs then the person had to pay for it themselves. They had explained the non-magical money system and hoped everyone remembered.

“Coming Mum/Lily” was the replies she got. The usual noise followed.

Harry came down first, dressed in tan shorts and a plain green t-shirt with sandals on his feet and sunglasses on his head. Gary followed wearing dark brown shorts and a red t-shirt, also wearing sandals and sunglasses. James followed the boys down; he was attired in black trousers and a white polo shirt with white socks and trainers. Lily, who was wearing a simple floral sun dress and sandals, huffed at them.

“What took you so long?” she asked guiding Harry into the kitchen to hurry him along. The other two followed not wanting Lily to get more upset then she already was.

“We didn’t want to look alike today, but we had to keep changing, because every time we came out of our rooms we were dressed alike. Finally I said ‘let me dress and then I’ll come to you and you dress different’ and it worked. Sorry Mum,” Harry said self-consciously, it was true after dressing the same way for most of the years they still hadn’t got into the separate mind set. One of the pitfalls of the bond.

“Well I guess that makes sense, still you guys should have figured it out earlier. Why didn’t you just do your twin thing and think it to each other?” then she noticed their embarrassed looks and sighed, “Oh, come on let’s eat.” She didn’t even ask James what took him so long, he probably had his heart set on a shirt he couldn’t find.
They had a quick breakfast of tea and pastries; there would be food where they were going so they didn’t fill up. At 8:30 a.m. people started arriving. When everyone was gathered, they made sure everyone was dressed appropriately, slathered in sunblock and that they had non-magical money and knew how to use it. Wands were to be left in purses or backpacks. They had been going to make them leave the wands behind, but there was too much protest.

Everyone chattered excitedly as they exited the manor and got into the bus that the Potters had rented for the day. The driver was a Muggle-born and was tickled to be driving such a large group of wizards. Plus, he was paid for the day and could enjoy the park. After many comments on how much more comfortable the seats in this bus were compared to the Knight Bus, everyone finally settled. Though there were complaints that it was much slower.

When they arrived at the Park the wizard-raised were in awe. They eyed the large crowd of non-magical people. There were more Muggles here than there had been wizards at the Quidditch World Cup, well that’s what it looked like anyway. Where did they all come from? Lily assured them that this was not a special event that it was a weekend and this was the normal summer crowd for the Park. She also told them that this was a small fraction of people compared to the population of Britain. After a bit more on that discussion, they all stood as a group off to the side of the ticket booth while James and Lily counted heads.

“Okay, we have sixteen adults, five over twelve and eighteen under, so that’s thirty-nine all together.” James counted and started going through his wallet for his credit card, which he had set up during the years the boys couldn’t go into the wizarding areas. “Everyone stay here and stay together. Try and stick with Remus or Sirius, they’ve been here before.” And he and Lily went to get the tickets, they had called ahead to get the special rates.

When they brought them back they noted that the group had splintered into smaller groups. So the boys and their godfathers must have told them there were different themes to the park. The more adventurous people were with Sirius and the less hardy (mostly the woman and kids) were with Remus. There was a third group, mostly of teens and pre-teens, that James would take around. Even though the boys had been here before they wanted to have an adult with them. Lily went with Remus.

“Okay, here are your tickets. If you want food; Lily, I, Remus and Sirius have the money for that. If you want to play a game or buy a souvenir then you will have to pay for it yourselves. Ask one of us if you don’t remember how to use the money. We’ll meet at the map in the front at closing time. There are rest areas for those who for some reason get bored. If you splinter off from your group and get lost there are park employees that will take you to an area where they can call out to the park for us to find you, ask them for help. Try not to do that, if you must put a leashing spell on the kids, now, it’s easier,” James said as he handed out tickets. “Do not use your wands on anything; you’ll put the whole park in danger if you start casting spells. That’s why one of us will be with you at all times, in case of emergency. Believe me when I say you’ll have a good time without magic.”

The crowd grumbled a bit, but then looked at the wonder of the park and conceded the point. It did look fun. They took the tickets and went inside the park. Many could be heard to ask if it was magic and were informed that no it wasn’t, just good ole Muggle technology. They looked at the map and decided where they wanted to go. Remus’ group went to the zoo first; they’d go to the kiddie rides when they were through there. Sirius’ group went straight to the Transylvania area, to ride the roller coaster. While James’ group decided to start with the Market Square and work their way up.

Harry, Gary, Susan, Tracey and Daphne decided to stick together, though they didn’t part from their group, they just were off to the back so they could take in the sights better. They were getting a kick out of the other teens faces. Astoria went with Remus’ group to the zoo, she wasn’t a thrill seeker.
“So what do you think, Daphne?” Harry asked the blonde girl, who was dressing similar to him in tan shorts and a green top.

“This is wonderful, to think all of this and no magic. Are you sure the rides are safe? All that metal and noise makes me think they will break down any minute,” she asked giving a wary eye to the merry-go-round. Tracey just grinned at her friend, she’d been before and tried to explain it all to her, but Daphne didn’t believe it.

“Yeah, these rides have been operating for years. They make sure they’re safe every night,” Harry answered.

“I think they look like fun,” Susan said. She was also dressed in shorts and top, but hers were in shades of pink. You could tell neither girl got out in the sun very often as they both had pale white legs. Tracey’s on the other hand had a light tan. “Let’s go on the merry-go-round, Gary,” Susan said turning to the twin on the left of her with big pleading blue eyes.

“Sure,” Gary said with a blush and took her hand and went to his dad to let him know where they’d be.

“Do you think those two will ever get together?” Daphne asked her cheeks also dusted with a blush. Though it was very faint and could be put off to the heat. Her Ice Queen persona, which she used in Slytherin, was nowhere to be seen. She only used that personality in school to protect her and Tracey from the bullies and never around the friends she had known grown up with.

Tracey just grinned and decided to make herself scarce and joined the other teens to help with the guiding, then maybe her friend could talk to her crush.

“Aren’t we a little young to worry about that?” Harry replied quizzically, looking to the two who were now getting in line for the ride.

“Well, you do know girls mature faster than boys. I think Susan has her sights set on your brother,” Daphne said also looking at the couple. And then wondered where Tracey went. She spotted her getting money for some food and turned back to Harry.

“Yes, I know, but I don’t think that we, Gary and I, are quite ready to be dating yet. Besides, we have the Dark Wanker out there still. Maybe, in a few years,” Harry said his cheeks now tinted pink, running his hand through his ever messy hair.

“Well, how about you and me stay close to one another, in a non-date way, today and you can see how you feel being around a girl?” the blond girl said slyly, taking a side-long peek at the embarrassed dark haired boy next to her.

Harry shuffled his feet and rubbed his head some more. He knew this would happen someday, but thought it would be years from now. He never really gave thought to having a girlfriend. Daphne was sure cute enough and it might be fun.

“Sure, we can give it a try,” he answered. And that’s what they did; Harry even won her a stuffed panda in the games booth, which earned him a hug and a kiss on the cheek. She kept that panda the rest of her life and considered it his first token of love. Girls are weird like that.

Meanwhile with Gary and Susan

Susan wasn’t quite as subtle as Daphne; she took Gary’s hand and said, “Today you and me are keeping each other company. You will be staying by my side and going on all the rides with me,” she announced in a voice that stated there would be no argument.
“I am?” Gary asked then looked at her determined face and nodded his head and reiterated, “I am.” He like Harry didn’t think he would be dating girls until much later. Their dad had given them The Talk before they went to Hogwarts, but told them they had plenty of time and not to worry about all that. Their mum had told them that females weren’t quite that patient. Now he could see his mum was right.

“Don’t worry, Gary, we’re just friends who are enjoying each other’s company. My aunt won’t let me date until I am at least thirteen,” Susan said with a giggle, while she liked Gary what she stated was true. Besides, the poor boy looked terrified.

Gary sighed with relief and enjoyed the rest of the ride. He and Susan did keep each other company the rest of the day, but made sure they interacted with all the kids. They didn’t want anyone to think they were being left out.

Hphphp

James looked at his sons and girls accompanying them and smiled. ‘Lily will get a kick out of this development.’ And with that thought he turned his attention to the rest of his group, taking pictures and handing out money for food.

The rest of the day was wonderful, no one got lost (not too far anyway), no one used magic (though there were a few close calls, but the Marauders stopped them) and everyone one had a great time. It was an exhausted, but excited group that went home that night.

“Do you think everyone had a good time,” Lily asked as they were settling in one of the sitting rooms.

“I think they did,” James answered cuddling up to his wife and putting his feet on the coffee table. Which Lily joined him, since both of their feet were achy. They had to do this again in a few weeks with the birthday boys and the Mutineers.

“I saw the boys on dates today,” James said with a chuckle, after a few minutes of comfortable silence.

“You didn’t,” Lily said with a giggle. “Harry told me firmly that it was a non-date. That he was too young to be dating. I agreed with him,” she said giggling again and leaning back against James chest.

“Darn, I didn’t win the bet. I was hoping they’d take after me and find their true love when they were young,” he said relaxing into the back of the couch trying not to let his eyes close.

“Silly man, they’re too young. Maybe next year they’ll start thinking about dating, but even then it’ll be mild. Like blushing a lot and hand holding, maybe a kiss on the cheek. Quit trying to push them,” Lily said also trying to keep her eyes open.

James kissed the top of her head and nodded sleepily into her hair. “Yes dear, whatever you say.”

The two sat in silence and soon fell in to a comfortable sleep.

Meanwhile the boys were thinking

Gary was pondering the day. Susan had been surprisingly good company. She had wanted to go on all the same rides he did. He didn’t think that girls would do that. Most of the girls they had taken to the park had stuck with the merry-go-round and other simple rides, but not Susan. No, she wanted to go on the rollercoaster and other thrilling rides. Maybe, girls weren’t so bad after all, but did she have to keep holding his hand.
Harry was thinking as well. He had a good time with Daphne, she didn’t want to go on all the rides, but that was okay. He enjoyed playing the games and taking in the shows. They pretty much kept their distance without leaving each other’s company. But there was no hand holding and except for the hug and quick peck on the cheek he got for the panda, they really didn’t touch one another. So he didn’t understand why he blushed the whole day.

Soon the two boys drifted off to sleep with Pandora’s voice echoing in the air, giving them sweet dreams of future relationships.
Will You Stand By Me?

AN: Thanks to my beta, darrelldeam, for going over this for me. All mistakes left are my own, especially since I have a bad habit of adding things and not sending it back to him.

Disclaimer: I don't own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belongs to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her.

Hphphp

August 3, 1992

Harry and Gary had called a special meeting of all the Mutineers. Harry had gotten a strange visit from a house elf, named Dobby, on the night of his birthday. Dobby had warned Harry not to return to Hogwarts, he said bad things were going to happen and that Harry was in danger. So the boys called a meeting. It was going to be with all the kids and adults.

They decided to have the talk outside, where everyone would fit. The only families not invited were the Weasleys and the Finnegans. The Dunbars, the Jamesons and the Jacksons were invited as long as they took an oath that what was discussed would stay private. They agreed that if it was to protect their children they would hear the Potters out and do it just this once, but if it didn’t work they would pull their children from the group.

Everyone sat at a large conjured round table, tea services were scattered about every third person or so. The kids sat with their parents and everyone was talking loudly, catching up on what they’d been doing over the summer.

When James stood and called out, “Can I have everyone’s attention, please?” The crowd went silent and all heads turned to James. “Thank you for coming on such short notice. Everyone here took a small vow that this meeting will be kept here and not talked about outside of anyone at this table, even the children. Now Harry has something to say.” And he indicated his son, who stood and shuffled his feet a little as all heads turned to him.

“I was going to bed the night of my birthday. When I got to my room there was a house elf bouncing on my bed. I don’t know who he belongs to, but his name is Dobby.”

Natalie Greengrass stood to be heard, “That’s the Malfoys elf. Why would he be here, you guys aren’t affiliated with them?” and she sat and waited for the answer.

“He said he came to warn me that something was going to happen at Hogwarts this year. Something bad and dangerous. He didn’t want me to go back, so I’m thinking it has to do with me, but he did indicate that the whole school would be in danger. Now we at least know to look out for anything Malfoy Sr. does,” Harry said nodding his head in thanks for that important piece of information. “I don’t want to blame a kid for anything, but Mr. Malfoy might give or say something to his son, so watch him as well.” He regained his seat and let the adults take over.

Everyone got a thoughtful look on their face. The Malfoys had been playing the good card lately. The adult Malfoys had been standing up for the Potters and making charitable contributions. With this warning though everyone now knew they were blowing hot air.

“Why did he come to you? How did he know you’d be in danger?” Aric Davis asked. They had all been told that no one knew who survived the Killing Curse that night. This information confirmed a
lot of the group’s belief that it was Harry.

“The Potter elves must have spread the word. They think it’s me who survived,” Harry answered from his seat with a shrug. He knew the elves knew when he and Gary were born, but this was all the explanation he was willing to give at this time.

“We need to tell Dumbledore there is danger to the children, it is only right, he is in charge of the school after all,” Cherry Dunbar said harshly.

“We already told him that we received warning that something was going to happen at the school. It was the first thing we did. We may not trust Dumbledore with our family, but like you said he is in charge of the school,” Lily said compliantly.

“Oh,” was all Cherry said as she sat down her cheeks a little pink. When it came to the Headmaster it was always hard to tell how the Potters would react.

“Yes,” James said standing, “that was not the part we wanted to keep a secret. No, what we are about to suggest is what we want made you take the vow for. We’ve been training the boys in wandless defensive magic since they were toddlers. They want to teach the Mutineers more than what they already know. They want to teach them to defend themselves. We don’t want that getting out. It’ll only hurt them if the press were to get ahold of it, people will think we’re trying to raise a children’s army or some stupid thing like that. When all we want to do is give them a fighting chance to get away from an enemy, and that’s all the boys will be teaching— defense.”

The kids broke out in excited whispers, those that were especially good at wandless magic where extra happy. The parents were a little more cautious, they were talking among themselves and their kids, weighing the pros and cons about this new suggestion. Most were all for it, the Potters hadn’t lead them wrong yet. There were a few families that weren’t quite sure their children were ready for such a task.

“How will you get away with teaching the whole group under the Headmasters nose?” Wayne Sr. asked above the noise, which cause everyone to quiet down a little.

“That’s the beauty of it, we won’t,” Sirius said with a huge smile on his face. This caused the noise to rise again as questions were being tossed in confused voices.

James held his hands up for silence and after a minute it was granted. “Thanks Padfoot, for the confusion,” he mock scolded his friend and then turned his attention back to the group. “Harry and Gary already know what needs to be taught. What we’re planning on doing is drawing numbers, the highest number will be taught by them, they in turn will teach the next set of numbers and so on. No more than six students at a time will be grouped up. That way there’s less chance of being caught. Most of you know where there are classrooms that are never used, so take whoever you’re teaching to one of those rooms and do your training in there.”

“That is a damn good idea,” Frank said smiling, he too was always happy to get one across Dumbledore. Alice and Neville nodded next to him in agreement.

“What I don’t understand is why we can’t tell Dumbledore?” Cherry asked, while she took the vow she still was a firm supporter of the Headmaster.

“Look,” Lily answered standing next to her husband and putting a hand on his arm so he wouldn’t start snapping at the poor woman, “we understand that Dumbledore is a good man, but he has tried to stop this group from meeting every since we formed. He doesn’t like that he’s not in control, he never will. To him, he’s the only one to lead the fight for the light. We don’t agree. We feel that
everyone should have a chance at fighting and protecting themselves on their own terms. To think for themselves and not mindlessly follow anyone—not just him. If you disagree then you can tell your children not to participate, but we have been friends for many years and wanted to offer you this opportunity.”

“Yes,” James said, much calmer now, “we have shown time and time again that we consider all of you at this table—friends.”

Many nodded, if there was one thing that could be said about the Potters they did want equality among everyone they considered friends. Even after the Mutineers were split they still invited everyone to the parties and outings, no one was left out of the festivities. The Weasleys and the Finnegans withdrew their families on their own prejudice.

After ten minutes of debating, they all agreed with various degrees of eagerness or reluctance, but in the end it was good for the children.

“Okay,” James said standing once again, “we, the adults, are going to set up the timetable. The kids are going to go off and have a private meeting.” And with that the kids stood and with hugs and kisses to their parents they went to the tree line and settled into a rough circle. Harry and Gary were carrying a large stack of small books.

When they all settled the twins started handing out the books. “We need you to read this. It’s very important to what we have to tell you. Remember, this goes with the vow we made you take when you got here today,” Harry said and you could tell he was extremely nervous. The kids looked at each other; it was rare that anything would make one of the Potter twins jumpy.

There were looks of confusion and understanding on the faces of the kids. Some of the smarter ones got it right away. The book was Lily’s research on parselmouths. Soon the small books were read and some just laid them in their laps, others put them to the side. They all held their breathes to hear what the twins would have to say.

“I can see some of you understand why we wanted you to read this. For those of you that don’t get it… well... ummm, you see… I am a parselmouth,” Harry whispered, and talking started all at once. Some were excited; others were scared, even with what they just read. Gary was sitting by his brother and getting angrier by the minute. Finally he snapped.

“Quiet,” he yelled as he stood and pulled Harry up with him looking menacing at his group of friends, “I am ashamed of you,” he spat. “You’ve known us for how long? Do you really think that Harry would be evil? After all he has done for you and everyone in he has ever come across.” Many looked ashamed; the ones that hadn’t raised their voices stood and went to the twins’ side. Daphne took Harry’s other hand and glared at the group.

“That is just as bad as saying all Slytherins are Dark,” she defended her friend.

Luna looked at the group and dreamily said, “Did the nargles get you? I can give you something to make them go away?” causing a few snickers.

“Why do you think we gave you these books? Did you even read them? We don’t know how Harry became a parselmouth, but I will stand by his side and fight anyone who calls him evil,” Gary defended his brother and all you had to do was look at his face and stance to know every word he said was true.

Most of the more studious readers stood and went to Harry’s side. They did read the book and understood what the twins were trying to get across to them. Besides, they did know these guys and
every move they ever made was for the good of the people. Even keeping things from Dumbledore.

“What about Slytherin and Voldemort?” Faye Dunbar asked defiantly, she didn’t like that she had taken a vow not to discuss what went on at the Potter manor today.

“There is good and bad in everything. We’ve been trying to teach you this since we started this group. You know the man who was caught in our dorm?” Gary waited for her to nod. “He was a Gryffindor, and one of my dad’s best friends. He was also a Death Eater and the one to betray us to Voldemort. That is an evil man, coming from a place everyone thought no evil could come from.”

“These men and women in this book are all good or neutral people. Most of them are healers or potion gatherers. They never harmed anyone, the one thing they have in common is they are all parsemouths,” Harry said shyly, he knew it would happen and he knew this might split the group further, but Sally had warned him that keeping the secret any longer could be worse.

“Harry?” Daphne asked bringing his attention to her, “Why didn’t you tell us sooner? I was not upset that you are a parselmouth. I was upset you kept secrets.” Many nodded with that statement.

“I was scared,” Harry said simply.

“And judging from the reaction of all of you, he had every right to be scared,” Gary defended his brother yet again, still glaring in defiance at the ones not standing by their side.

Harry looked up and with pleading eyes looked at the ones in front of him. “This will get out one day. There is no stopping that. When it does, will you stand by me?” tears were dripping down his face, he thought these people were his friends.

“We have always stood by each other in this group. When the bullies picked on Luna for being different, we stood by her. When they picked on anyone in this group, we stood together. Why would this be any different?” Gary asked pulling Luna from behind him and hugging her to his side. Neville gave the younger girl a one-armed hug. She just smiled that vacant smile of hers.

More kids stood and went to Harry’s side; they apologized and patted him in the back in support. Only two kids were still unsure.

“What can we do to get you to stand by our side, as we would stand by yours?” Harry asked his face clear of tears, but not the hurt.

“I don’t know,” Faye confessed, torn between something she always believed and standing by her friend who had always backed her when she needed it.

“Why do you believe parsemouths are evil?” Gary tried a different tactic.

“My mum, she said anyone who can talk to animals is evil,” the young girl confessed.

“And you, Leanne? What makes you think that?” Gary asked, taking up the role of spokesperson, so his brother could calm down more.

“I don’t know, the bible said snakes are evil,” she said shocking everyone. Christianity was something they all heard about, but they didn’t know there were any in the group.

“It says the same about witches,” Gary countered.

“I know,” Leanne said hanging her head.
“I won’t ask you to go against your beliefs, I wish we had known sooner, and then we would not have told you this and caused you confliction. All we ask is you don’t tell anyone,” Gary said sadly.

“If Harry shows me that he will use this language for good, I will stand by him,” Leanne said raising her head and looking at the torn young man she called friend.

“How can I do that? You only have my word on what I am saying to a snake,” Harry asked looking the girl right in the eye. “If you want I can take a vow right now that states I will never turn evil. That way if I do go Dark I will lose my magic and can’t do anything against the people,” he offered much to the protest of the rest of the group, the loudest being Gary. “But,” he said over the noise, “if you make me do that, we will never be as close as we were. None of this group will trust you with their secrets, since you don’t trust us.”

Leanne and Faye hung their heads again. Many emotions crossed their faces as they thought about losing this large group of friends. They had been friends for many years, laughing, playing and learning. They knew that had they not been friends with the Potters and by extension the rest of the Mutineers they never would have learned as much as they did.

“Can we think about it?” Faye asked tentatively.

“Of course,” Harry said giving them a small smile of encouragement. “Remember your vow, no one can know.”

The two girls nodded their heads and the group sat down once again. Daphne staying by Harry’s side, though she wasn’t holding his hand anymore.

“Now that the heavy stuff is out of the way,” Gary said changing the subject as he cast a wandless spell to retrieve the books. There was no point in leaving them laying around, not yet anyway. “We need to talk about what Dobby told Harry.”

“Did he tell you what danger?” Neville asked from his seat to Gary’s right.

“No, he just said great danger was going to be at Hogwarts,” Harry answered.

“Well that’s extremely unhelpful,” Wayne Jr. huffed. “How are we supposed to be on the lookout if we don’t know what we’re looking for?”

“Well, we do have one secret weapon,” Harry said with a small smile, still hurting from the previous discussion. “You know all the ghosts that showed up on Halloween?” nods were seen around the group. “They’re spies.” His grin widened and more smiles broke out among the children.

“That’s bloody awesome,” Terry said with a huge grin on his face, he had made friends with some of those ghosts; they were helpful in history studies.

Many others voiced their agreement.

“So if something were to happen that we can’t explain then we tell a ghost and they will go looking after hours to see what they can find? Do we tell a professor?” Faye asked shyly, not wanting people to glare at her again, but still she was all for telling Dumbledore.

“Yes, of course we tell one,” Harry said looking straight at her. “Anything that protects the students should be shared immediately with one of the staff.”

“We would never hide something like that,” Gary said a little more firmly. He was not going to forgive as quickly as his brother.
The maps were not discussed as not everyone had one, but the mirrors were incorporated into their plans. They reminded everyone of the mirrors in the classrooms and stated that if they saw anything unusual then they should use them to inform the staff right away. This group would be used as a sort of neighborhood watch. Not getting involved in a fight unless they had to, just staying alert and sounding an alarm if they see something.

All and all the meetings went well, but for the dispute on Harry’s parselmouth ability. But the talks after did a lot to ease the minds of the two girls who were still in conflict. After the Mutineers and their parents left the Potters and the Marauders gathered in one of the sitting rooms.

“So, how did it go?” Lily asked Harry after they all settled in one big family cuddle on the largest couch. The uncles on the couch opposite.

“As well as could be expected, I guess,” Harry said getting comfort from his dads hug.

“So not all then?” James asked pulling his son into a tighter hug. He knew well how people would react.

“Faye and Leanne,” Gary said spitefully, “I knew we should have kept this to the pro-security group. I don’t understand why you had to tell everyone.”

“If… no… when this gets out we need as many people as we can get to stand by our side,” Harry said once again. It was something they argued about before.

“Will we be telling the adults?” Sirius asked.

Lily thought for a moment, they had had this discussion in the past and decided to tell the kids first as they were more easily convinced of something. “I think we should only tell some of them at first. I think it might have been a mistake to tell an entire group all at once. We should have sounded out the response first.”

“I disagree,” Remus said speaking up. “We tried that when we outed me as a werewolf to the group. If we had told everyone at once then the group mentality would have swayed more at once. As it was there were a lot of arguments that never would’ve happened to get everyone on our side. It took months to get everyone to understand that I’m not a Dark creature. Some of them still look weirdly at me.”

“Remus it right,” Sirius said supporting his friend, he too remembered all the quarrelling. “This way there are only two of the kids that need to be talked around or split from the group.”

They talked about it some more and it was agreed that when the kids went back to school the Potters would call the parents together and let them know.
A New Member —Kinda

AN: Thanks to my beta, darrelldeam, for going over this for me. All mistakes left are my own, especially since I have a bad habit of adding things and not sending it back to him.

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Hphphp

August 22, 1992

It was time to go to Diagon Alley and get school supplies; they went as a group again. Everyone decided to meet up at the Leaky Cauldron, instead of the Potter home. They did warn the shop owners that they would be descending on them once again. Since only four of the Mutineers needed wands (Luna, Astoria, Spencer and Ellie) they split so the first years would go there first. While everyone else had breakfast at the Cauldron, which consisted of; eggs, rashers of bacon, sausage, fried bread and beans. Then the first years would intermingle with the second years.

They all missed having the Weasleys with them. Luna was especially upset that Molly had pulled Ginny away from the group. The Potter boys still heard from the Weasley twins, they wrote on the sly using Muggle mail. Ginny wasn’t allowed to go to the village near their home alone, so they passed her notes with their letters. The Potters had set up a P.O. Box just for the Muggle-borns the boys had met during their first year.

After the first years got their wands they split up into groups of five or six. The Greengrass girls, Luna, Harry and Dean were in one group. Astoria kept teasing Harry and Daphne about being girlfriend and boyfriend, even though they weren’t doing anything. Causing the small group to laugh and Harry and Daphne to blush, it didn’t make them separate though. Lily, who was one of the chaperones, just laughed along with the rest.

“Don’t worry, sweetie, it’s what little sisters do. I used to do it all the time to Petunia,” she said patting Harry on the shoulder, a wistful look in her green eyes as she remembered the good times she had with her sister, before they found out she was a witch. Everything changed that day in the park when she met Severus. Oh, how her sister hated her after that and nothing she said or tried changed that. She shuddered at the thought that Dumbledore had wanted to put this young man with her spiteful sister.

This group was getting robes at the moment. They were sharing the shop with the Malfoys. Draco had been surprisingly polite. He still picked on non-purebloods and got into plenty of fights with Ron about Seamus and Hermione, but never around the Potters.

“Ah, Lily Potter, how are you this fine day?” Lucius asked tipping into a small bow.

“Lucius,” Lily replied neutrally, her head bobbed and her face was blank. “We’re fine. Yourself?” The rest of the group stood back and watched, trying not to draw attention to themselves. They surrounded Dean and his mum, keeping them in the middle of the group.

Lucius looked over the assembled people and though his nose wrinkled, he kept his opinion to himself. “We are well. Doing a bit of remodeling of the Manor, but nothing drastic,” he said airily, waving his hand, indicating it was nothing important.
“I’m sure. Say, Lucius, I hear you have a house elf named Dobby, who gives you a bit of a bother. Do you want to sell him to us? It would be a late birthday present to our boy hero,” she asked with a sudden inspiration.

“Dobby, you say. Yes, well he is a bit high-strung. How did you hear about him?”

“Oh, one of our elves was talking about the differences between house elf personalities to one of the Muggle-borns at the house and Dobby’s name came up. They think he is a bad elf, we wanted to see if we could, you know… tame him,” she said pulling the first thing she thought of that would let the man think Dobby wouldn’t be going into an ideal situation.

“Tell you what, as a token of my appreciation on that little project you are doing for me, I will gift him to your twins,” Lucius stated as if he was giving away the Crown Jewels.

Lily forced a look of excitement on to her face. “Would you really? That would be wonderful and very generous of you. I know house elves are hard to train properly. It will give the boys a sense of responsibility. Can you do so now?” the rest of her group looked at her like she had lost her mind. Only Harry was laughing inside.

“Of course,” the blonde man said through his teeth, not really wanting to do it publicly, but then again it might help his image. His son looked on with an air of confusion. “Dobby.”

“Master calls for Dobby?” the little elf appeared in a worn raggedy pillowcase, he bowed quickly to his horrid Master.

“I am releasing your bond from me to the Potter twins. You are now theirs.” A blue light surrounded Lucius and Dobby, and then the light moved from the adult blonde to Harry. Whose eyes got wide and a smile broke out on his face.

Dobby bounced in place, his whole demeanor changed from subservient to joyful confidence. “Dobby is belonging to the Great…”

“Dobby,” Harry yelled, hopefully fast enough, though he did see a conniving glint in Mr. Malfoy’s eyes, along with a bit of confusion. “Go to the Manor and talk to Tilly about your duties,” he commanded firmly, wanting to keep up the ruse of training the excitable house elf.

“Yes sir, Master Harry Potter, sir.” And with that the elf popped away.

“That was well done, Mr. Potter, though you should have added a bit of self-punishment,” Lucius drawled. “Come, Draco, we are finished here. Mrs. Potter, until we meet again.” And with a nodding of heads they left.

The whole group relaxed until, “How could you do that?” came a shrill voice of a bushy headed second year they all knew well. No one had seen the Grangers enter with the Weasleys.

“How could we do what? Rescue an abused house elf? Rather easy, I’d say,” Harry answered back, rubbing the back of his head, not really sure what had upset this girl.

“That is slavery,” Hermione yelled, stamping her foot, her parents were in shock behind her. All the while Arthur whispered the real reason why house elves needed to be bonded to wizards hurriedly in their ears.

“No it’s not. Where did you get that idea from?” Daphne defended the Potters actions. She knew this was one of the reasons Muggle-borns were looked down on. They always jumped to conclusions.
“How can it not be?” Hermione asked venomously, turning her anger to Daphne. Daphne just tightened her jaw and stood her ground.

“How Hermione,” Harry said trying to stop the argument before it escalated even more, “you’re a smart girl. Have you even read about house elves? They are not human, you know. For all you know you’re accusing someone of doing something evil, when it is actually saving a life. I, for one, think you’d better do a bit more studying on it before you make wild assumptions,” he said overly polite, he never understood why Gary liked this studious, bossy person. Every time he ever interacted with her, she would be making despairing remarks about him and the entire wizarding world. Plus, she never listened to explanations.

“Hermione Jean Granger, you stop this instant. I am ashamed of you, fighting in public,” the woman who could only be her mother snapped. She had just mulled over what Mr. Weasley was trying to explain and decided to get books on all magical beings so something like this wouldn’t happen again. Hermione hung her head, but you could tell this argument was not over, by the steel glint in her eyes.

“I think, we should go to the books store, since this shop appears to be full right now,” Mr. Granger said as he guided his family out the door. The Weasleys followed, Arthur mouthing apologies behind Molly’s back. Lily winked at him, she felt sorry for that hen pecked man.

Madam Malkin seeing the excitement was over herded the children to the stools to get their measurements. She was happy, because she now had gossip.

“What was that all about,” Dean asked, he never doubted for a minute that the Potters were doing something well-intentioned, they always did.

“I’ll explain everything later,” Harry offered as he stepped up onto a stool, the tape measure zooming around his body.

“Don’t worry, Dean, it was all for a good reason,” Daphne said in support as she waited her turn.

“That poor, poor girl, her head is surrounded by nargles,” Luna added her two Knuts worth. She had no idea who Hermione was.

“You might be right about that,” Astoria said patting Luna’s arm. Luna was hardly ever wrong when it came to people.

**Gary’s group at the book store**

“Oh my, would you look at this crowd,” Frank said leading his gang of kids in to Flourish and Blott’s. There was a line of middle aged women outside the store; they stretched down the street almost to the ice cream parlour. “I wonder what’s going on here.”

“It looks like that ponce, Lockhart, is signing books today,” James said pointing at a sign with said ponce in all his life-size glory.

A collective groan was heard. They all wondered why this man’s books were on the school list. Having read the ones in the Potter Manor, they felt they were nothing but trash. Some cottoned on to why early, but they didn’t want to believe it.

“Come on, let’s just get our books and leave,” Neville suggested, going around the line of overly perfumed women.

“Yeah,” Gary agreed. The less time they spent here, the better off they’d be. “We’ll get everyone’s so they don’t have to come here. They can pay us back later.” He looked to his father for
confirmation and received a nod in return.

So Gary, Neville, Susan, Spencer and Tracey split up and gathered books for everyone, each decided on which subject they would pick up. It was finalized they would collect the subject they were best at, except Spencer who would get all the first year books, sans Defense. James went with Spencer to help the first year out.

Gary had the worst of it, since he had to get the Defense books and there were seven of this idiot man’s books and he had to buy them for every Mutineer. Thank, Merlin, for bottomless baskets. He was making his way to the counter to pay when he was grabbed from behind, he held on to his basket by sheer luck.

“Merlin’s beard, it’s Gary Potter;” came an overly cheerful voice. When Gary turned he saw Gilderoy Lockhart, with his stupid over-styled blonde hair and way to shiny white teeth, holding him.

“Get off me, you git,” Gary said stamping on the man’s foot causing him to jump up and down in place for a minute, which Gary used to make his escape. He subtly cast a wandless flatulent spell and giggled when a loud ‘pfffttttt’ filled the air. He paid for his books while Lockhart stuttered out apologies.

“Gary, are you alright?” James said, having come in just in time to see Gary defend himself. His eyes were sparkling with mirth at the fart that had rendered from the ponce’s arse. He knew what his son had done.

“Yeah, Dad. I got all the Defense books, can we leave now?” Gary said as he lifted the very large, feather weight bag to show he was done.

“Best wait for everyone else. Why don’t you stand by the door and we’ll meet you there. That way you can stay away from the commotion at the front and that ponce won’t see you again,” his dad suggested, ruffling his hair.

Gary nodded and went to the front of the store; he leaned against the wall between the door and the display window, chuckling at all the nonsense the women were spouting. Really, these people believed this over-stuffed peacock did all these things. He shook his head and waited.

He had been standing there for five minutes when an argument broke out between Mr. Weasley and Mr. Malfoy. That argument turned into a small fight. Gary was tempted to go and show his support, when Hagrid broke the men up and ushered Mr. Weasley and his group out the door. No one noticed the additional book in Ginny’s cauldron.

“I wonder what that was all about,” Neville said as he joined Gary by the door. He had had to gather all the Herbology books. It was surprising that Gary was done earliest, but then again all his books were in one place, since every year had been assigned the same books.

“Don’t know,” the dark haired boy said with a shrug, “but I hope Mr. Weasley popped him a good one.”

“Yeah.”

The two friends talked about their summers and the new school year. One by one the rest joined them, until at last James and Spencer were finished. They went to join the rest of their crowd to let them know they got all the books. Soon a lunch, of fish and chip or kidney pie, was eaten, much to the pleasure of Tom the barman, and everyone went home happy.
As soon as Harry exited the Floo, he was accosted by a very happy house elf. Who was now dressed in a clean pillowcase.

“Harry Potter sir, Dobby is most excited to be bonded to the Great Harry Potter,” said the being attached to Harry’s leg.

“Something you want to tell me, Harry?” James asked with an accusing tone, though you could see the mischief in his eyes.

“It wasn’t me, it was Mum,” Harry said in defense, trying to unwrap Dobby from his legs.

James looked at Lily, who was giggling so hard she was bent in half. She raised her hand and tried to get herself under control. A few minutes and many deep breaths later she finally had enough air to answer.

“It was a spur of the moment thing,” she said, still wiping the mirthful tears from her eyes. “Lucius was in the robe shop and it just hit me that we could question Dobby about his warning if we owned him. So I tricked him into giving him to us… well the twins.”

“That was very sneaky, my beautiful, intelligent wife,” James said and then he planted a kiss on said wife.

“Ewww, stop that,” came twin voices.

“Shut it,” James said turning to his blushing sons.

“Let’s go into the sitting room,” Lily suggested grabbing James’ hand and leading the way. “Dobby, join us.”

“Yes, Mistress Potter, ma’am.”

After they settled on to a couch, facing the still standing house elf, who looked very nervous. “Dobby, sit on that chair there,” James ordered pointing to a chair at the side of the couch.

“Yous is asking Dobby to sit as an equal?” the little elf squeaked, pulling his ear in confusion. “No one has ever asked Dobby to sit.” Tears started to form in those huge bulbous eyes.

“Well, you’re part of the Potter family now and we don’t stand on ceremony when we are not in public. I want to ask you a few questions and then you can attend your duties. I would rather you sit while I ask,” James explained in a firm voice.

“Yes, sir, Master Potter sir,” Dobby said as he tentatively sat on the chair indicated, expecting to be punished for following the order.

“Listen,” Harry said kindly, “we don’t punish our elves, but we do know that you need to be kept busy. And that you need direct orders to do something, so if Dad comes off a bit harsh it’s because he wants to make sure you understand the order. Okay?”

James had been raised that house elves were indentured servants, and you treated them as such. Lily had calmed his attitude down a lot, but he was still very firm in his orders.

“Yes, sir, Master Harry Potter sir.”

“Okay, Dobby, what can you tell us about the danger that will be coming to Hogwarts this year? We’re assuming that it has something to do with Lucius,” Lily asked getting to the heart of the
“Ah, ma’am, Dobby is not knowing much. Dobby is hearing the bad Master saying that he is going to be doing something to get rid of the Mudbloods. He is saying that there will be great danger. That is all Dobby knows, Mistress Lily Potter ma’am,” the elf answered, a bit more relaxed since there had been no orders for punishment.

“Why did you come and tell Harry? He is not a Muggle-born,” James asked leaning forward just a little grabbing the elf’s attention.

“Harry Potter is the greatest wizard of all times to the house elves. We remembers the bad times when the Dark Lord ruled. He did bad things to us and Harry Potter destroyed the bad Master’s Master. Dobby will always protect Harry Potter, so when he is hearing that bad things were going to happen at Hogwarts he did what he could to warn him,” Dobby explained pulling his ears at his past transgressions.

“Dobby, stop pulling your ears, you are not in trouble,” Harry ordered gently.

“Dobby, do you remember seeing anything that might be helpful?” Lily asked, “Any Dark object that Lucius would pay attention to when he was planning?”

Dobby thought for a minute and then his large eyes lit up. “Dobby is remembering a Dark book. The Dark Lord is giving this book to the bad Master. The bad Master is taking this book off the shelves when he is planning. Dobby remembers he brought this book to the Alley today,” Dobby said bouncing with exhilaration that he could help the Great Harry Potter and his family. Then he deflated. “Dobby cannot tell yous what the book looks like, only that it is dark leather and about this big,” he said making motions with his hands showing that the book would be smallish sized.

The Potters exchanged looks, it wasn’t much, but it was something. “Thank you Dobby, you’ve been very helpful. Go and see Tilly, she’ll tell you what the twins need,” James ordered, not knowing Harry had already given that order.

“Dobby is being knowings, Tilly is telling Dobby just what the Great Potter Twins is being needing,” Dobby said jumping down from the chair and with a bow to the family he popped away.

“I wonder how long it is going to take for his excitement to calm down,” Gary said smirking at his frustrated brother.

“Merlin, I hope it is soon. I never wanted a fan in the Manor, it has always been a safe haven for us,” Harry groaned leaning back on the couch, his eyes closed. “You’re just glad it’s not you, prat.” He blindly swiped at his twin, who ducked and punched Harry’s arm in retaliation. The two boys tussled on the couch until their parents stopped them.

“Don’t worry, Harry, I’ll speak with him,” James said patting the poor boy on the head as they got up to put the shopping away.

“Thanks, Dad,” was the rejoinder.

The Potters spent the rest of the day, laughing at the antics of their newest member, or just hiding in Harry’s case. Lily sent what they knew to the Headmaster, and the boys mirrored all the Mutineers to be on the lookout for strange books. They told Sally and she in turn warned the ghosts at Hogwarts.
A New Year Begins

AN: Thanks to my beta, darrelldeam, for going over this for me. All mistakes are my own.

AN: once again I would like to reiterate that electronic entertainment has been brought up to date. It is necessary for my plot in the education of the pure-bloods.

Disclaimer: I don’t own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belongs to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her.

Hphphp

A short narration

The train ride was uneventful, but for many more students joining the Mutineers in their carriage. Many of the neutral wizard-raised that had visited the Potter manor over the summer decided that it would be okay to hang out with this group. They and their parents had learned a lot about Muggles, and the computers went a long way in helping with that.

The Welcoming Feast went off without a hitch, except the many groans of the group when Lockhart was introduced as the DADA professor. Many felt that Dumbledore had lost his marbles. That aside it was a good feast.

Things didn’t go so well with the adults. The Potters and Maunders had called the parents together once again and made them take the same vow. The Dunbars and the Jamesons declined so were not told and they could only hope the kids wouldn’t tell their parents. The rest of the group took Harry’s parselmouth ability rather well; some of them already expected it. His giggling around any snake was kind of a giveaway. Lily’s research went a long way in helping others get over their innate fears. The group decided as a whole that if this ever got out then the book should be sold at the same kiosk that sold the crystals and mirrors.

The Mutineers were on the lookout for the book Dobby had warned about. No one had seen it yet, since Ginny was not part of the pro-security group, she was still undecided about going against her mum, she wasn’t told to watch for it. The Weasley twins were keeping an eye on her, she was acting different and they couldn’t tell why. The red headed girl looked like she wasn’t getting any sleep at night, but when asked she said she was ‘fine’. According to their maps so far she wasn’t going out of her dorm at night, so they were confused. Ron, on the other hand, didn’t see anything wrong with his sister and blew off their concerns. Luna was worried about her friend; Ginny was pulling away from everyone.

Luna, who was sorted into Ravenclaw, was picked on the first day she was in the common room. Those bullies soon found out that this atypical little girl was not friendless. When Padma, Harry and the other Mutineers stood firm at her side and informed them, quite plainly, they would retaliate. The bullies, seeing they were outnumbered, backed off.

Even with all the watching going on, classes and Quidditch practice life at Hogwarts was uneventful, except Lockhart making a fool of himself on a daily basis. It was a good thing the Mutineers had decided to learn on their own, the wandless lessons were going off without a hitch. The Mutineers figured they would teach the non-Mutineers defense at the very least. The upper-years would have to fend for themselves, unfortunately.

At the beginning of October both Potters tried out for their teams and were both taken on as Seekers.
Much to the relief of the Ravenclaw and Gryffindor team captains.

October 31, 1992

Gary, Neville and Dean were invited to Nearly Headless Nick’s Death Day party, after they tried to cheer him up. He had been declined to join the headless hunt once again, so they offered to show support to him at his party. Gary being hailed as the Boy-Who-Lived held some value, even with the castle ghosts. Being forewarned by the other ghosts what a death day party entailed, they made sure to visit the kitchens before they went. They also made sure to get permission from their Head of House before going. She was more than happy to give it and awarded points for standing up for the Gryffindor House ghost.

The party was held in one of the deeper dungeons, all of the ghosts of the castle were invited. The room was made of the same stone as the rest of the castle. It was dark down there, and the walls were wet, though not dripping. It was also very cold, as ghosts didn’t need to be warmed. The boys did their best not to complain about the party and endured the cold and dark for their friend. The rotten food at the tables on the wall almost made the boys lose their dinners, though they were glad they ate before coming.

Even Professor Watts was there and she regaled the boys with stories of her own death day. They met Moaning Myrtle and tried to keep her from, well —moaning. Gary even offered to dance with her, but Peeves came along and started teasing the poor girl until she wailed and flew away.

Sally was there, though only Gary and the ghosts could see her. She was watching the party, to make sure the kids were safe. She scared Peeves off after what he did to Myrtle. She was upset at the uppity ghosts who disrupted Nick’s speech and in one slicing movement of her hand she removed the string of dead flesh that held Nick’s head to his body. Everyone rejoiced and Nick in a fit of happiness declined the pretentious ghosts’ invitation to join the hunt that year.

It was getting on 10 p.m., which was when the party in the Great Hall would end and the boys were making their way to the dorms. Many of the castle ghosts joined them, wanting to make sure they got where they needed to be. When they got to the second floor, near Moaning Myrtle’s bathroom, they could hear the rest of the student body down the hall and turned to make their way towards them.

Gary stopped suddenly, and the other two bumped into him. “What did you stop for?” Dean asked rubbing his slightly injured nose.

Gary just pointed at the writing on the wall and the cat that hung from the light fixture. In red ink, well they hoped it was ink, were the words:

‘The Chamber of Secrets has been open. Enemies of the heir, beware.’

“Oh,” said Neville, “that’s not good. Do you think it has something to do with the book?” he asked in a shaky voice. The boys started backing up from the scene, making sure they didn’t touch anything.

“Yeah, it might,” Gary said. He turned to one the ghost that had followed them. “You need to tell a professor or the headmaster,” he said as they inched further away from the bathroom.

Professor Watts joined the boys and looked thoughtful, this was something she had learned about last year and was going to discuss it in future classes, but she decided the next class might be more pertinent. She whispered that the boys shouldn’t worry too much, as the ghosts would vouch for their whereabouts for the night.
The rest of the student body came across the three boys and stopped to stare at the words on the wall.

“I hope that’s ink,” someone said from the back. Heads nodded in agreement.

Filch came from behind the students and barked, “Why are you all standing in the middle of the hall?” then he saw Mrs. Norris hanging from the lamp and gave a strangled cry. “Who did this? Who did this to my cat?” he turned and saw Gary standing there and went to grab him. “You, you did this to Mrs. Norris!” he shouted and then he saw Harry standing next to his brother, “Or was it you? Why did you do this to my cat?”

“Don’t be stupid, you foolish old man,” snapped Professor Watts. “Gary was with me and all the ghosts in the castle the entire night,” she defended her student. “Well, except Myrtle, she left early.”

“And Harry was in the Great Hall,” chimed in Professor Flitwick. Many students nodded at these words.

“Argus,” Dumbledore said as he came on to the scene, “take Mrs. Norris down and we will adjourn elsewhere to see if we can understand what happened to her. Gary, Mr. Potter,” he said deliberately showing favoritism, “you two will join us.”

“I think not,” the diminutive Charms Professor said, “both these boys have firm alibies, you are not going to make scapegoats out of students by singling them out.” He stood firmly by the boys’ sides.

“That was not my intention at all,” the Headmaster said serenely, “I merely wanted to know what their thoughts were.”

“They are children, their thoughts are unimportant. We as adults should be handling this. Someone needs to call the Aurors. Remember Albus, you are still on probation,” Filius stood firm, the other professors, bar Snape, nodded their heads in agreement.

It was too late; rumors had already been started among the students. It was a good thing that the Mutineers had the best gossip mongers on their side. Parvati and Lavender were the best at squelching unwanted gossip. Already you could hear them defending the Potter twins. Other voices soon joined them.

The professors herded the students away to their dorms; mirrors were used well that night.

Sally joined Harry when he was talking with his twin mentally. “Call Gary on the mirror. I have news and it will be quicker this way.”

So Harry pulled out his mirror, activated the security and called his brother.

“What’s up, Sally?” Gary asked.

“Myrtle told me that she saw Ginny Weasley go into her bathroom tonight. Said she seemed possessed, and was carrying a book. She was the one to put the writing on the wall. I don’t want to tell a professor, yet and asked Myrtle to keep it to herself for now. She is just going to tell them it was a student, but she doesn’t know which one. I want you guys to see if you can get that book away from the poor girl. It is probably a horcrux,” she explained.

“If I see her first, I’ll summon it out of her bag, it might come to me, because of my own horcrux,” Harry said and then thought a moment. “If not, I’ll just bump into her and take it. I’m pretty good at
pick-pocketing, Sirius taught us well,” he added.

“If you can’t let me know, she still likes me better than you and she might give me the book if I ask,” Gary said thoughtfully, while Ginny wasn’t crushing like she was before, she still preferred Gary over Harry.

The three continued to make plans until the boys grew too tired to think. Sally held off lessons that night and let them sleep. After a quick mirror call to the parents they signed off with warnings of being careful and slept.

Gary missed Ginny the next morning, but Harry didn’t. He found he couldn’t summon the diary, so he sidled up to her on the pretense of asking if she was okay, which he really wanted to know, but used it to palm the book out of her bag. He slipped it into his own and left the Gryffindor table with words of encouragement to the younger girl.

On Monday, history class became the main topic of conversation once again and Gary was looking forward to the lesson. He went into the classroom and sat at his assigned seat, which was still next to Hermione and waited for Professor Watts to start the lecture.

The Professor came in and called for quiet, when the class calmed down she started her lesson. “As a ghost I am privy to a lot of information that you are not. There is little written history of the Chamber of Secrets, but here is what I know from those who have passed on. Salazar Slytherin disagreed with the other Hogwarts founders about the importance and the acceptance of Muggle-borns at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. As the other Founders were against him in this matter, he left the school. According to legend, before he left, he created a secret chamber deep underground in Hogwarts Castle — known as the Chamber of Secrets.

“This Chamber was home to a monster — we’re not telling you what it is, just that we know and will handle it,” she didn’t want them to know it was a Basilisk. “It was allegedly supposed to purge the school of all Muggle-born students. Slytherin’s spirit denies this, but it is legend, it is also stated that only his heirs could open his room, through the use of Parseltongue. Over the centuries after Salazar Slytherin's death, many headmasters conducted searches of the school to find the Chamber. None, however, were successful, and the Chamber was dismissed as a mere legend by many. When the Chamber was opened in 1943 it was revealed to be real, yet still never found.”

The sound of quills meeting parchment was heard throughout the room as most students wrote down the lecture. Professor Watts was notorious for give homework on her lectures and not just what was in the History books.

“There is clear evidence that the Chamber has been opened more than once between its creation and the twentieth century. When first created, the Chamber was accessed through a concealed trapdoor and a series of magical tunnels. However, when Hogwarts’ plumbing became more elaborate in the eighteenth century, the entrance to the Chamber was threatened, being located on the site of a proposed bathroom. The heir in school at the time was a student called Corvinus Gaunt — direct descendant of Slytherin — he explained to me how the simple trapdoor was secretly protected. He told future heirs so that those who knew how could still access the entrance to the Chamber even after newfangled plumbing had been placed on top of it.” She stopped for a moment to see if they were paying attention and noted that every student there was hanging on to her every word. So she continued, tapping her ever present ruler on her leg.

“The Chamber was last opened during the 1942-1943 school year by a young boy by the name of Tom Marvolo Riddle,” she glared at the students that started whispering, they remembered her lesson from last year on who Riddle was. “He, as you know, was later known as Lord Voldemort. Through his mother, he was the last remaining direct descendant of Salazar Slytherin. In his fifth year, Riddle
located the secret entrance to the Chamber of Secrets, and was able to control the monster. He turned
the beast loose on the school, injuring many.

“The last victim was a student named Myrtle Warren, who you know as Moaning Myrtle; she was
killed in the girls’ bathroom. Hogwarts was due to be closed, which upset Mr. Riddle, who did not
want to return to the Muggle orphanage in which he was raised. He framed fellow student Rubeus
Hagrid, who had concealed a pet Acromantula named Aragog. Mr. Riddle convinced the
Headmaster at the time, Armando Dippet, who is the one that relayed this story to me, that Aragog
was the monster that had terrorized the school. Mr. Hagrid was expelled, and Mr. Riddle received an
engraved trophy for Special Services to the School. Now that the Aurors know this they are doing
what they can to get Mr. Hagrid a trial. Hopefully he will be cleared and can use a wand again.”
Again she stopped taking a look at many hopeful faces, glad to see so many would stand up for
justice.

“This is what I’ve been told by the spirits that passed on from this school.” She started to conclude
her lecture. “Myrtle informed us last night that the Chamber had been opened and though she told us
how, we will not be telling you. Leave it to the adults to handle this. I am only informing you about
the Chamber so you will not go through the trouble of looking for it. The Aurors have been called
and a watch has been posted to keep you kids out of there. They are still trying to find a way to open
the Chamber and rid us of the monster. Your homework is to write a one foot parchment on the
difference between legend and fact. What I have told you is both; I want you to separate my lecture
on what is fact and what is not and explain how you know. You need to learn to tell the difference.”
She turned to the board and motioned to the lesson written there by one of the upper-years. “Write
this down and turn it in on Wednesday.”

Quills flew over parchment as the students followed the instructions. Many were excited about the
lesson and couldn’t wait to do the homework. The bell rang and the students gathered up their books
and left the class none too quietly.

Gary let Harry know what had been said and got back the mental message ‘Dumbledore’s not going
to like this.’ Causing both boys to chuckle.

Hphphp

AN: The lecture is adapted from Harry Potter wiki.
How do You Stop a Tidal Wave?

AN: Thanks to my beta, darrelldream, for going over this for me. All mistakes left are my own.

Disclaimer: I don't own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belongs to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her.

AN: If you like this story, then please check out my others. None of them are like this one, but you might still like them.

Hphphp

November 3 1992

They were right Dumbledore didn’t like the lesson, but he learned last year there was little he could do about Professor Isobel Watts. She told it like it was and if he didn’t like it, tough. The Headmaster also didn’t like that there were Aurors in the school. There was round the clock surveillance around Moaning Myrtle’s bathroom. Myrtle liked it though; there was always someone around to complain to.

It was after class and Harry was sitting in his common room looking at the innocent seeming leather bound book. Tom Riddle was the name on the front of it and he knew who that was. He opened it and noted it was blank; however there was an overwhelming urge to write in the book. Harry ignored the charm, but was very curious. He got a quill and ink and wrote, “Harry Potter, November 3 1992,” as if it was his own diary.

The ink disappeared and the words formed, “Hello, Harry Potter. My name in Tom Riddle.”

‘Well that’s weird,’ Harry thought to himself. He knew he should stop, but he wondered about the man who tried to kill him. He was about to write some more when the book was ripped from his hands and thrown into the fireplace.

“What the hell do you think you’re doing?” Terry Boot whispered furiously at the dark haired boy. “You know that book already possessed someone. Are you trying to be the next?” he glared at his friend for being stupid.

“You’re right, thanks Terry. I have no idea what came over me,” Harry said and then looked at the fire and noted the book was not burning. “You probably saved mine or someone else’s life. Who knows if I could have fought that diary off? Thanks.” He clapped his friend on the shoulder and then got up and started towards the stairs. “I’m going to have to wait until the fire dies to get that. Keep an eye on it for a minute, I need to call my mum,” he asked his still pissed off dorm mate.

“Yeah, mate, but hurry. I don’t want to be alone with that thing,” Terry said nodding his head and sat right in front of the fireplace, thankful there were only a few students in the common room.

Harry ran upstairs and grabbed his mirror; he activated security and said, “Lily Potter.”

Lily’s face came on and she answered, “What’s wrong now? I swear we never should have let you guys go to Hogwarts.” she seemed tired. There were dark rings under her eyes, like she hadn’t gotten any sleep lately.

“Mum, I need you to send me something to put that book in. There’s a compulsion charm on it and
the horcrux interacts with anyone who writes in it,” Harry explained, ignoring his mum’s griping, though he was worried about her health.

“Oh, sweetie, don’t tell me you wrote in it. You know who it belonged to. Nothing good can come of that,” she said, looking over her child as best she could through the mirror. She nodded and looked relieved that he didn’t seem possessed. “I’ll send a box right now. Tilly will be there in a few minutes. Put the book in the box and give it to her. We’ll take it from there. Try and make sure no one sees her,” came the short orders.

“Allright, Mum, sorry to worry you. I just wanted to know who Riddle was when he was a teenager. I thought maybe I could find out why he turned out the way he did. But, you’re right, it was stupid. I didn’t mean to worry you. I won’t do it again,” Harry apologized profusely. What he said was true, it was dumb to think he could control something as Dark as a horcrux.

Lily sighed and ran a weary hand over her face. She didn’t know how much more trouble she could take. “I’m not really angry, but Harry, you could have been hurt and you know that I don’t want you or your brother hurt in any way.” She looked away and then could be heard giving orders to Tilly to get the box to Harry.

“All right is on her way, just put the book in the box and give it back to her. I love you, sweetie, try not to defy any Dark Lords for at least a week. I don’t think my heart can handle it,” she said with a smile to let him know that he wasn’t in trouble.

Tilly popped into the room. “Okay, Mum. Tilly is here. It might be a minute. Terry threw the book in the fire so I have to wait until it burns down some. But, the second it does, I’ll get it to you,” Harry said, glad his mum wasn’t too mad at him.

“Harry, are you a wizard or not? You’ve been floating things since you could crawl. Just levitate it into the box,” Lily said exasperated.

Harry blushed and smiled sheepishly. “Well, you’re the one who always made us try and do without magic. You said we’d get lazy,” he said in mock accusation, then sobered up seeing as his mum wasn’t smiling. He did wonder what was going on at home to make his mum so short tempered.

“Just get the book. Done.” And the mirror went blank. Harry stared at the mirror in confusion; his mum was rarely that sharp with them. He looked at Tilly and wondered if he should ask her. Then figured she wouldn’t tell anyway, so he held out his hand for the box, smiling at the little house elf.

Tilly gave Harry the box and he went downstairs. Terry was still watching the fireplace and the non-burning book.

“Terry,” Harry whispered bringing the other boys attention to him, “make sure the coast is clear. Mum sent me a container to put that in, but I don’t want anyone seeing.” He crept as close to the fireplace as he could get, placed the box on the floor and opened it.

Terry looked around and noted that the five people left in the room were focused on their homework. “You’re clear, but hurry.”

Harry cast a wandless, wordless levitation spell and floated the book into the box. You could feel the heat on the diary, but not even a page was singed. He quickly closed the box and thanked Terry and ran up the stairs, he gave it to Tilly and thanked her. He got his mirror out and called his mum. He told her it was on the way and disconnected. It was getting late and he wanted to see if he could take a nap before Sally came and tortured… trained him.
The next day at the Manor

The Hunters gathered once again to make their reports. After greetings were made and the meeting called to order they started. Once again Augusta was the first to report.

“Well, from the history lessons going on at Hogwarts, there is a lot of gossip. Tom seems to be the main topic, which is good for us. More and more people are remembering things about him from when he was in school and right after,” the eldest woman said, and then she took a sip of her tea. “We already have the ring, the diary and the necklace. And Professor Watts gave us information on the orphanage, so we have another area to look. From what I have heard we might be looking for the Hufflepuff cup and the Ravenclaw diadem. There is also talk about the Gryffindor sword, but no one has seen the diadem or the sword since the time of the Founders, so we don’t know if Tom found them or not. He just asked many questions about them during his time working at the store.”

“Well, that’s something,” James said as the group mulled it over. They had come to a standstill in their search. It was keeping them up at night, that and having something more happen at Hogwarts. “Amelia, how goes it with the goblins?” he asked turning to the formidable DMLE Head.

“Slowly,” she sighed. She had been in talks with them for months but was getting nowhere. “They don’t like us poking around. I tried to tell them what might be in their vaults, but they said without evidence they can do nothing.”

“We have the diary, with Riddle’s name on it. Do you think it might help? We haven’t cleansed it yet. Oh, and you can tell them we know how to rid the horcruxes of the soul pieces without damaging the container. That might help,” Lily said excitedly. She was very proud of her group’s accomplishment.

“Yes, that might be just what I need,” Amelia said thoughtfully. Though she was loathed to even touch the box the book was in.

“I don’t know how susceptible goblins are to compulsion charms, but you might warn them anyway,” James warned, he didn’t want them to get on the bad side of that nation.

“Another good idea,” the monocled woman stated.

“Wonderful, was there anything else?” James asked clapping and rubbing his hands together. He loved it when things worked out, maybe they could get some much needed sleep.

“I am worried about the Dunbars and the Jamesons,” Albert Boot said, a concerned look in his eyes. “We should call the parents together again and discuss it.”

“Why are you worried about them? They took a vow,” Lily asked, noting the man’s troubled face.

“Yes, but there are ways around that vow,” he said solemnly. “I was thinking, we didn’t tell them about Harry’s parseltongue, but they did tell the children. The children can still tell their parents, making it so the parents can tell the press, because we didn’t tell them that day and they didn’t join us for the other meeting…” he broke off letting them connect the dots.

“Shite,” James said, ignoring his wife’s reprimand. “That is not good. Dammit. Any suggestion?”

“We could use Harry to open the Chamber,” Amelia suggested, so far they hadn’t been able to get in there. They blasted the sink apart and tried cutting around it but the wards were too strong. They even called in curse breakers, but still nothing.

“Let’s hold off on that,” James said, not wanting his child anywhere near a Basilisk. “Unless we
really have to, I don’t want him involved. That and the Headmaster would know and use it against us.”

“We start selling the book,” Sirius said, he mind running over solutions. If Skeeter got ahold of this, it would be very, very bad.

“That might draw attention faster,” Kenton Brocklehurst said as he too went over the problem.

“We could go to the press first, or do both. Go to the press about the book and why we want it sold,” Remus said. He looked at James and Lily, “Remember what I said about crowd mentality. If you tell everyone at once then you are likely to control what they think. If you hide it and it gets out then you’ve lost that control. I say get your lawyer on it as well.”

“But, the Headmaster…” Lily started only to be interrupted.

“Will know no matter what you do. You can’t hide this, you can control it,” Remus said gently.

“So if we get one of the more reputable reporters and Xeno, of course, and tell them a story about how we just learned Harry’s ability, then we sell our little book explaining why we wrote it? Hmmm, we’re going to have to think on that.” Lily said worry now etched in her face, her finger tapping away on the table in thought, until James grabbed her hand to make her stop. So much for a good night’s sleep.

“Let’s call another meeting and we can decide as a group, just like we always do,” James suggested and the meeting broke up from there.

The next day at the castle

Parvati approached Gary the next day with a gleam in her eyes, meaning she had good gossip. There was also a hint of worry. “What’s up, Parvati?” he asked when she got close enough.

“So me and Lavender have been busy,” she started taking Gary’s sleeve and pulling him away from the other students. “It all started when the Headmaster tried to take you and Harry away on Halloween. There are rumors that both of you are the heirs of Slytherin. We’re doing our best to crush that rumor since we know your family tree. It is a good thing it is well known you keep the tree at the Manor and anyone can see it.”

“I don’t see the problem,” Gary said as he leaned against the wall out of the way of the student body traffic. He had been going to the Great Hall for study hour and the halls were busy.

“That’s not all I’ve heard,” she whispered getting close enough not to be overheard. “Someone talked, we think. There’s rumor that there is a parslemouth at Hogwarts. Because Professor Watts said that only a parslemouth could open the Chamber of Secrets, then there must be one here. And with the rumor about you two being the heirs of Slytherin, well you can see where this is going,” she explained worrying her robe sleeve.

“Shite,” Gary said and relayed the message on to Harry via their link. He heard Harry cuss back in the same way. “Thanks for telling me, Parvati,” he said and gave her an absentminded kiss on the cheek and wandered away.

She giggled and said to herself, “I better not tell Susan.” And followed the dazed boy to the Hall.
Confusing the Masses or Controlling the Press

AN: Thanks to my beta, darreldeam, for going over this for me. All mistakes are my own.

AN: Thanks for voting, I didn’t even have to wait a day. With the poll and the reviews you made your choice very clear. Thanks also for all the suggestions, they helped shape this chapter. So enjoy.

Disclaimer: I don’t own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belongs to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her.

AN: If you like this story, then please check out my others. None of them are like this one, but you might still like them. Alas, so few of them are being read and need your support to grow up to be big and strong like this one.

Hphphp

November 6, 1992

Once more at the Manor; the parents were worried, they’d been getting mirror calls for the last few days about the gossip. An emergency meeting was called. Eighty-five percent showed, at least one guardian for each Mutineer was there, barring the Dumbledore supporters. Whispers and ideas were flying about the room. Everyone claimed their usual seats and tea service was once again spaced around the table.

“Okay, everyone, quiet down,” James said in a loud voice, standing at the head of the table, as usual he was taking control of the meeting. “I know you’re all worried, so we’re here to see how we can maintain control. So ideas? One at a time, please. Let’s start with Amelia and work our way around. Everyone got a pencil and paper?” Nods were seen and Madam Bones stood.

“Thank you, James, I won’t take long. My idea is simple, have Harry open the Chamber of Secrets to let the Department of Magical Creatures in to slay the beast,” she said looking around the room. It was a good idea, one that if used correctly could help a lot.

“I like it,” said Wayne Sr. slapping his hand on the table in approval. “But, I don’t think we should put Harry in the spotlight like that. I think maybe we should use the mirrors. That way he can open it from the safety of an empty classroom or his bed. Then you can keep his name out of the report and only call him ‘a student’.”

“That’s a great idea,” said Faye Abbott standing to be heard. “If you use the media when you open this… Chamber, then it would go even better. Is your department going to kill or just capture the beast? I’m afraid I don’t know much about Basilisks.” As a Muggle she was still learning about the wizarding world her daughter was in. She knew a lot thanks to the Potters and the other Mutineer parents, but there was still so much she didn’t know.

“They will try and capture it first, if that doesn’t work then they will have to put it down,” was Amelia’s reply. “Which media do you think we should use? I can get the Wizard Wireless to the castle for such a historical event as opening the Chamber of Secrets.” She knew the owner and he owed her a favor. Being the Head of the Department of Law Enforcement came in handy once in a while.

“I can also be there,” offered Xeno marking something on the pad in front of him. He had come far since the death of his wife, and it was all thanks to the friends he had in this group. “Such an event
would sell lots of papers. I can even call it a collector’s edition.”

“These are all good suggestions,” James added, thankful that they could keep Harry’s name out of the press.

“I think we should start selling the book,” Lily put her two Knuts worth in, “If we say there are…” she paused to think of a good number, “four authors then that would also keep the limelight off us. Who wants to claim ownership of the book?”

Many raised their hands and a vote was cast, it was decided that no one with political clout would be author of such a controversial book, so in the end it was: Aric Davis, Wayne Hopkins, Sarita Patil (who was chosen because she was a foreigner) and Gifford Abbott. They would sell the book once the Chamber was open and use the press to push their point. The rest of the night was used to make plans to open the Chamber; they had to act fast, before they could be stopped.

November 8, 1992

It was dinner time at Hogwarts, dessert had just been served when the door opened and Amelia Bones, Xeno, three goblins and five burly looking men walked in. Dumbledore rose from his chair and went to greet the group.

“Amelia, what a wonderful surprise. What brings you to the castle, my dear?” Albus asked in his ever so kind grandfather voice, the one that put Amelia’s teeth on edge.

“Didn’t you get the memo? We’re here to claim the beast in the Chamber of Secrets,” she said lifting an eyebrow. The students nearby started excited whispers and soon the whole Hall knew why they were there.

“Yes, I did receive such a memo, however I sent a missive back stating we had everything under control,” the Headmaster stated firmly. He didn’t want anyone to take that glory away from Hogwarts.

“Oh, you know how to get into the Chamber?” Amelia asked in a condescending voice that just dripped with sarcasm.

“Alas, not as of yet, but my staff is working on the problem and we expect it to be solved quickly,” he offered in a placating tone.

“We already know how to get in. Plus, we have a parselmouth that is willing to help,” she said, maybe a little louder than necessary, her tone carrying across the Hall. Once again setting the children into an almost frenzy. Though voices never carried above a whisper, they wanted to hear what was being said.

“A parselmouth you say? Amelia, my dear, wherever did you come across a parselmouth? And one that is willing to help the Department of Law Enforcement? Such a person would be a treasure to behold, indeed.” Inside he was cursing, such a person should be controlled by the Light and since he didn’t know who it was, that meant they were not.

Amelia smirked, Dumbledore played directly into that, there was no way he could back out of his praise now that the whole school heard, not to mention one of the men behind her was a reporter for the Wizard Wireless Network. Xeno also stood by, his quill flying across the parchment by his side.

“Since the person is a minor, I will not be giving his or her name.” She turned to the student body and cast the Sonorus and said, “I need everyone to go to their dorms. We are going to rid the school of the Slytherin monster, but we don’t want to take the chance of anyone getting hurt. I am sure your
headmaster will send your desserts to the common rooms for you to enjoy.” She cast the *Quietus* and then turned back to the Headmaster and raised her eyebrow.

“Prefects take the students to your dorms. The house elves will bring your desserts,” he complied, not seeing any other choice.

The students got up and loudly left the Great Hall, many of them smug in the knowledge that they were right, there was a parselmouth at the school. Though they were a little let down that no name was given. When the Hall was clear of students, Amelia’s group and the professors went to Moaning Myrtle’s bathroom to tend to the monster.

One of the burly men startled the staff of Hogwarts by saying, “This is it folks, live at Hogwarts, as you heard earlier Madam Bones Head of the DMLE and members of the DoMC are going to open the fabled Chamber with the help of a parselmouth student here at Hogwarts. This is history in the making, stay tuned to find out how this momentous occasion unfolds.” He spoke into a mic that was pinned to his robe, they hadn’t even noticed it.

Dumbledore was about to tell the man he needed to leave, until he realized it was a live broadcast. He always felt that due to the death of Pandora, he could manipulate Xeno into saying what he, Dumbledore, wanted to be printed.

Amelia ignored the reporter and pulled out her mirror, she set the security and called Harry. When his face, behind a cloth, appeared she warned him not to talk English as she was taking off the security to see if he could open the Chamber. Myrtle pointed to the sink that she had seen Ginny disappear down, the same one that had the eyes that killed her. She then dived into her favorite toilet bowl and hid at the u-bend. Amelia shook her head at the ghost’s antics and took the mirror over, undid the security and pointed it to the snake carved in the sink.

*Open, says me?* came the hiss from the mirror, you could actually hear the question in the phrase.

The sink started to slide apart, it seemed to expand and then fold back away from a deep, dark tunnel. The smell from the slime in the pipe that was exposed was nauseating. Amelia, the goblins, and the four men that weren’t reporters, simultaneously cast a cleansing charm down the tunnel. The staff stayed to the back and let the team do all the work, as so ordered by the Head of the DMLE. Harry, who was still on the mirror, hissed again and stairs appeared.

“Student,” she said to the cloth covered face, “I want you to stay at the mirror in case you are needed later.” Inside she was smirking at the disgruntled face of Dumbledore. She knew he was upset that he didn’t know who was on the other side of the mirror.

They went down the stairs, various degrees of awe on their faces. Snape was overjoyed to be in Slytherins Chamber, though you could only see it in his eyes. Whispers of excitement could be heard among the rest of the staff. The DoMC team was more cautious.

The reporter was giving step by step description, things like ‘We are going down a dark and creepy staircase, no light is here, but for our own *Lumos*.’ Or ‘We’ve come to the bottom of the stairs and there are thousands of skeletons of small animals. No doubt food for the monster we are about to face,’ all theatrically spoken to make the listeners feel the foreboding atmosphere.

They came upon a set of double doors that wouldn’t open so Amelia held up the mirror, with the silent Harry, to the snakes that lined the door. The people at her back had their wands ready to capture or kill the beast that might be hidden behind these doors. The reporter made sure to state that they would not have made it this far, was it not for the helpful parselmouth student. He also promoted the new book release that was scheduled for the next day. To be sold at the kiosk
‘Pandora’s Box’ in Diagon Alley.

*Open, says me,* this hiss caused the snakes to move around the door with hissing of their own. Soon the doors opened with an ominous screech. They entered in to the large cavern. Statues of snakes were everywhere. Water was dripping off the walls, the sound echoed throughout the room. The party made its way to the large statue of Salazar Slytherin. They spread out and hid behind the statues and pillars that lined the room. It was up to Harry to see if he could control the Basilisk. The goblins and the DoMC were ready to slay at a moment’s notice. The only noise that could be heard above the dripping water, was the reporter’s furiously whispering of the events into his mic.

Now this password Harry knew from Sally, Salazar didn’t know the ones to the sink or the door, they were set after the plumbing was installed. *Speak to me, Slytherin, greatest of the Hogwarts Four.* Harry made sure that Sally gave Salazar a hard time when he heard that.

The large snake slithered out and smelled all the prey in its tunnels. It was about to strike when a loud hiss commanded it stop. *Who dares to try and control me?* it said to the unseen voice.

*Sasha, listen to me,*” Harry hissed using the Basilisk’s name. *Salazar spoke to me from the grave. He wants you to go with these men and they will take you somewhere there is prey. You will no longer have to haunt these tunnels.*

*You know my name, let me see you, so that I may look upon one that was chosen as my Master’s voice.*

*I cannot, for I am not there. I am only here in voice. I do speak for Salazar; he gave me your name so that you may know this. ‘Sasha will listen,’ he told me. ‘Call her name and tell her that her Master commands she go with this group of slayers.’ He does not want to see you dead. Please, close your eyes and coil up so they may transport you. Do this and they will know you comply. Do not and you will be killed.* Harry begged the King… err… Queen of Serpents.

The large snake slithered around itself in thought and confusion. It knew well the voice spoke the truth about Salazar, but many of his heirs had also spoken to her, commanding that she killed the impure of the school. She was old and tired, maybe it was time to die. She continued to hiss and argue with herself, causing the team to get agitated. They readied themselves to cast the charm to call the roosters. The goblins readied their swords and reflective shields.

Finally the snake coiled upon itself, stilled and closed its eyes. She hid her head within the coils. One of the wizards peeked around the statue that hid him after the snake went quiet and when he saw she complied he took a shrunken metal box out of his robes and placed it on the floor. He cast the spell to enlarge it, keeping an eye on the snake the entire time. When the box was the size of Sasha he nodded to Amelia and hid back behind the statue. When he was completely hidden she told the ‘student’ to ask the snake to enter it. He did and the snake obeyed.

The rest was anticlimactic. The box was hauled away; the reporter went around the room and described it to his listeners, once again praising the ‘student’ who saved the lives of the team sent to capture the Basilisk. Reminding them to purchase the new book ‘They’re Not All Evil — Get The True History of Parselmouths’.

Snape and the rest of the staff looked on in wonder at that marvel of a chamber of one of the Founders. Already thinking of ways it could remain open.

Harry and the Mutineers in his House, who were with him so that no one could say it was only Harry that was missing, went and joined the rest of the kids for dessert. The Mutineers of every House had hidden away until they got the word to join their House.
In the common rooms of all four Houses, the WWN was playing a blow by blow description of what was happening in the Chamber. Everyone was so enthralled with the reporters words they never noticed the group of first years that only now just joined them.

The book went on sale the next day, and because of the happenings the previous day at Hogwarts, it was sold out by the end of the day. Xeno spent the night making more.

Older parselmouths, that had remained hidden due to Riddle, came out of hiding and praised the book that freed them of the bad history of their talent. They gave interviews about what they did for a living; most like those in the books, were potion gatherers or village healers. There were only a few, but it still lent credence to the book and took the pressure off the ‘student’.

Rita Skeeter tried to vilify the book as a cover up, but she had lost most of her following because of the lawsuits the Potters had won. She was furious; she had had an article already drawn up to take down the Potters on the hearsay of the students of Hogwarts. Now, because of the Chamber’s opening being live she couldn’t use it. She would get them sooner or later, or her name wasn’t Rita Skeeter.

Dumbledore cursed himself for not recognizing the reporter for who he was, since his word that the parselmouth would be a treasure was broadcasted live, he could not go back on it. He knew the Potters had set the whole thing up, but could not use it in any way. It was a well-played manipulation.

Professor Watts had a house elf go and purchase the new book and used it in her class for every year. Once again going against the Headmasters orders that it not be used.

There were of course those that still held Slytherin as the evil pure-blood that they were raised to believe. Those such as Ron Weasley, Faye Dunbar, and Leanne Jameson would not be swayed that parselmouths and Slytherins were not evil. Faye and Leanne were vocal enough that they were taken from the Mutineers and they too stopped remembering what the group was about. Due to the vow they had taken they could not name names and they faded in the background and were recognized as troublemakers. They teamed up with Ron, Seamus and Hermione and formed their own small group. No one really paid them any mind.

Those such as the Malfoys and other Death Eater families would not believe that Slytherin was misunderstood. However, sheep will be sheep and these protesters were the minority.

The Potters once again dodged a bullet and this time their name was nowhere near the ruckus.
Aren’t They Cute?

AN: Thanks to my beta, darreldeam, for going over this for me. All mistakes are my own.

AN: Well that was another outline thrown out the window, so here is a filler chapter until I decide if I am just going to end the second year and go to summer. Thanks to everyone for the votes and reviews.

I also wanted to let you know that I spent the last few days rereading this story and came across some plot holes, incorrect names and such, so as per usual I changed some things. I’ll be spending all day today uploading the changed chapters. I knew I was messing up somewhere.

Some of the things I changed are: I added both boys to their respective house teams. I had put the senior Dunbar in with the Hunters and had to replace him with Gifford Abbott. I put poor Spencer in Hogwarts a year too early and had to change that. On the chapter Halloween I had Sally get rid of Myrtle, so I had to change that. Sorry if any of you got confused. There were some other minor changes, but nothing important.

Disclaimer: I don't own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belongs to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her.

Hphphp

November 14, 1992

It was almost a week after the opening of the Chamber and the excitement had cooled some. The rumor mill was still going on who the parselmouth was. Because the Potter name hadn’t come up with the press, other than Skeeter, other names were banded about. Names like the Malfoys and the Flints were popular ones, and Draco used it to make connections, though he never said he was the heir.

Something subtle was happening within the Mutineers, only the older students and the Staff noticed. It seemed that the children were pairing off. Susan sat with Gary at every opportunity. Daphne was more discrete and only sat with Harry if Tracey or her sister joined her. Even Neville seemed to pair with Hannah. Terry was spending a lot of time with Mandy. And Luna and Spencer were seen studying together. Since there were far more girls in the Mutineers most of them paired with those outside the group.

As it was Saturday the group was just hanging out at the Hufflepuff table, which most of the Hufflepuff were starting to call the Mutineer table. But, since they were never asked to leave they didn’t mind, that and they were all for inter-house relations. A lot of them had made friends in other Houses over the years and now sat with them during Study Hour.

Susan was sidling up to Gary, moving closer and closer without him even noticing. They were talking about the upcoming Quidditch match, between Gryffindor and Hufflepuff; it would be Gary’s first game. Ravenclaw won against Slytherin in the first game with Harry catching the snitch in under an hour. This did cause a bit of tension between the older Potter and young Malfoy. Gary was proud of his brother and made it well known with his cheering during the game.

Susan was an avid sports fan. She enjoyed all the sports she had been introduced to at the Potter
manor. She especially liked football. It was as they were talking that she got an idea.

“Gary,” she said batting her eyelashes, “do you think we can get a game of football going. I know we enjoyed playing over the summer. I don’t see why we can’t play now.”

“Do you have something in your eye?” Gary asked concerned. “I can take you to see Madam Pomfrey I’m sure she has a wash or something. Then when we get that taken care of we can see who wants to play. I have a ball in my trunk, but I don’t want you to play if there is something in your eye.” He looked at her face to see what was causing her eyes to move like that.

“No,” the girl huffed at the clueless boy, “there is nothing in my eye. It must be some dust or something. Why don’t you get the ball and I’ll drum up some kids to play.”

Gary shrugged and went to do as suggested. As he was leaving the Hall he did wonder why all the upper-years were trying not to laugh.

Harry, who was sitting with Daphne and Tracey, shook his head at his brothers retreating back. Thanks to his questioning his mother after his non-date he knew what to look for. His mum told him to leave it to Gary to ask her or let him figure it out for himself.

“Well,” Susan said standing and looking at all the smirking faces, causing her to blush and huff again. “You heard. Let’s get some teams up so we can play. Only those who have finished their homework, though.”

Groans could be heard from the less studious among them. Ron and Seamus had risen to join the group, but on hearing that and Hermione informing them they still needed to do their Charms homework, they sat back down. While the two boys were not part of the Mutineers anymore, the group decided to leave them alone. They didn’t want to be accused of favoritism. So they didn’t go out of their way to antagonize anyone. It made life in the dorm easier as well.

The Slytherins that were part of the study group, declined playing, they were going to watch though. They had seen the game on the telly at the Potter manor that summer, but were not inclined to getting dirty. Daphne, Astoria and Tracey were among them. They would cheer for their friends though.

Everyone who was going to play got up and went to put on casual clothes. Harry decided to sit with the girls and let Gary show off for Susan. Soon enough everyone was gathered at the Quidditch pitch. One of the upper-year Ravenclaws conjured a net between two of the goal posts and the teams were picked.

Susan was goalie for one team, whose shirts were turned blue. And Gary was goalie for the other team, whose shirts were turned red. Harry worried that they were on opposite teams, hoping that it didn’t cause conflict. Upon seeing Susan’s playful face, he figured that she was going to take the opportunity to show off.

As the game was being played Daphne once again broached the subject of Gary and Susan.

“You know she is going to win, right?” she said from her seat next to Harry. Tracey and Astoria were sitting behind them.

“I know,” Harry sighed as he watched his brother block a goal. He stood up and cheered with the rest of the crowd and then turned to the girl beside him. “Mum told me to let him figure it out for himself,” he explained.

“Oh, when did you ask her?” Daphne inquired.
“After that day at the park, I wanted to know what to expect from a girl. And how to know if I am being flirted with,” the dark haired boy said, a blush on his cheek. He had made sure not to lead this girl on, but she seemed okay with that.

“Oh, what did she say?” the Slytherin girl said slyly. She didn’t make her move yet, but she did make it so that Harry thought her opinion was worthwhile. She always made sure to speak up and offer advice when needed. She also defended him and his brother in her House. With all the half-bloods supporting the Potters it was easy to sway the more susceptible of the Slytherins away from the pure-blood mentality. Cunning was the name of the game after all.

“Well, it was kinda confusing. There were so many different ways one can be flirted with. Like what Susan did earlier, with the eyelashes. Plus, the way she is always scooting closer to him in Study Hall. I mean it is pretty obvious that she is flirting,” he said scratching the back of his head. “I’ve wanted to tell him so many times, but Mum said it was part of growing up. She wouldn’t have told me if I hadn’t asked.”

Tracey and Astoria giggled, making Harry turn and look at them. They just looked back with such complete innocence that he just shook his head and turned back to the game. Just in time to see the red team score. He cheered again and sat back down.

Daphne, on the other hand, glared at her best friend and sister. She waited until the crowd settled to get back to the discussion.

“So, your mum didn’t tell you anything else?” she asked, worried that all her plotting was going to be for nothing.

“Nope, that’s all she said,” he confirmed. Not knowing that his mum knew exactly what Daphne was doing and didn’t want to ruin it for the girl.

Daphne let out a sigh of relief and turned back to the game.

The two teams played for an hour and red team won. Susan ran to her friend and gave him a hug and kiss on the cheek to congratulate him. Gary in turn told her what a good goalie she was and gave her a high-five, which for some reason made her pout.

It was after dinner in the Gryffindor common room that Gary got his first clue.

“So, Gary, our” said one of the red headed terrors of Gryffindor.

“young friend, why” said his equally red headed twin.

“didn’t you tell us you were”

“dating the lovely Miss Susan?”

“Ickle Gary is all”

“grown up now.”

“How did we miss it, Gred?”

“I’m not sure Forge, but look at him.”

“Awww, so cute,” the Weasley twins said together.

“What are you two morons talking about?” Gary asked his teammates and fellow Mutineers
“You didn’t notice the batting of the eyelashes?” Fred said with a look of fake awe. He knew his young friend was clueless.

“Or the way she sits so close to you?” said George, putting his arm around Gary’s shoulders.

“Or the way she makes sure you have your favorite treat?”

“Awww, you are sooo cute,” they said again, each taking a cheek to pinch.

“Well, no I didn’t really think anything of it,” Gary said confused batting their hands away. “You mean she likes me?” he all but shouted. Not sure what to do about that. “I mean I knew she liked me, she keep holding my hand when we went to the park, but she said she wasn’t allowed to date. I didn’t think she liked me.” He defended himself.

“She may not be allowed to date, but she is marking her territory,” Fred said sagely.

“Don’t worry though, your ickle brother is just as oblivious,” George said trying to cheer their younger friend up. It wasn’t that long ago that he and Fred didn’t like girls either. But now that they were older, well girls took on a whole new meaning.

“But…but… we’re twelve, isn’t that a bit young?” Gary sputtered trying hard not to blush. Then again he did enjoy her company this summer and they held hands all day.

“Well,” George drawled, “maybe a little.”

“Let me ask you this, young Gary. Do you think she’s cute?” his brother said in all seriousness.

“Well, yeah, she’s cute and all, but so are a lot of other girls,” Gary answered still wondering how this conversation even came about.

The Weasley twin nodded wisely and dropped the subject. They changed to the upcoming Quidditch match and went over some of the plays that Wood was drilling in them. Gary was glad the subject was dropped and enthusiastically mused about how well he’d do.

**Meanwhile in the Ravenclaw common room**

“Hello, Harry,” came the dreamy voice of Luna Lovegood as she sat next to her friend.

“Hello, little Luna,” Harry said pulling her into a one armed hug.

“I see the nargles are starting to float around your head. Do you need a necklace to chase them away? Or did you want to talk about it?” she asked with her large eyes focused on the air around his head.

“I’m not sure why the nargles are there, Luna,” he said swatting the area above his head good-naturedly.

“That won’t work, you silly boy. You have to figure out why they are there and then come to a logical reason to rid yourself of them,” she said with a giggle.

“Oh, I wonder what is bothering me.”

“Well, what did you talk about today?” Luna asked with all seriousness.
“Hmmm, let’s see, I talked about Quidditch and homework, but I talk about those every day, so that’s not it. Ummm, I talked about the football game….” Then he paused and remembered his chat with Daphne. “Ohhhh that might be it, I talked to Daphne about Gary and Susan,” he said snapping his fingers.

“So you talked about relationships?” Luna asked with a cute tilt of her blonde head.

“Yup, we talked about how Gary is totally clueless that he is being flirted with,” Harry said proudly.

“Hmmm, I don’t think the nargles are here about Gary. You might want to think on who is playing with you, then maybe they will leave you alone,” she said decisively and then got up and wandered away.

“What?” Harry called after her, only to be ignored.

Terry sat down and shook his head. “You really are naive, aren’t’ you?”

“What?” Harry repeated dumbly racking his brain as to who he missed flirting with him.

“You do know what the word subtle means don’t you?” Terry asked kicking his feet up on a foot stool, enjoying the other boy’s confusion.

“Of course I know what that means… Ohhhh, I get it,” dawning finally came and Harry blushed to the tip of his fingers. How could he have missed it?

“I see you understand now,” Terry said with a smirk.

“Well, yeah. At least she’s cute. I still think we’re a little young for dating though,” Harry said settling down now that he figured it out. Daphne was cute and since she was discrete he didn’t mind her flirting.

“Yeah, I said the same to Mandy,” Terry nodded. “She said her dad wouldn’t let her date for a few years anyway. But, it sure is fun to make her blush.” He winked at his friend.

The two boys talked about girls for a little while then they, like so many other boys, turned the topic to sports and Gary’s first game.

The next day while Gary hid from Susan, Harry went to find Daphne. He found her in the library and went to sit next to her.

“So, I figured something out last night. Luna told me the nargles are gone now, so I know I was correct in my assumptions,” he said after taking a book out and pretended to read.

“Oh,” Daphne said confused, “I didn’t know you had nargles.”

“It’s okay, like I said they’re gone now. Someone told me I was being naïve and that I was not seeing something right in front of my face. Something a girl was doing,” he hinted and when he saw the blush on her cheeks he continued. “I just wanted to let this girl know that I’m okay with what’s happening as long as it stays this way for a few years yet. Maybe it will bring us closer, me and this girl,” he said fighting his own blush. Then he got up, nodded to her and left the table. She was a smart girl she’d catch on.

As Harry was making his way outside to get some air, Gary came running up to him in a state of panic. He worried for a moment that something else had happened. Until Gary opened his mouth that is.
“Harry, Susan is flirting with me. What do I do?” he pulled his brother outside and started walking to the lake, hoping to hide from Susan, until he figured out how to handle this new development.

Harry laughed and went with his insistent brother. “Who finally told you?”


“Yeah, but don’t get mad at me, Mum told me not to tell you,” Harry said pushing the other boy back.

“Why?”

“She said you had to figure it out for yourself. I had to do the same it seems,” Harry answered with a shrug.

“Really?” Gary perked up at this. “Who?”

“Daphne.”

“Well, she’s cute, a little shy for my taste, but cute.”

“Yeah. So I told her that I think we need to keep it light until we’re older. She seemed to understand. Maybe you need to do the same with Susan,” Harry said as he picked up a rock to skip over the lake.

“Yeah, that might work. I still think you’re a prat for not telling me,” Gary said looking for his own rock to skip. “Or maybe I can try and… I don’t know… flirt back. You know like holding hands and such. I think I’m ready for that.”

“That is completely up to you and Susan,” Harry said as the two boys got into a contest on who could get the most skips. Not understanding how his brother went from complete panic to acceptance. But then Gary had always been that way, more outgoing than Harry. He went from being depressed over the public calling him the Boy-Who-Lived to just shrugging them off last year, maybe it was part of growing up.

Gary did find Susan later and told her about his talk with Harry and the Weasley twins. She said she’d have to ask her aunt, but figured hand holding wouldn’t hurt. Unfortunately, her aunt didn’t agree. So they decided there would be no more flirting this year, though they did still sit together.

The Staff and ghosts watched all of this and most of them agreed that young love was cute. Not Snape of course, but most. Dumbledore didn’t offer his advice, though he was unsure of Harry’s choice in a Slytherin girl. He had already stepped on too many toes recently and held his opinion to himself; it was the live broadcast of the opening of the Chamber and his words of praise to the parselmouth student that kept him his position as Headmaster.

Hphphp

AN: There you go, hopefully a cute chapter on young love. Let me know what you think.
The Christmas holidays came and went without fanfare, this year the Potters gifted everyone in the group with a new trunk. It was a three compartment trunk, because next year they would start their electives and have more books and homework. Those that had family trunks were given a certificate to either have the old one refitted or obtain a new one. Many chose the new, as family trunks were heirlooms and they didn’t want to destroy family history.

The kids were thankful for the gift, as well as the personal gifts given by the twins. Most of the Mutineers were taking three new classes next year; Arithmancy, Runes and Care of Magical Creatures. Only a few wanted to take Divination (Parvati, Lavender and Sally-Anne to name a few). Muggle Studies will see an all-time low in students, because the Mutineers had already shown half the second years how outdated it was.

There was a petition among the upper-years to get a magic null room set up in Hogwarts, but no one was sure that it would work in a magic saturated castle. There was talk of a Muggle type library being built in Hogsmeade, complete with a computer room. It would be funded by a percentage of the proceeds of Pandora’s Box. Which was also expanding to the village.

The secret studying was going well. None of the Mutineers stayed out after curfew and used classrooms near their dorms. It was unfortunate that the upper-years had to study on their own, but there was little the Mutineers could teach them. Though they did teach the Weasley twins some defensive spells; and those two taught the Quidditch team and they taught their friends and so on, so it wasn’t a complete loss.

The point system was finally the friendly competition it was supposed to be. Inter-House relations were at an all-time high. With Snape remaining more neutral than destructive the points given were fair and even. The professors were happy, the Board was happy even Dumbledore was moved that things he had been preaching for years seemed to come to pass. Although the Headmaster felt it was his own doing and not that of a bunch of younger-years.

The only glitch in the year was Gilderoy Lockhart. That man was a menace, his continuous bragging and gloating was wearing on everyone’s nerves. The way he would reenact his books showed even the most loyal fans of his that he was a fraud. Some of the girls enjoyed and utilized his beauty tips. His constant way of using the Potter twins in class was also grating. At least the second years had learned not to jump to conclusions after the professor from first year was berated in front of the class. McGonagall had taken to have the two boys graded independently. Though with what the fraud was teaching it was a chore.

The bright spot of the class was that Sally had suggested to a few of the soldier ghosts that they help the poor man along. So it was common to see a ghost in the class telling the students the correct way to do something, as they mocked the over-bearing blonde professor. Which in turn helped the upper-years. Since Gilderoy couldn’t hex his way out of an open classroom, there was little the man could
do. He tried to complain to Dumbledore, but was told these ghosts had wills of their own.

The Chamber of Secrets was searched by curse breakers and a library was found. The books could not be removed from the room without them deteriorating. So the Board of Governors decided to let Alumni and Scholars come to the castle on weekends to make copies. During the week, after dinner and before curfew, the professors were allowed to give tours to the students. They weren’t allowed in the library, but could view it from a roped off area. Professor Watts was the most enthusiastic in giving lessons about one of the great Founders.

Dumbledore was not pleased; it was something else that was out of his control. He was losing more and more control of the school as the year went on. With his probation he didn’t dare complain too much. He also left the Potter twins alone. He had done more research on the twin bond, even talked to Molly, and found that Harry had been correct. If he tried to separate the twins he took the chance of making them squibs.

So now the Headmaster had to find a way to train Gary, and perhaps Harry, to defeat Tom when he returned. Maybe he could use this bond to make the boy hero stronger. Maybe he should make amends with the Potters, explain how he was wrong and try and work with them, though it irked him to do so. He could use his past and get them to see that he could teach the boys, who judging by their grades could use more training. It was something to think about.

Ginny missed her diary friend for about a week. Then she realized that whoever took the book probably saved her life. After all her father warned her about trusting something that you couldn’t see it's brains. So she shrugged it off and became a full Mutineer.

Her twin brothers were ecstatic over that fact and helped her learn to keep it secret from the other two siblings in the school, which actually wasn’t that hard. Ron was immersed in his own little group of friends. Percy was busy with his studies and trying to make sure he was Head boy next year. With the twins help in *Occlumency*, Ginny now had a map and was given all the secrets of the Mutineers, after her vow of course.

*February 10, 1992*

While the happenings of the school were going as well as could be expected, the Hunters were still scouring the wizarding world for the *horcruxes*. They had made little headway. So far the ring and the necklace were cleansed, with the help of Harry via the mirrors. They had given the diary to Amelia to use to negotiate with the goblins. The goblin in charge of vault security wanted to meet James, so here he was with Amelia waiting for that meeting.

They were sitting in a medium size room, which was decorated to impress and intimidate wizards. The table and chairs were antiques, large wooden monstrosities that were worn and pitted with what looked like sword marks. The outer rim of the room was lined with statues of goblin warriors of old. Their ferocious like visage made them look life-like, as if they would spring in to action at any given second. Weapons were mounted on the walls; almost every inch was covered in bladed weapons. The lighting was kept bright so you could see the glint of metal, warning you that these goblins had fought before and were not afraid to fight again.

James had to admit the room was impressive. It certainly did what it was designed to do.

Three goblins walked in wearing their old-fashion, but sharp business suits. One carried a briefcase in his spindly hands. The other two were armed. They marched in and sat opposite of James and Amelia.

“We have examined the diary you sent to us,” started the one carrying the briefcase as the three sat.
“It is an abomination, where did you come by it? And what do you want of us?” he directed his questions to James.

“Well, we are sure that the horcrux was made by You-Know-Who,” James said leaning forward hands on the table in a non-threatening gesture. “What we would like from Gringotts is for them to examine the vaults of the Death Eaters to see if there are more. I remember my contract stating that cursed items were not to be stored in the vaults. I am sure Madam Bones has already made this request.”

“Yes, she has asked us to do such. What we fail to understand is what is in it for us,” the still unnamed goblin said with a lifting of his bushy eyebrow.

“I would think the goblins would want to keep He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named from coming back. With these horcruxes it is possible for him to do so,” James said not understanding the issue.

“During the last war we asked the Ministry for extra guards to help keep the bank secure. While the Dark Lord did not threaten our way of life, he did threaten our customers and that is bad for business. The Ministry said they would not spare people to protect the bank. So I ask again, what is in it for us?” the goblin snarled, his disgust showing on his wrinkled face.

“What do you want? I have little to offer, besides gold, and I know that goblins don’t deal in gold,” James asked going over anything he possessed that could sway the goblins.

“Our talks with Madam Bones indicated she was not here with the blessing of the Ministry. We concluded that you are a group of individuals that are working independently. We want, what we always want, any goblin made artifacts that you may possess,” the still nameless goblin smirked. It was something that wizards never gave up, for they didn’t understand why something that was passed on to them should be returned to Gringotts. He figured this wizard would be the same.

“Done,” James said without thought. He would give up anything to keep his family safe. “And I’ll even talk to my friends about doing the same. However, I would like the option to repurchase the items. They have been in my family a very long time. Perhaps we can draw up a contract that upon my death my children will either negotiate with Gringotts to maintain the items or give them back.”

All three goblins jaws dropped, Amelia looked just as stunned. This was not something they thought would happen. And had they asked before James got married it wouldn’t have, it was Lily showing him the different cultures of the world, via the internet that made him realize that perhaps wizards had it all wrong in thrusting their beliefs on others beings.

“My name is Proudfoot, I am the head of security here at Gringotts. Madam Bones indicated that there might be more of these… horcruxes here at the bank. While we do have a clause in the contracts, we are still setting a precedent that will make us look untrustworthy. However, I have permission from the Head of the Goblin Nation to go forward,” the same goblin said a bit of respect showing in his beady eyes. The other two goblins were still in a state of shock. Proudfoot pulled out some parchment from the briefcase and placed it on the table. “I can search one vault for every three pieces of goblin worked item that you bring me.”

“The Potter vaults at this time contain a small amount of items. I will hand all of them to you, again with the option to repurchase them. Let’s negotiate,” James said, now comfortable in his stance with the goblins.

James and Proudfoot sat at the table for two hours going over what was in the Potter vaults and what the goblins were willing to have repurchased. Some items had been too long in wizard hands and the clans that made them would more than likely want to keep them as the treasures they were. James
worked hard to keep some of the heirlooms in his family. The contract was worked so each
generation had to have a meeting with the goblins to rework it. If the clan that made the heirloom
died out or didn’t want the item any more, then it was the Potters to keep and the goblins would write
it off as a loss.

In the end a time was setup to look over six Death Eater vaults, all of whom were currently in
Azkaban. The Hunter Team Two would bring the Dark object crystal to help with the search.
Gringotts would not look into the vaults of anyone not incarcerated. They would, however, send a
letter to everyone that had a vault in Gringotts reminding them that as per the contract they signed all
cursed items should be removed or vaults would be confiscated. The vault holders had one week to
comply.

“I have a question that has always bothered me. Why do you keep the vaults open to people who are
supposed to spend the rest of their lives in prison?” Amelia asked. The Ministry has tried many times
over the years to confiscate the vaults of Death Eaters, but to no avail.

“As long as our client isn’t dead, and the fee can be paid, we see no reason to close their vault.
Besides, there are always family members that can claim them upon the death of said client. You
wizards and witches are so inbred that almost anyone can make such claim —especially the
Lestranges,” Proudfoot answered with a sneer, he knew she was asking for the Ministry.

James nodded with agreement; Sirius had told him how many families the Blacks were kin too. It
really was quite disgusting how pure they kept their line.

They left the meeting with the lead box that contained the diary. The Hunters would cleanse it
tonight. They had talked about writing in it to find out if it knew what the other horcruxes were, but
decided that it was too risky.

The next day James called the Hunters together to give them a briefing on what happened at
Gringotts. After his report the Hunters talked about what to do next. Soon the meeting was called
back to order.

“Okay, settle down everyone. Augusta, any new news?” James asked after rapping his knuckles on
the table.

“Well, from what little I have put together I know that a cup was passed down through the
Hufflepuff family, and through the centuries made its way to Hepzibah Smith, a descendant who
kept the cup as a priceless heirloom. In 1946, from what I could find out, Madam Smith showed the
cup to Riddle, who, as you know, was at that time employed at Borgin and Burkes. She dazzled
Riddle with the cup and fondly stated she could never part with it. Along with the cup, Hepzibah
also possessed Salazar Slytherin's Locket, which we already have. She kept them well hidden even
from her family members,” the elder Longbottom said then paused to take a sip of tea and to create a
dramatic effect.

James and the others chuckled. “Okay, enough with the pause. What happened to the cup?” he asked
even if he found it amusing.

“Poor Hepzibah was found dead two days later,” Augusta sighed saddened by the news, though she
knew her old time friend was dead it always sat wrong with her. “Her elderly house-elf, Hokey,
recalled mistakenly putting poison in the poor dear’s cocoa. Rumor, however, says that Riddle had
embedded a false memory in Hokey as he himself had murdered Hepzibah for the artifacts. It was at
that time Riddle fled with the cup and the locket. By the time her family realized the cup and the
locket were missing Riddle had resigned his post. He was neither seen nor heard of for a decade.”
She finished with a contented sigh, she was glad that she finally got some insight to what one of the
horcruxes could be.

Lily smiled at the elder woman. “That’s wonderful news. Did you get any gossip on what else might have been used?” she asked.

“Well, Tom did ask many people about the Gryffindor sword and dagger. Slytherin was also said to have a cane, much like Lucius, but that has never been confirmed. Some of the Alumni of Riddle’s year, said he took an interest in the Ravenclaw ghost. It might be pertinent to have someone question her about what they talked about. The Bloody Baron was also seen spending a lot of time with him,” Augusta said with a proud look on her aged face.

James and Lily shared a look and nodded with understanding. “I’ll ask one of the boys to talk to Professor Watts,” James said and then turned to the three men who made up Team One. “Have you found anything?”

Kenton nodded. “We went to the orphanage that Riddle grew up in. It’s empty now, but we got in and searched the whole building. We didn’t find any cursed objects, so we searched the offices; there was paperwork that mentioned his time there. Seems he was quite the bully, terrorizing the other orphans. There was mention of a cave, so we checked it out. It took us hours to get through the traps. We almost lost Wayne to the Inferi. But, we got out alive, barely,” he said with a shrug, they knew this would be dangerous when they volunteered.

“There was a cup that had a potion in it,” Wayne took up the story. “You had to drink the potion to get to the necklace. We drilled a hole in the bottom and let it drain out. The locket, as you know, was a fake. There was a note in the locket that states someone with the initials R.A.B. knew what Riddle was up to and they stated that they took pride in stopping him. The poor man died not knowing that there was more than one horcrux. We think he was a Death Eater.” Then he shuddered and continued, “It was as the liquid hit the lake that the Inferi attacked. I almost died in the fight to get free.”

There were many sympathetic noises made among the rest of the group. Then a clatter of a cup dropping on the table was heard. Sirius stood and with a drawn face asked, “Do you still have the note?” His hands shook as he looked at Kenton with wide eyes.

“Yeah sure,” Kenton said and withdrew the parchment from his pocket along with the fake locket. He handed the note to the shocked man and waited with the rest of the team to see what had Sirius so shook up.

Sirius took the note with unsteady hands, not wanting to believe what he was thinking. He unfolded it and read aloud;

"To the Dark Lord

I know I will be dead long before you read this but I want you to know that it was I who discovered your secret. I have stolen the real Horcrux and intend to destroy it as soon as I can. I face death in the hope that when you meet your match you will be mortal once more.

R.A.B."

Sirius upon seeing the handwriting of his younger brother dropped back down into his chair. The piece of parchment fluttered to the table from his nerveless hands. Suddenly guilt overwhelmed him, he put his hands on his face and his shoulders started to shake.

“Sirius, what’s wrong?” Lily asked getting up to comfort the distraught Marauder. The rest of the
group looked on, not understanding what could bring on such a violent reaction.

“Dear Merlin, all this time… I was so wrong… I could have helped… He didn’t have to die…” the dark haired man rambled. Great sobs shaking his form.

Remus picked up the discarded note and realized what the problem was. He handed the note to James and went to comfort his friend.

“I see,” James said with a sigh. He then turned to the other Hunters. “This was written by Sirius’ younger brother.”

“I thought you guys didn’t associate with him in school. How would you know his handwriting?” Wayne asked, having seen the Marauders terrorize Regulus and Snape in school.

“We use to steal the homework from him and Snape. We’d hide it and the put it back after the assignment was due,” James explained. “We were bullies in school, there is no excuse for what we did,” he offered with a shrug, what was done was done. “I think we should end the meeting here. We’ll give Padfoot time to adjust and then meet back up in a week.”

The rest of the team nodded and took their leave. Lily and the Marauders spent the rest of the night giving words of encouragement to Sirius. Letting him know he had no way of knowing that his brother had tried to rid the world of Voldemort. It took a long time; Sirius was too overcome by guilt. He did pull it together enough to continue the hunt for the horcruxes, which he threw himself into with vigor. He would make it up to his dead brother by finishing what Regulus started.

During the week the goblins did find the cup and another meeting was held. Ten goblin artifacts were given for the item, after all they only negotiated to search for the cursed object, not to hand it over—the greedy buggers. The Hunters cleansed it and continued the search for more. They were hopeful now that four horcruxes were cleansed.
Valentine’s Day

AN: Thanks to my beta, darrelldeam, for going over this for me. All mistakes are my own.

Disclaimer: I don’t own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belongs to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her. Anything you recognized was adapt from the books.

Hphphp

February 14, 1993

It had been a busy week for the Potter twins; Quidditch practices, secret studies, regular school work and more secret studies with Sally. Harry was glad the week was finally over, he just had to get through Lockhart’s class at the end of the day then it would be the weekend. Maybe he could get a game of football going tomorrow. Now that he and his brother had decided that romance would be put on the back burner for a few more years, he wasn’t too concerned about Valentine’s Day.

He and Gary had made sure that all the girls in the study group were to receive a white rose and a card stating how nice it was to have them as friends, just after breakfast. They had already talked it over with Daphne and Susan, both said they understood. The twins and the girls thought it was a nice gesture.

Harry walked into the Great Hall and he was surprised when he found it decorated like cupid came in last night and vomited from the ceiling.

Enormous gaudy pink hearts were hanging over all the tables, including the Staff Table. Little pink paper hearts were fluttering down like rain from the enchanted ceiling and cluttering up the student tables. Covering the food that was there, making it almost impossible for the children to eat. Harry went to the Ravenclaw table, sat down next to Terry and looked at the staff to see how they were taking it.

The teachers looked grumpy, McGonagall’s cheek was twitching violently and Snape looked like he was about ready to render someone into potion ingredients. The only two people at the Staff Table that seemed to be enjoying the commotion were Dumbledore and Lockhart. Dumbledore was dressed in various shades of pink robes with purple hearts floating about. Lockhart was similarly attired, only he had on a suit with a hideous pink cape.

Lockhart stood and addressed the students, “Happy Valentine’s Day!” he shouted. “And may I thank the forty-six people who have so far sent me cards! Yes, I have taken the liberty of arranging this little surprise for you all — and it doesn’t end here!”

Lockhart clapped his hands and through the doors to the entrance hall marched a dozen surly-looking dwarfs. Not just any dwarfs, however. Lockhart had them all wearing golden wings and carrying harps.

“My friendly, card-carrying cupids!” beamed Lockhart. “They will be roving around the school today delivering your valentines! And the fun doesn’t stop here! I’m sure my colleagues will want to enter into the spirit of the occasion! Why not ask Professor Snape to show you how to whip up a Love Potion! And while you’re at it, Professor Flitwick knows more about Entrancing Enchantments than any wizard I’ve ever met, the sly old dog!”
Professor Flitwick buried his face in his hands. Snape was looking as though the first person to ask him for a Love Potion would be force-fed poison.

With that said the git retook his seat, beaming that he had pulled off the best Valentine’s Day surprise, hoping that his fans would now adore him again.

Suddenly a flurry of wings could be heard as dozens of owls swooped into the Hall. All carrying in a single white rose. They landed in front of various girls of all Houses in third, second and first year. Many noted they were the girls from the Potter Study Group.

“Oh, how pretty,” Luna said loudly, making sure everyone around her heard, as she took the rose from the owl. “And white too, this will keep the nargles away. White is for friendship you see, and friends always drive those pests away.” She nodded serenely and went about trying to find food that didn’t have little pink hearts on it. Padma and Mandy also nodded their heads in agreement as they too took their roses.

A collective sigh was heard among the hormonal teen girls of the Hall. The older-years didn’t get white roses, but they thought it was a romantic gesture anyway. This caused many of the older boys to groan, they were busy scrambling to get valentines written so that dwarfs could deliver them to their girlfriends or crushes. Might as well use them since they were there.

Another flurry of wings sounded as the normal mail owls came through the hole and more valentines were delivered. Packages and cards were given to a larger population of the older girls. Two of the girls at the Gryffindor table sat up as their cards exploded into words that glittered above their heads.

*We think you’re pretty, we think you’re smart, and Quidditch is wonderful with you as a part.*

Angelina Johnson and Alicia Spinnet, two of the team’s chasers, blushed red, making the smiles on their faces stand out more. They each got up and went to one of the Weasley twins and gave them a kiss on the cheek as a thank you. The crowd clapped, you could always count on those twins to lighten up any mood.

Breakfast was finally over, though not many got to eat anything, and classes started. Professor Watts gave the confusing history of the martyrs celebrated on this day and how it morphed into a day of love.

All day long, the dwarfs kept barging into their classes to deliver valentines, to the annoyance of the teachers, and late that afternoon as the Gryffindors were walking upstairs for Charms, one of the dwarfs caught up with Gary.

“Oy, you! Gary Potter!” shouted a particularly grim-looking dwarf, elbowing people out of the way to get to him.

Gary and his friends stood and waited for the embarrassing moment to be over. Harry stood further down the hall and tried not to laugh at his brother; it didn’t work as tears of hidden mirth wetted his eyes. Gary glared at him, with a mental promise of retribution, which caused Harry to burst out with laughter. His Ravenclaw friends looked at him then and Gary’s disgruntled face and they broke out in smiles and the twin’s antics.

“I’ve got a musical message to deliver to Gary Potter in person,” the dwarf said, twanging his harp in a threatening sort of way.

Gary sighed, “Let’s hear it then.” He put his bag down and stood with his arms folded. The crowd
around him stopped to hear.

“Right,” the dwarf said, twangling his harp again. “Here is your singing valentine:

His eyes are as green as a fresh pickled toad; His hair is as dark as a blackboard. I wish he was mine, he’s really divine, the hero who conquered the Dark Lord.”

Lockhart should be shot, because these dwarfs couldn’t carry a tune in a bucket. The off key valentine was delivered and Gary picked up his bag. The students that filled the hall laughed.

“Well, my day is now complete,” Gary said laughing with the rest of the students. “Thank you for delivering that and I hope that you have no more for me today.” He bowed to the poor dwarf and went to class, his brother’s laughter sounding in his head. He did wonder who sent such an awful valentine.

Harry, still chuckling at his brother’s plight, went to DADA. He hoped that Lockhart wouldn’t be reenacting any of his books today. Maybe the ponce would take a day off and just read them his valentines. It was not meant to be.

“Today we are going to be discussing my famous book ‘Holidays with Hags’. If you have done the reading you will know it tells how I took on the hags and made them beautiful women, who of course fell immediately in love with me. Who could blame them, I am fabulous,” Lockhart said flashing his sparkling smile, after the class had settled.

Harry and all the boys and quite a few of the girls grumbled. They pulled out the useless book and waited for what was sure to be something stupid. Thank Merlin for the Hufflepuff Soldier showing up.

The Hufflepuff Soldier never gave his name; he only let the school know that he was once in Hufflepuff and died in the war with Grindelwald. It was his goal to make sure that people didn’t see Hufflepuff as a House of duffers. He was the most vocal in this class and his corrections on Lockhart were the best lessons the students had.

“There is no spell to make a hag beautiful. They don’t want to be anyway. Hags like being who they are, they are Dark by nature. You are once again making it up,” the soldier said from his usual place at the front of the class.

Lockhart gritted his teeth and put on a pained smile. “Pay no attention to that grumpy ghost. He is just jealous that he can’t do the things I can,” he said as he tried to get in front of the ghost. “Let’s see, who shall we pick today to play the part of the head hag…?” he pretended to think.

Harry thumped his head on the table and shook it from side to side in denial. Terry patted his friend on the back in commiseration; they all knew what was coming.

“Harry Potter, being the studious boy that you are, I’m sure you read my book. Come on up here and we’ll show the class just how wonderful I am.” The ponce smiled that too bright smile and waved the reluctant boy forward.

“Harry Potter, being the studious boy that you are, I’m sure you read my book. Come on up here and we’ll show the class just how wonderful I am.” The ponce smiled that too bright smile and waved the reluctant boy forward.

“Now, I know you are not the hero that your brother is, but I am sure you could pull off playing the part of a hag well enough,” Lockhart said taking Harry by the shoulders and placing him in front of the desk. He moved the poor boy around like a tailor’s dummy and making him stand hunched over with his head bowed, arms raised half-way up his body with gnarled hands and fingers stretched out in front of him. “Now you stand right there, and when I ask you what you want you simply quote my book.”
Harry could only nod and stand looking stupid. They had tried to get this man classes banned, but as long as no one was hurt the Board felt he was harmless and the curse would rid them of him before the year was out. He had an iron-clad contract to teach for the year. They did however take great pleasure in telling Dumbledore that all new teachers had to go through them from now on and that curse breakers would be finding a way around the one on the DADA class.

Lockhart stood in front of Harry and said in a loud voice, “What do you want of me, you ugly hag?” he stood as if he was a great hero. His shoulders were thrown back, his head was held high, his hands were placed on his hips and his feet were apart. He was very good at acting his part, and if the girls in class didn’t know he was a fraud they would have sighed.

Harry gritted his teeth and said, “Please, wonderful Lockhart, I’ve heard of your wonderful deeds and I want you to make me and my coven as beautiful as you.” He choked out the words written in the fool’s book.

“Why of course I will, though you can never be as lovely as I, I will make you as pretty as I can,” the pounce said and he raised his wand to the still snarling Harry. “Ossaevanescunt” he said and the Hufflepuff Soldier could be heard in the background shouting “NO!!!”

Now Harry had played the bad guy for Lockhart all year and nothing bad had happened so far. So he only raised his hands at the Soldier’s warning shout and when the spell hit his left hand it got a funny sensation, it tingled for a moment and then flopped down onto his arm. The bones had vanished. It didn’t hurt, but it felt as if the end of his arm was jelly. 'So much for playing football this weekend.'

The Mutineers shot out of their seats at the Soldier’s yell and when they saw Harry’s hand plop down boneless, they started shouting at the fool teacher. The Soldier took charge and yelled for silence.

“You, Brocklehurst, go to the mirror and call Pomfrey. Let her know what happened. You, Corner, take Mr. Potter to the infirmary. Brocklehurst, when you are done call Flitwick and tell him what Lockhart has done and that I will be attempting to get this fool into the headmaster’s office. The rest of you are dismissed, go to the library and study real defense.” He snapped out commands and the students jumped to do as ordered.

Michael gathered up his and Harry’s books and then took the fuming teen by his uninjured arm and lead him to the hospital wing.

“My folks are going to kill him. If I hadn’t raised my hand that fool could have killed me, the spell was aimed right at my face,” Harry said stomping his way down the hall. He was understandably pissed off.

Madam Pomfrey was waiting with a bottle of Skel-a-grow. She started to fuss as soon as Harry was settled on a bed. It would take a day for the bones to grow back and Harry needed to be knocked out as it was a painful process. After the potion was administered and Harry was sleeping, Madam Pomfrey used the mirror to call the Potters and let them know what happened. Needless to say they were upset, she did assure them that no lasting harm was done, however she would be taking it up with the Headmaster.

Lockhart didn’t listen to the Soldier. He promptly went to his room and started packing. An hour later when the Potters showed—he was gone. That didn’t stop them from confronting the Headmaster.

“How could you let this happen,” Lily said as she stood by her sleeping child’s bed. James and Remus were standing on the other side. Dumbledore was standing at the foot of the bed; his face was
lined with worry. He knew the man he hired was a fraud, however he felt the man was harmless and there weren’t any other applicants that year. People just didn’t understand how hard it was to fill that position.

“My dear, Mrs. Potter, I am sure it was an accident. Poor Gilderoy must be filled with such regret that he has fled the castle. I, of course, take my students health very seriously. I have already spoken with Madam Bones and she informed me that she will look into this,” Dumbledore said compliently. He knew now was the time to try and get on the better side of the Potter family. So he didn’t hide the happenings as he usually would.

“That man was such a fraud that he accidently vanished bones. I hold your school responsible for this,” Lily said not in the least mollified.

“Of course, my dear, we will do all we can to make sure that something like this doesn’t happen again. The Board is looking into finding a competent teacher,” the Headmaster said once more trying to calm the woman in front of him. “I have put in a request for our dear friend, Mr. Lupin, to be next year’s professor. I was going to ask him this summer if I got the approval,” he said with a smile, turning to the werewolf in question.

“You want me to teach a school full of children knowing about my affliction?” Remus questioned. While he did hold a Masters in Defense, he felt that it was too dangerous to be around that many innocents. When he was teaching the Mutineers he simply didn’t go to the Manor during the full moon. Staying at Hogwarts was another matter.

“Of course, my dear boy, you are more than qualified. Professor Snape assures me that he would be more than happy to brew the Wolfsbane potion for you,” the headmaster said ignoring the scoffs of the two men. “And the Hufflepuff Soldier says he can take your classes on the full moon. The Board will know all of this when I put forth my recommendation,” Dumbledore said with an assured smile.

“As long as they know who and what I am, I will be more than happy to take the position,” Remus said as James clapped his friend on the back. “But, what about the curse?”

“The curse breakers will be here all summer to see if they can override it.”

“Well, even if they can’t it would be nice to teach for even a year,” Remus said and then looked to his godson. If he were here then things like this might be avoided.

“Who is going to teach for the rest of this year?” Lily asked as she ran her hands through Harry’s dark hair. He was sleeping peacefully, though every now and then his face would screw up with pain. Thanks to the sleeping draught he never woke from the voices or the pain.

“In my discussion with Amelia, she recommended an off duty Auror, just like last year,” Dumbledore said the twinkle back in his eyes now that the yelling had stopped.

“As long as it isn’t some Boy-Who-Lived fan,” James muttered under his breath.

The Potters and Remus stayed long enough to be assured that Harry would be fine in the morning. Dumbledore made the announcement that Gilderoy Lockhart would not be teaching the rest of the year, that he was called away. The students cheered. He then introduced the Auror who would be taking his place.

He was a young man, about twenty-five, by the name of Robert Stallman, who seemed to be content in his temporary position. He was off duty due to an injury to his knee. His was medium height and could be lost in any crowd with his unassuming brown hair and hazel eyes. He dressed in a plain
black robe over a simple white polo shirt and tan trousers. His specialty was infiltration, a skill he was more than happy to pass on to the students, the Weasley twins took to the class like ducks to water.

The rest of the year passed uneventfully for the students and staff of Hogwarts. Madam Bones caught Lockhart trying to leave the country. He was brought up on charges in front of the Wizengamot, but the incident was ruled as an accident and he was let go with only a fine. His book sales plummeted and his fan mail trickled off to only the most die-hard fans. So he changed tactics and wrote beauty tip books that sold like hot-cakes to the middle aged witches of the community. If there was one thing that could be said about Lockhart, he was handsome.

The Hunters were at a standstill, they had looked everywhere they could think of and found nothing new. They did bring Mayur Patil into the group upon his request. Two weeks before summer vacation they gathered once again in a dining room of the Potter manor, the Hunters sat disheartened at their lack of progress.

“I am happy to be part of this group, and I do understand the vow that you made me take. What I don’t understand is why you are keeping this apart from the other parents,” Mayur said from his place between Wayne and Gifford.

“We felt that we shouldn’t burden the other parents with something as Dark as what we are hunting. There is enough pressure on them to keep things… in group, so to speak,” James explained running his hand through his hair.

“Then you are acting no better than Dumbledore,” Mayur exclaimed sitting up in his chair, ignoring the indignant protest. He held up his hands and when they quieted down he explained in a softer voice. “I know you don’t mean to, but you are withholding information that others can help you with. This is something that the Headmaster is known for. An example, how are you eliminating the artifacts of the soul pieces?” he asked placing his hands in a teepee under his chin.

“Lily and Albert came up with a way to use the powder we used to dispossess Quirrell,” James explained with a look of pride to his wife and his friend. “They put the item in a heavily warded room in the cellar; there are no windows and only one door. The artifact is the only thing in the room, they then use a wind spell to blow the dust in the room, close the door and ward it. It’s only after they hear the soul piece scream that the door is open again and the item removed. Or we leave it for the day and return the next. We then use the crystal to make sure it is cleansed.”

“What of the curses on the items?” Mayur asked, though he did seem impressed at the tactic.

“Team One here,” James said pointing to Wayne, Gifford and Keaton, “are all curse breakers, by hobby. They take care of the curses before we purify the items.”

“While I am impressed that you made it so far, in India we have a way to cleanse horcruxes with only a spell. Had you consulted the parents on what you were doing I would have told you a long time ago,” Mr. Patil chastised the group with a disappointed look in his dark eyes.

James and Lily shared a look, were they really acting like Dumbledore? The rest of the group took on various facial expressions from shock to understanding.

“You’re right; we’ll talk to everyone next weekend. We’ll tell them that we are working on something Dark and ask them if they want to be involved,” James said he then stood and ended the meeting for the night.

After everyone left Lily brought the subject up again. “I don’t want to act like Dumbledore,” she said
as she snuggled into her husband’s embrace.

“I didn’t think we were until Mayur pointed it out. I’m still not sure we are, but he is correct, we could have come further in our hunt if we had consulted everyone. We’ll make it up to them,” James said as he rubbed Lily’s arms in comfort.

“You’re probably right, I just hope they take it well,” she said and leaned her head on his shoulder. They sat in quiet for a long time, each contemplating on how the parents would react.

The next weekend a meeting was called and the Hunters came clean about what they were doing. Many of the parents protested that they should have been referred to, but after profuse apologies they were appeased and many bowed out of the hunt. They did gain a few more people who had experience in tracking Dark objects though. The hunt was still on.
July 30, 1993

So far the summer was going great for the Potter twins. Their parents finally let them go to friends’ houses without being accompanied by an adult, as long as there was someone of age at the house they were going to. Harry and Gary were ecstatic, the Greengrasses, the Boots and the Bones and so many other places. They even visited the Thomases and had a wonderful afternoon playing football with Dean.

This year they were celebrating their birthday with Neville and his family. It was going to be a small party, only the two families and Marauders. It was Neville’s year to pick what they did and he wanted to go on ‘A Walk through the City of London’ tour, to visit all the historical gardens. This walk explores nearly 2000 years of London’s history, with gardens built around Roman remains and church ruins, the gardens of city livery companies and those made in churchyards and on bombsites after World War 2.

It was going to be a long walk, it normally took two hours, but with Neville as a guide it would more than likely take five hours. Which was okay with the rest of the party, it was Neville’s birthday after all. They started the day at the Longbottom manor, each person dressed in comfortable clothes and sturdy boots or shoes.

“Are we ready? Does everyone have their backpacks?” Frank asked looking over the boys to make sure they had the proper shoes.

“Yes, Uncle Frank/Dad,” came the exasperated response from the three boys. They had already gone over this. Sirius and Remus chuckled while the parents all got stern looks on their faces.

“Watch your cheek,” Alice said with a firm, motherly look at the three teenagers. Well the Potter twins will be teens in the next few days, but it was close enough to count.

“Sorry,” a triple contrite chorus was heard.

“Make sure you have your lunch and make sure there are some dried fruits and nuts in there. It’s
going to be a long walk and I want you to have some energy food. I have juice boxes and water,” Alice said going through her own backpack. They were taking the extendable backpack the Potters had gifted everyone. Neville was sure to want to pick up any gardening books available. “Better carry an umbrella, it might rain,” she muttered to herself and picked up a few of said items and handed them out.

“Yes, Aunt Alice,” Harry said looking through his own bag making sure he had everything he needed. The two other boys followed suit.

Soon enough everyone was ready and they all trooped to outside the wards, Frank and Alice in the lead, the three boys in the middle and James, Lily and the Marauders taking up the rear. They took the Knight Bus to St Paul's underground station, which is where the walk starts.

The places they walked to and explored after that were; St Anne and St Agnes church, Goldsmiths' Company St John Zachary Garden, St Mary Aldermanbury Garden, Aldermanbury Square, Girdlers' Hall, Finsbury Circus Garden (which is where they stopped to eat), Barbican Estate Lakeside Gardens and Terrace, Salters' Garden, St Alphage Garden, Monkwell Square, Barber-Surgeons' Hall Gardens, Museum of London, Postman's Park, Christchurch Greyfriars Church Garden, St Paul's Cathedral Churchyard Garden, Festival Gardens and ended at 25 Cannon Street Gardens.

Neville was happy with most of these gardens, the history behind them fascinated the whole group and everyone had a good time on the walk. They ran into Sally Anne in the Finsbury Circus and ate lunch with the shy Hufflepuff. Neville invited her to join the group, but she declined stating she already had plans for the day. The boys accepted this and sat and shared the onion soup and ham sandwiches that the Longbottom house elves packed for them. Neville talked about all the trees, plants and flowers they had seen. He had picked up a pamphlet about the walk and was waxing poetic on the history of all the sights.

Neville did stop and pick up a few books on the histories and the plants in the gardens, James paid for the books as a birthday present. After the walk they all went back to Longbottom Manor and cake was eaten and presents were handed out.

Neville got mostly greenhouse equipment. Now that he was a teen his parents decided that they would let him build and operate his own greenhouse, whereas before he was only allowed to help the house elves in the Manor’s greenhouses. With the equipment he received today he could build a medium sized greenhouse and place less dangerous plants within.

The twins gave him some starter plants from the Potter gardens and a few they picked up in Muggle London. Mostly roses for the Longbottoms' yard.

Harry and Gary both got some clothes, robes, new seeker gloves, and broom repair kits. All three boys received various gifts from the Study Group, like chocolates, books and study guides. Nothing too fancy or overpriced. They had made sure to give these types of gifts for birthdays, so that people didn’t feel they had to buy them expensive gifts on theirs.

Gary also received many cards and token gifts from fans, though not as many as he had when he was a baby. The house elves had already made sure they were safe. The Potters would spend the next day making sure Thank You notes were sent.

It was a fun day had by all and the tired group went home content.

August 7, 1993

It was a week after their birthday and the boys were just about to leave for the Boots’ to have a pick-
up game of Quidditch with a group of Mutineer boys. They were stopped at the Floo room.

“What’s wrong?” Harry asked as soon as he saw his mother’s pale and drawn face. It had been such a good summer so far, he knew it was too good to be true.

At first she didn’t say anything she just took the boys by their hands and led them into the game room. The twins were protesting about being kept home, Lily ignored them and pulled them along. When they got halfway there she said, “Peter escaped.”

“What! How?” Gary exclaimed as he followed his mother, with this news he no longer had to be pulled along. Protest died on their lips.

“We don’t know. All we know is that he broke out of Azkaban about three hours ago. He killed a guard and got away. He has the guard’s wand and now is considered armed and dangerous. He was heard the day before stating ‘I have to get him. Master would be pleased.’ We don’t know if he is talking about kidnapping you, Gary, or finding Voldemort,” Lily explained guiding the shocked teens into beanbag chairs.

Harry looked at Gary, Gary looked at Harry and both faces took on a look of determination, they weren’t scared eleven year olds anymore. They had been training for this type of situation for years now. Both boys were proficient in wandless and wordless defensive magic. They could take on a weak wizard like Pettigrew.

Lily seeing the look on the boys’ faces got worried. “I don’t want you two to go looking for that traitor. Defend yourselves and your friends, but don’t go searching for trouble. Let the adults handle the hunt,” she said in her mother voice making sure to catch their eyes.

“Yes, Mum,” Harry said while talking to Gary mentally about what they were going to do. They had finally been able to hold two conversations at once, one mentally and one verbally. It was tricky and it took them years to perfect, but they had accomplished it last year in school during their boring classes or Study Hall.

“Do you think he’ll come after you?”

“I don’t know, maybe, but if he does I’ll be ready,” came Gary’s reply.

“Look, boys, I know you’ve trained for this, but as pathetic as he is, Peter is a cunning rat. He’ll try and trick you. Remember he was a Marauder, it was up to him to plan escape routes and that’s not an easy feat,” Lily said making sure that they didn’t underestimate the escaped convict.

“Okay, Mum, we understand. We won’t go looking for him, but we need to tell the Mutineers that he is out there. Is it going to be in the paper?” Gary asked going over plans to mirror everyone as soon as they were done talking to their mum.

“Yes, the Minister couldn’t keep it under wraps. Not with the death of the guard. Besides, he has to let the Prime Minister know in case Peter goes to the Muggle world.”

“Will the wards here keep him out?” Harry asked.

“Yes, but your dad is making a map of the Manor. Just like your school maps. We’ll post it in the Main Hall so that we can keep an eye on it. When we are asleep Tilly has volunteered to watch it,” she explained hoping to ease their worry.

“We should get the whole group together and teach them how to make their own maps. It’s well known we have many friends and they’ll need every tool they can get to protect themselves,” Harry
said running his hand down his face. It had been such a good summer.

The boys went to their own room and pulled out their mirrors, Harry would take the boys and Gary would call the girls. The Potter adults did the same, only James would call the husbands and Lily the wives. Everyone they had ever been friends with was given a call, either via mirror or Floo. Lily also called the professors and warned them, including Dumbledore, though he already knew.

The entire pro-security group was called together and an argument broke out. Amelia informed them that Fudge wanted to put Dementors around Hogwarts to guard the castle. No one thought this was a good idea, but that’s not what the argument was about. No, it was on whether to give a map to the Headmaster. Most of the group didn’t want him to have that kind of power over their children. Others argued that it was the only way to keep the kids safe.

In the end the majority won and the map was kept secret. However, a committee was formed to talk to Fudge about what an idiot he was. It was decided that if they could get Auror protection at the castle then the person in charge of that detail would be given a map, if they swore an oath not to reveal it to anyone. Amelia would be in charge of that.

James, Frank, Xeno, Albert Boot, Derryl Jackson and Aric Davis were the pure-bloods that formed the committee. They agreed that only pure-bloods would talk to the Minister as the man would listen to them better. The wives argued for a while, but it was decided that women would not have the same voice as the men. The only woman that would accompany the group would be Amelia. Each father only had one child, but for James, and they would use that as a reason not to put the demons at Hogwarts. It was the reason that the Greengrass’ and the Patils wouldn’t be going. James was included because he had the most political clout. Plus, he could use the Boy-Who-Lived card.

The next morning dressed in their finest robes, the team descended on the Ministry. They made an impression; many wizards and witches stopped and stared, wondering why such important people were converging on the Ministry. The committee went through the wand check and marched straight to the Minister’s office.

“Do you have an appointment?” the harried secretary asked. She had been fielding owls and mirror calls all morning. So far the Minister had blown them off as unimportant.

“No, but if you tell the Minister we are here I am sure he will find some time for us,” James answered making sure to keep his voice neutral.

“Please take a seat and I’ll let Minister Fudge know you are here,” the secretary said pointing to the chairs that lined the wall by the office door.

The men complied and listened to the poor woman tell the Minister that they were there.

“Minister,” she said as she went into the office, leaving the door slightly open, “there is a group of men and Madam Bones out here that want to talk to you.”

“Well, who are they? I am a busy man, you know,” snapped the Minister.

“One is James Potter, and from the way they are dressed I would say the rest are his pure-blood friends,” she said harshly back, knowing that it would get the man to see this group.

“Well, what are you waiting for? Send them in, don’t keep them waiting,” came the frantic reply.

The woman huffed and came back into the waiting area with a smirk playing on her face. If they were there for what she hoped they were there for, then they could do a better job at convincing the Minister than she could. Her son was set to start Hogwarts this year and she didn’t want those
monsters around him, but the Minister didn’t listen to lowly office workers. She was quite put out with the man and if she didn’t need this job, she would have quit.

“The Minister will see you now,” she said waving them through the door with a wink.

“Ummm, thank you?” said a confused James. Then he and his group stepped into the Ministers office.

The office was pretentious; gaudy chairs and tables were set around a large oak desk, which had a wood and gold throne like chair that the Minister sat in. Many certificates and medals, of past Ministers, hung on the wall. You would never know they weren’t Fudge’s unless you looked closely. Golden statues were in the corners and expensive vases were on the tables. A fine looking floral rug took up most of the floor, too bad it clashed with the furniture.

The men and Amelia took seats without waiting for an invitation, causing the portly man behind the desk to sputter.

“What can I do for you today?” Fudge asked after a minute.

“We want to know why you are trying to end our line,” Frank said with a raising of his eyebrows.

“I never, why would you even think that?” Fudge asked in confusion going over any deed in the past week that would make these people feel that way and came up with nothing.

“You are putting soul sucking monsters around our only heirs. What else are we supposed to think?” Derryl spat making the Minister sweat.

“Understand this, Fudge, if my son gets kissed I am suing you for line theft,” Frank said venomously as he pounded his fist on the desk.

“Answer, me this,” James said coolly. “How are a bunch of children supposed to protect themselves from Dementors? It is not like those demons can be controlled. I would also like to know how they are supposed to capture a man who has escaped them once already.” He sat back in the uncomfortable chair and glared at the now profusely sweating man.

Amelia spoke up, “Cornelius, perhaps it would be better if we post guards at the school and Hogsmeade,” she suggested trying to get the man to see reason. “There is less chance of the heirs to be killed if there are human guards.”

“But, the Dementors are under Ministry control. I was told that they will not interfere with the school in any way,” Cornelius once again tried to defend his position.

“Minister Fudge, you are friends with Lucius Malfoy, correct?” James asked, trying another tactic.

“Yes, what of it?”

“You do realize his only son goes to Hogwarts.”

“Of course I know that,” Fudge said still not getting what Potter was trying to tell him.

“Imagine if you will, what your dear friend would think if his only son suffered from Dementor exposure. Because even if you say you can control the Dementors from kissing anyone, you can’t
control the nightmares they will cause the children,” James finished smugly.

“And knowing what you do about ours and Malfoy’s history, do you think their dreams will be pleasant?” Frank added as he too sat back and watched the horror cross Fudge’s face.

“Yes,” Xeno said in a dreamy voice, “I can see the headlines now, ‘Boy-Who-Lived plagued with nightmares thanks to the Ministry’.” He held his hands up in front of him as if he could see the words between them.

Fudge paled, that was something that could ruin him. He looked to James and saw that he would let such a headline happen.

“Alright, I will recall the Dementors and place guards at Hogwarts. Amelia, I leave it to you, you’re in charge,” the frightened man conceded.

With nods of thanks the group got up and left the man to stew. They made their way back to the Potter manor and mirror called everyone with the results.

Amelia picked Kingsley Shacklebolt to head the team of Aurors. She took his vow that he wouldn’t tell anyone, especially Dumbledore, about the tools she was going to give him. The map was for him and his second in command, Patrick Savage, who of course also took a vow. They were suitably impressed with the map. Every Auror on the team got a security mirror; they were told that only Aurors had these mirrors.

That done the Mutineer families set up making maps for their homes. The rest of the summer was spent only at houses of the Mutineer kids and only with all parents present. They were taking no chances. With so many friends it wasn’t bad, though the boys did complain about the loss of their short-lived freedom.

Another argument broke out among the parents about letting the children go to Hogsmeade. This disagreement was drawn out for the rest of the summer and finally it was decided that they would only go if at least one parent for each child was in the village on the weekend they went. The kids were not happy. Hogsmeade weekends were supposed to be a time away from homework and adult supervision. They did concede that they might need the parents there, but still… it was the principle of the matter.
The Pest

AN: thanks to my betas, darrelldeam and alix33, for checking this over. All mistakes are my own, especially since I have a bad habit of adding things and not sending it back to them. Sorry for the format AO3 it being mean today.

Disclaimer: I don't own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belongs to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her.

Hphphp

September 14, 1993

Classes were going great. The Mutineers were thankful they had gone to the Muggle school since it made Arithmancy easier. The studies they did on Muggle runes were also helpful. Care of Magical Creatures was fun, the professor was new. There was a rumor that Dumbledore tried to hire Hagrid on, but the Board squashed it stating that Hagrid never finished his schooling and could not be a professor. Only Parvati, Sally Anne and Lavender took Divinations and from what they described about their first few classes the rest of the group was glad they elected not to take that subject. The three girls liked the class because it was a good place to pick up gossip, no one paid attention to Trelawney.

The new CoMC professor, Prima Whitfoot, was a sturdy woman who brooked no nonsense in her class. She stood a good six feet tall and had a wide girth, though you really couldn’t call her fat, just large. Muscles showed that she was not afraid to take on most of the creatures she taught. Her dark brown hair was pulled up in a messy ponytail. Her matching brown eyes were sharp and the students soon learned they would not get away with anything in her class.

Since this was a third year class, they were being taught about smaller animals, such as; the Augury (also known as the Irish Phoenix), the Bowtruckle, the Chizpurfle and other such XX classed creatures. The book they used was ‘Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them’ written by Newt Scamander. While the upper-years used ‘The Monster Book of Monsters,’ by Edwardus Lima.

The Ministry classifications of creatures were thus:

X: Boring

XX: Harmless / may be domesticated

XXX: Competent wizards should cope

XXXX: Dangerous / requires specialist knowledge / skilled wizard may handle

XXXXX: Known wizard killer / impossible to train or domesticate (or as Ron puts it, "Anything Hagrid likes")

Boring creatures or class X, the students were told were for self-study. The XX class was shown in third year students. Each class was taught to each higher year. So XXXXX was taught (though never seen) to the sixth and seventh years. XXXX classification was taught to fifth years for their OWL’s, but like the XXXXX class they were never seen.

To coincide with this, Remus was teaching them how to overtake the creatures taught in CoMC. If they learn about the Bowtruckle that week, he would tell them how to make it move from its tree. He
also taught them about beings that were not taught by Professor Whitfoot, such as the Boggart for third years and the Dementors for fifth years and so on. Defensive spells were learned at the end of the week. This way the classes were evenly split to give everyone an all-round education. Remus, or Professor Lupin, was thankful that the Hufflepuff Soldier had helped in the year before.

McGonagall once again had to grade the Potter twins separately, though she was glad to see that they were graded fairly. She, however, didn’t want anyone accusing them of receiving special grades from a family friend.

Today the Mutineers were studying at the Hufflepuff table. It was going well. They got a lot of help from the upper-years and everyone was learning a lot. Harry and Gary were sitting together with Terry, Dean and a few of the other boys. They were working on their Runes homework when a noise at the entrance of the Hall broke their concentration. It was Ron and his small group. It looked like they were arguing with Hermione. Finally Ron and Seamus stomped away and the three girls of the group went to the Gryffindor table in a huff.

“I really hate it when they get on Hermione like that,” Gary said with a crease in his brow. He had tried to keep a casual friendship with Ron and Seamus since they shared a room. However, he never liked the way they treated the girls.

“I still don’t see why you like that girl,” Harry said looking at his brother.

“She’s alright,” Gary said still looking at the frazzled girl. “She’s just a little bossy. I think it has to do with her childhood. I mean, from the things Parvati and Lavender say, she didn’t have many friends growing up. I guess I just feel sorry for her.” He shrugged and turned his attention back to his homework.

“I still don’t see it,” Harry said with a shake of his head. “She’s always getting on me about something in class. Like I don’t know what I’m doing and only she does.”

“I know,” Gary sighed and looked at the girl in question again. “I’ve tried to get her to back off, but she just calls me a bully and runs off. I don’t understand why she can’t take some constructive criticism.”

“Maybe, you should just let her fall. I mean, I know it’s mean, but sometimes you can’t help people. Especially ones that don’t want to be helped.”

“Yeah, maybe you’re right,” Gary said and then shrugged it off. He knew he couldn’t save everyone.

“When she does fall, we can help pick her back up. I don’t think she’ll ever make a Mutineer, but she’s still a person and that means we help if we can,” Harry said kindly. He didn’t want his brother to think he was heartless to the girl, but sometimes you really do have to let someone hit rock bottom before they will take your help.

“Okay, I’ll just keep an eye on her,” Gary conceded and they went back to their studies.

It was later that night right after the twins had their nightly mental talk that Sally came to visit Harry. It was his night for training anyway, so he was expecting her. They couldn’t sneak away like they used to, because of the Aurors having the map. So they only went over wand movements and new spells. The secret Mutineer study groups were still a go, because they never studied outside of curfew.

After about an hour of training Sally brought up the subject of Peter. “Well,” she said, “Peter has
been spotted near the castle.”

“What?” Harry yelled. “Why didn’t you tell us?” he asked baffled as to why she was so casual about it.

“And just what would you have done?” she asked.

“Well, we would have… we might… we could have done something,” he said indignantly.

“No, you really couldn’t have,” she said with a shake of her head, causing her pigtails to bob around her cute little face. She was aging with the boys and now looked to be a thirteen year old.

“Why would you say that? Isn’t this the type of stuff you’re training us for?”

“Look, by the time the Aurors got to where he was— the rat was gone. They’ve also chased off Rita a few times. Those two are just too small to capture. The second they hear someone coming their way they hide and run,” Sally explained firmly.

“Oh, well in that case I guess I understand, but I don’t like that Gary doesn’t know that Peter is somewhere near. How is he supposed to be on his guard if he doesn’t know he is in danger?” he asked very concerned about his twin.

“You should be on the lookout anyway. Both of you know that that man knows the castle as well as you do. Never let your guard down,” she snapped, now worried that training might not be enough.

“We are,” Harry snarled back, “but we can be more alert if we know what’s going on.”

“That’s why I am telling you now.”

“Oh, yeah, well that’s better then. Why do you think Mum and Dad are keeping it quiet? I mean, I know they don’t want us to worry, but…” Harry trailed off as he sat back on his headboard, calmer now.

“Don’t you remember what I told you when you were younger? Parents, like yours, don’t want their kids fighting if they can help it. And you have to admit that you and your brother would charge off to face a foe,” she said getting more comfortable at the foot of the bed. “Besides, I don’t think your parents know.”

“Yeah, but, we’re not kids anymore,” Harry pouted. “Why wouldn’t they know? Don’t you tell them everything?”

“No, I spend my time with you and your brother, I let you know stuff and you tell them. And yes, you are only children. Just because you are more powerful than most adults doesn’t mean you are not a kid. You are thirteen years old. Until you are seventeen and make your own way in the world you are still a kid.” She glared at the teenage boy in front of her. She knew stuff like this was going to happen, that didn’t mean she had to like it.

“Whatever, I’m going to sleep.” And he put his crystal on and rolled over ignoring the deity on his bed.

Sally shook her head sadly and disappeared.

Meanwhile at the Manor

The Hunters, with their new members, gathered around the usual table in the Potter Manor. The new
members consisted of; Mayur Patil, Aric Davies, Natalie Greengrass. They now made Team Three.

“Okay, now that everyone is settled, what do we know?” James asked from his spot at the head of the table.

“I have no new news,” Augusta sighed.

“It’s okay,” Lily said patting the woman’s hand. “There’s only so much you can get from gossip.”

“I know, but now I feel useless,” the elderly woman said. An out of character slump of her shoulders showed just how she felt.

“Why don’t you join me and Albert, we’re still looking up ways to keep the kids safe,” Lily offered. Now that the hunting teams had the Dark artifact crystals and they knew how to cleanse the horcruxes, the research team needed something to do.

Augusta brightened and nodded her head. It was something.

Amelia stood to be heard. “My Aurors have reported that both Rita and Peter were seen around Hogwarts and Hogsmeade this afternoon.” She sat and waited for the storm to be over.

Just as she predicted the parents all jumped to their feet and started shouting. After about five minutes of this, James used his wand to produce a large ‘bang’ and got everyone’s attention. “Come on, settle down,” he said as he retook his seat. “I know you’re worried but let the Aurors do their job, okay? Amelia, can you tell us what happened?”

The Head of the DMLE adjusted her monocle and looked sternly at each person there. “Shacklebolt saw Pettigrew on the map and immediately informed the rest of his team. They converged on the area, but there was nothing there, Shacklebolt thinks he was either in the walls or fled.” She reported taking a drink of water and continued. “It was Savage’s team that spotted Rita; they think she is some type of insect Animagus. They couldn’t find her either.” She was just as frustrated as the rest of them, but she had faith in her Aurors.

“That rat coward will probably stay away from the castle now. Good thing he doesn’t know about the new maps,” Sirius said smugly.

“Do we tell the children?” Natalie Greengrass asked, worried for her daughters, yet unsure as to whether or not to give them this type of information.

“I’m pretty sure they’ve already been informed. The new ghosts are adamant that everyone involved needs every scrap of information in order to protect themselves. Since we don’t control the ghosts there is little we can do to stop them passing things on,” James explained, he too was worried about the kids knowing things he felt should be handled by adults. He and Lily had argued with Sally all summer about it, but what could you do against a deity.

“I’m not sure I like that,” Mayur said with a worried brow.

“There is little we can do. Not even Dumbledore can exorcise them. That and I like that they are spies for us,” Lily said, she wasn’t as concerned about the ghosts as she was about her reckless sons.

“Yes, well, if it wasn’t for the Hufflepuff Soldier, I would be having a harder time this year teaching your children,” Remus added.

There were nods around the table, they had all been told the stories of the Soldier over the summer and were thankful to the man… err ghost.
“How goes the library and kiosk?” James asked Sirius.

Sirius sat up straighter. “Now there is good news. The library is almost done. It should be open by the time the kids get their first Hogsmeade weekend. There’ll be a map in the back room that any parent whose kid is not enjoying the village will man, so mostly the second year parents. Xeno is publishing the opening and the kiosk is going to be right outside the library. We also decided to sell the Quibbler there and the one in Diagon Alley. Now that Xeno has started publishing political news, we think more people will read it. Oh, he is still reporting on unusual animals, but they are in the back pages,” he said enthusiastically, he was excited. Between this new stand and the one in Diagon Alley they would be set financially if there was a war. Though this group's function was to make sure there wasn’t one, it was better to be safe than sorry.

“That is wonderful, now maybe more students will learn,” Natalie enthused. Her family being pure-blood was expected to act a certain way. Had it not been for the Potters asking them to join this group her daughters would have grown up with one or two friends. With a library in Hogsmeade then even more pure-bloods could be swayed to more open thinking. There was hope for the wizarding world yet, in her opinion.

“Yes, it is good news. Now how goes the hunt for the horcruxes?” James said changing the topic. It was getting late and he wanted to end the meeting soon.

“Team Two has nothing new to add,” said a disgruntled Wayne Sr.

“Team One has nothing,” Sirius added with a pout.

“Team Three hasn’t started yet,” Mayur said with a smirk, trying to lighten the mood. Sirius barked with laughter causing the rest of the group to relax a little.

“Amelia, maybe you can get Shacklebolt or Savage to talk to the Grey Lady,” Remus suggested tapping his chin in thought. “I’ve got a good thing going with the Hufflepuff Soldier, so I’ll ask him to chat with her. Or he can talk to the Bloody Baron.”

“That might work, if Riddle put a curse on the DADA, then it is possible he hid something in the castle,” Amelia said nodding her head in agreement. She’d get on the mirror when she got home and talk to her team.

Hey Mayur, can you stay behind for a minute, the rest of you go home. We’ll meet again in a week,” James said standing up and leading everyone to the Floo Room.

Mayur stayed behind. “What can I do for you?” he asked taking a seat in the Game Room. he always liked it in here.

“I was just wondering if the spell you spoke of could get rid of a horcrux on a living being? We have reason to believe that Riddle made a human a horcrux by accident. We can’t tell you who, we’re under a vow, but if your spell can rid this person of it without putting them into a coma, like the powder, we might be able to convince the person we made the vow to, to let us bring you in,” James said quickly, not wanting the man to think they were withholding vital information again.

“No, I’m sorry the spell would be harmful to a person. It is made to rip the soul out of the item. There is no guarantee that it would not rip the person’s soul out and leave the horcrux behind,” Mayur said with a sad shake of his head.

The Potter adults deflated, though Sally had told them that Harry might need the horcrux to save his life they were still hopeful that they could remove it without the powder.
“Well, thanks anyway,” James said standing then shaking the man’s hand. Lily then accompanied him to the Floo room and said her own farewell. She then joined James and the two settled in front of the telly and didn’t think about anything important for a few hours. Just mindless shows to relieve some of their tension.
October 30, 1993

The chatter this morning was loud. It was the first Hogsmeade weekend for most of the Mutineers and everyone was excited. Well, not everyone, Ginny, Astoria and Spencer were all moping. Luna was just sitting confident that the rest of the Mutineers would bring her back something. She hummed a little tune under her breath and just waited.

The four second years were sitting at the Ravenclaw table with Harry, Terry, Mandy and Padma. As the meal drew to an end and it was getting closer to the time the upper-years would depart for Hogsmeade the three kids got more and more glum.

“Cheer up guys. We’ll make sure to bring you back something. What would you like?” Harry asked the three gloomy second years.

“I was wondering if you could take my earrings to Dervish & Banges to see if they can fix them. The nargles have started to populate in the dorm and I want to make sure they stay away from my head,” Luna asked as she started to take off her radish earrings.

“Ummm, Luna, I don’t think they do jewelry. I think they only do gizmos and tools and such,” Harry said cautiously, he didn’t want to offend the girl. Even though he never saw a nargle, or any of the creatures Luna talked about, she was rarely wrong about someone’s head being muddled when she said they were infected. But, he truly doubted that the earrings actually did anything.

“Ohhhh, well then can you see if the shop has any instruments to help keep one’s head clear?” Luna said putting her earrings back on.

“Anything for you, little Luna,” Harry said with a smile, he was sure they didn’t have anything like that, but he would buy something that this quirky girl would like. “Now, what would you three like?” He turned to the others.

“The twins said they would pick me up some candy, so I’m good. I just want to go with you guys,” Ginny said with a full on pout, lips sticking out, arms crossed and watery eyes.

“I know Ginny, but you can go next year, yeah,” Harry said patting her arm.

“Daphne said she’d pick me up some new quills,” Astoria piped up, though she was unhappy that she wasn’t going at least she had a sister that would buy her things.

“I don’t have siblings, so you can get me some Blood Lollies,” Spenser said, perking up a little.
“Ewww,” said the two girls, with wrinkles of their noses. It was kind of cute the way they did that together.

“Yeah I can do that,” Harry said. Then put up his hand to stop the younger boy handing him money. “I’ll get this one. You can give me money on the next weekend, okay?”

Spenser just shrugged and put his coins away. “Thanks, Harry.”

Breakfast came to a close and all the Mutineers gathered in the Entry Hall. They would walk down as one big group and split up when they got to the village. Everyone was dressing in their warmest clothes, it was coming to the end of autumn in Scotland and it was cold. So pants, jumpers, hats, cloaks or coats, scarves, mittens and boots were mandatory wear for most of the students, though some of the girls braved the weather in long thick woolen skirts.

After a head count they all went to the gate. Mr. Filch was there checking permission slips. He face was in its usual snarl as he looked over each piece of paper handed to him. Harry wondered how a squib would be able to tell if it was forged or not, then he brushed it off as it being unimportant.

The walk to the village was long and cold. You had to go down the same road the carriages came up at the beginning of the year. On the walk down you went by the Shrieking Shack, an old looking house that was three stories high with boarded windows and doors. The yard was overrun with thorny bushes and waist high grass. It was said to be the most haunted place in Europe.

“I always wondered why the villagers are afraid of a haunted house,” Padma said as she looked at the run down house in question. “They all attended Hogwarts, which has ghosts and a poltergeist. So they know that spirits can’t harm them. I never understood that.”

“Don’t know,” Gary answered her with a shrug. “Maybe it is the shrieking that gets them. The house is supposed to sound like people are being murdered, but whenever it is investigated there’s nothing there. We know why that is, but it’s not like we can tell them.”

All the Mutineers grew up with the stories of the Marauders, they all knew about Remus’ affliction. This year he would run deep in the Forbidden Forest far away from the school, with Padfoot and Prongs. That way they could keep an eye out for Pettigrew.

“I know,” Padma said, “I was just commenting on how stupid it was to be scared of ghosts.” She then turned to her twin and talked about what shops they would visit.

Gary shrugged again and turned his attention to Susan. “Where are you going to visit first?”

“I was thinking of going to Gladrags and see if I can get a new winter cloak. This one is getting too short and Auntie gave me enough to get a new one. Do you want to come with?” she asked hopefully, just because Auntie said she couldn’t date didn’t mean she couldn’t hang out with her crush. She would have snuck around, but now that the Aurors were there and they were armed with the maps, she wasn’t taking any chances. She did curse the fact that she missed out on some quality time last year. Oh, well there was always next year.

“Yeah, I can go with you. I need some new gloves. Hermione’s cat chewed a hole in my left one.” He lifted his hand to show the hole that was between the thumb and forefinger.

“Parvati says that cat is a menace and that Granger won’t corral it in anyway. ‘He is a cat,’ she says ‘that’s what cats do’. Honestly people should be more respectful of other people’s stuff. I understand that cats chew up stuff, but how would she feel if I brought a cat that liked to gnaw on books and lent it to Lavender and all her precious books were ruined?” she asked with a huff.
“I know, I tried to tell her that, but she is one stubborn girl,” Gary said with a shake of his head. That was one conversation he never wanted to have again.

Susan just nodded her head and they talked about the other shops they might visit.

Harry was talking to Daphne about going to Honeydukes to get the second years some candy to cheer them up. She thought it was a good idea, along with the quills she was getting for Astoria. They would save Luna’s gift for last.

Once they rounded the bend to where they could see the village, everyone stopped and stared. Though they went from the train station to the castle, they saw very little of Hogsmeade on the journey. So now they were taking in all the sights.

Hogsmeade was a small, yet picturesque village. There were shops lining High Street and cottages laid behind them. The shops much like the ones in Diagon Alley looked like they just stepped out of the Victorian age. They stood about two stories tall and were wood paneled, slatted roofs and had large display windows. The cottages were tiny with thatched roofs.

The only building that was slightly out of place was a three story white building with plain windows and no chimney. On the front of that building were the words Hogsmeade Library. It did look like an effort was made to blend the library with the village, in that the paneling was wooden and the roof was slatted.

The Mutineers hadn’t been told about the library, so this came as a surprise to all of them. A lot of the parents were lining the steps with big smiles on their faces. They were waving to the awestruck children. Villagers that didn’t work in the shops were crowded around the front, watching to see how this new attraction would go over with the kids, after all this was supposed to be a study free time for them. Little did they know that this library was more for the villagers than the students.

Hermione was the first to go the library steps. She was dragging her two female friends behind her. That broke the students out of their stupor and they all surged forward to see what was going on.

“Welcome, everyone, to the opening of the Hogsmeade Library,” Xeno said with his spell amplified voice, from his place at the top of the stairs. “We wanted to wait until the first student weekend to show you the wonders this facility holds. Most of you have seen the magic null rooms in many of your friends’ houses. This library has one too. It holds ten computers so that you may enjoy the wonders of the world. Worry not, parents, each computer is child friendly,” he said with a chuckle.

“This library also has books that are not sold in the shops. You may check them out for the period of one visiting weekend to the next,” Sirius said with a smile. “We have set it up in age appropriate sections. Age lines and spells are on each book and section, so don’t try and read something your parents won’t let you.” He mock glared at the Weasley twins, who of course had mischievous twinkles in their eyes. A large groan was heard from the more studious of the students.

“Those spells on the books make it so you can’t even have older kids get them for you,” Mayur took up the explanation. “If you try and read them there will be nothing there. Remember, all you older kids, if the book gets damaged, your name was the last one it was lent out to. You will have to pay the fines and replace the book. So I wouldn’t if I were you. There is a pamphlet explaining all the rules for borrowing the books. No adult book will leave the premises.”

“Now that explanations are over, welcome to the new Hogsmeade Library,” Xeno said as he opened the double doors at the front of the building with a flourish. “Oh, and if you are in need of crystals and mirrors, there is a kiosk in the front of the library for your needs.” The adults had decided to put the stand inside so that it was more easily watched. That and there were no other booths in
Hogsmeade and they didn’t want to distract from the image the village liked to maintain.

Some students went in the library to check it out. Most went about the other shops, because who wanted to study on a Hogsmeade weekend. Some of the Mutineers went to talk to their parents.

“So,” Harry started with a lifting of his eyebrows as he stood in front of the adults, “this is some surprise. Any reason you didn’t tell us?”

“We wanted to surprise you,” Lily offered with an innocent smile. “We knew you guys don’t need to go here, but we didn’t want word to get out about it before others could learn about it. This is mostly for the village and the upper-years that aren’t in your group.”

“Okay, I guess that’s alright,” Gary said not really bothered with the surprise. “We’ll just be going now. You’re not going to follow us are you?” he asked with a narrowed eyed glare.

“No, we’ll just be hanging around the shops and the pubs, making sure no one is threatening you kids,” James answered with a chuckle.

“Good,” came a chorus of young voices. And the children turned from the library to do their shopping, breaking off into groups of four or five.

“I want to go and see what the library looks like after the crowd thins,” Padma said as she, Terry, Mandy, Harry and Daphne went to the quill shop, Scrivenshaft's. This was a small shop, which only carried quills, sharpening tools and parchment.

“We can do that,” Terry said as he looked at a never-out quill.

“I want to check out the kiosk, I hear that Luna has made a new crystal and I want to hear it,” Mandy said.

“Really, I thought they said she was too young to make them,” Harry stated wondering how he could have possibly missed that.

“They put a spell on her voice to make it sound older,” Mandy explained. “That’s what my mum said anyway. They did it this summer, while you guys… well not hiding… but keeping yourselves to mostly boys’ houses.” She picked up some parchment and quills and headed to the cashier.

Harry just shrugged and got some new quill knives for him and Gary. And soon the group left and headed to Honeydukes. As they entered the candy shop Harry looked around in awe at all the candy.

There were rows, shelves and bins of all sorts of candies. Stairs on either side led to more candy on the second floor. They had never seen so many sweets in one place there were things like; Acid Pops, Bat's Blood Soup, Bertie Bott's Every Flavour Beans, Blood-flavoured lollipops, Cauldron Cakes, Charm Choc, Chocoballs, Chocolate Cauldrons, Chocolate Frogs, Chocolate Skeletons, Chocolate Wands, Choco-Loco and much, much more. Candy as far as the eye could see. The kids were in heaven. Harry paid special attention to the chocolate that Honeydukes was famous for.

They spent an hour just going over their choices. Harry did remember to get Spencer his Blood Lollies and picked up some packages of Chocolate Frogs for the girls. One can never have too much chocolate.

The group went to the Three Broomsticks to get some lunch and butterbeer. They sat at a simple wooden table, with plain wooden chairs to complement, in the back of the pub and just enjoyed the cozy atmosphere.
Madam Rosmerta was a kind middle aged woman of average height; she had curly blonde hair and a pleasant rounded face. Her smile lit up the room as she wove her way through tables, floating trays of food and drink.

The kids had a great lunch of Sheppard’s pie, chips and butterbeer to drink. As they sat and let their food settle they watched and listened to the customers wonder about the library. Most seemed happy that it was there, this was a wizard village after all and they seldom saw new things. There, of course, were those that said nothing good could come of something so Muggle.

Harry and his troop soon left the comfy atmosphere of the Three Broomsticks and went to the library. Inside the doors you could see rows and rows of books. There were signs above each row that told what that particular aisle held and what age you had to be to enter. It seemed to be set up so younger year books were on the first floor and progress each floor up. There was a large counter in the front manned by a strict looking older lady. There was a door off to the side of the counter that said ‘Adults Only’. Harry went up to Sirius to ask about it.

“Padfoot, what’s up with that door?” he asked as he pointed to the door in question.

“That is mostly Grey books, curses, counter-curses and such. I got a lot of the parents to donate from their personal libraries. What they couldn’t donate we got copied; those books can’t leave the room. We kept it by the check out so that it can be watched at all times,” Sirius explained. “Why did you think it was for?” he asked raising an eyebrow and looking sternly at the oldest Potter twin.

“Ewww, not that, get your mind out of the gutter,” Harry said and pushed his dad’s best friend away. Sirius just laughed as he stumbled back a little. “Do we need to have The Talk?”

“No! Just no, Dad already scarred me and Gary, thank you very much.” He could hear his friends laughing at him, so he turned and glared, making them laugh harder. “It’s not funny.” He pouted folding his arms across his chest and almost stomped his foot.

“Come on, kiddos, let me show you the computer room,” Sirius said as he ruffled Harry’s always messy hair. He jerked his head to the archway in the back of the room and started leading them there.

Inside the archway were two rows of five cubicles each with a state of the art computer. The chairs were regular rolling chairs and the floor was tile. There was a telly in the corner that seemed to be broadcasting a Muggle news station. The volume was lowered as to not interfere with those using the computers. Most of the cubicles were occupied.

Hermione was in the furthest cubicle and was showing her friends the wonders of the Muggle world. Faye and Leanne already knew all this from their time with the Mutineers, but Hermione wasn’t listening as she went on and on about the things she thought they should know. Granted these two girls spent most of their time on the Potter computers looking up fashion, but still they did do their Muggle studies on the machines. Ron and Seamus were nowhere in sight.

“So when you said they were age appropriate, what did you mean?” Terry asked as he sat at the only available computer.

“There is a blocking program so adult stuff can’t be shown unless you get the password from the librarian. And you need to prove you’re of age. Even then you can’t view anything overly graphic,” Sirius explained and showed them what he meant by googling the word sex. A screen pulled up letting them know that this search was invalid and locked the computer.

“Isn’t that going to take time to unlock?” Harry asked impressed, he wondered if his parents set up
something similar at home.

“Nay, we’ve got a key disk for it. I just wanted to show we’re not running a peep shop. We worked hard to get these programs installed, what with all you hormonal kids running around. Don’t want the parents or professors getting into a tizzy over anything.” Sirius then guided the kids out of the room, let the librarian know he locked computer nine. “Mandy, try and go down that aisle,” he suggested to the dark haired Ravenclaw girl.

“I am not sure I trust you,” she said giving him the stink eye.

“Don’t worry I didn’t set it up,” he said laughing.

“Alright,” she said still cautious and then tried to go down the aisle that was designated to fourteen and older. She got to the first book and was about to read the title when she was gently levitated back out. She landed on her bum and glared at the laughing boys. Padma giggled, but at least she helped her friend up and asked if she was okay. “Yeah, just embarrassed,” she said wiping the nonexistent dust off her pants.

“So what did Dumbledore have to say about this? I can’t imagine he was happy about it,” Susan asked waving her hand to indicate the whole building.

“Oh, you’d be right about that. He tried to stop us by going to the Board, but we showed them all the precautions we were taking and they backed us. Besides, the only thing they could do is ban you kids from coming if they felt it wasn’t set up right. They really don’t have any say about the shops in the village,” Sirius said chuckling when he remembered the look on the Headmasters face that he couldn’t argue about the opening.

“This is a brilliant set up, but we still have some shopping to do,” Harry said grabbing Daphne’s hand and pulling her to the front of the library.

“You kids take care and be careful, yeah,” Sirius called to them as they wandered away.

“Not a problem, Padfoot, we will,” Harry answered back with a wave over his shoulder.

They went to the booth in the front and got the new crystal, plus a few extra for the second years, and exited the library. They made their way to Dervish & Banges to find something for Luna. This shop was noisy as gizmos and clocks were making wheezing and ticking noises. All manner of things were moving and zooming around.

The kids looked around for about a half an hour until they came upon a watch that showed your mood. The face had words of different colors and there was only one arm, shaped like a real arm with a hand at the end. At the end of the hand one finger pointed out what mood you were in. Terry tried it on and the hand moved to the pale green word of relaxed. Harry tried it on and the hand moved to the dark grey of cautious. They felt this was the perfect gift for Luna, if only because there was a blue word that said muddled.

It was a happy group of students, of all ages, that returned to the castle that evening. Luna loved her new watch and Ginny, Astoria and Spencer were thankful for the candy.

Too bad it wasn’t as good of a day for James and Lily. After the students went back to school, Pearl Jackson had spotted Wormtail in the village on the map in the back room of the library. The Potter adults immediately set out to capture him as the rest of the adults fanned out to make sure he didn’t get away. The Potters spotted the rat at the end of an alley between Dervish & Banges and Dominic Maestro’s.
“Come back, you coward,” James bellowed shooting spell after spell at the quickly moving rodent.

Peter, being good at escaping, dove behind a trash bin and into the hole in the wall at the end of the alley. Behind this wall was an open field, they would have to go around all the shops to get to it.

“Dammit,” James shouted throwing whatever he could get his hands on at the wall.

“Come on, James, let’s go back to the library and see if he’s still in the village,” Lily said grabbing her angry husband’s arm and led him away.

Peter escaped once again, but they weren’t letting their guard down. Now that he had been spotted twice they knew he was after the twins.

Hphphp

AN: Just wanted to jump in here and stop anyone from saying that cats don’t chew things. My cat, bless her little heart, chews up her scratching post and any flip-flop that enters the house. Plus, I’ve had cats that chew up my clothes in the past. So yeah they do.

Also a reminder that I brought computers up to the 2000’s, but I am not a computer programmer, so if my locking system is not correct, feel free to tell me the correct way and I’ll change it. All I know is I can’t look up adult entertainment on my library’s computers. Not that I’ve tried in many years, but hey I was young once. I was informed by my beta, darrelldeam, that my method is doable, I would still love to hear your opinion.
Worries Over Stubborn Women

AN: thanks to my betas, darrelldream and alix33, for checking this over. All mistakes are my own, especially since I have a bad habit of adding things and not sending it back to them.

Disclaimer: I don’t own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belongs to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her.

Hphphp

December 17, 1993

The Great Hall was decorated in the usual Christmas frills with twelve towering Christmas trees, festoons of holly, mistletoe, and other Christmas-oriented accents. Plus, real live fairies, which flew around the trees. A warm, dry snow fell from the Enchanted Ceiling. Elsewhere in the castle, everlasting icicles were applied to the banisters of the Grand Staircase and the suits of armor were charmed to sing carols. All and all it was very festive.

Gary was sitting at the Gryffindor table with Neville and Dean. They were talking about the Boxing Day party being held this year by the Longbottoms. Lavender and Parvati were on the other side of the table talking about girl things. Everyone was excited to be going home tomorrow and hopefully relaxing from the stress of having to keep on the lookout for Pettigrew.

They trusted the Aurors that were guarding the castle, but there were only six of them and they could only be stretched so far. So the Mutineers had been manning the maps and using the ghosts to report anything they had seen. So far that rat had shown up twice, but he kept disappearing out the tunnels and into the Forest or the caves around Hogsmeade. The Aurors searched the caves and came up with nothing. This man was very good at remaining hidden and immune to summoning spells.

The biggest downfall of the maps was that if there were more than ten people in one given area then all the names crowded together and it was hard to pick out one individual. Another glitch was that you could only look at part of the map at a time. So if you were looking at the Forbidden Forest area, then you couldn’t watch the front doors or the secret tunnels. These were the reasons the students were helping, the color coding helped a lot.

Ron and his group came into the Hall and sat a little bit away from the other third years, distracting Gary from his thoughts. He glanced over at the group and noted that Hermione looked horrible; her hair was frizzier than ever, there were dark rings under her very tired looking eyes. She looked like she hadn’t slept in months. Her book bag was packed as full as it could be, almost to the point of the seams ripping. Gary made a note to send her one of the expandable ones, either anonymously or have one of her dorm mates give it to her.

“Lavender,” he said quietly getting the girl’s attention, “What’s up with Hermione?”

The blonde girl huffed in frustration. “I don’t know. She won’t talk to us. We can’t even get anything from Faye and Leanne. When we ask, we’re told ‘everything is okay’, even though you can tell just by looking at her, it’s not.” She sent a small glare at the two girls in question.

“All I know is that she is studying all the time, even at night. That and that ungrateful group use her for homework help,” Parvati scoffed. “More like homework doing. I’ll never understand why such a smart girl puts up with them.” She sent her glare to the small group and then wrinkled her nose and the appalling manner the boys were exhibiting.
“We’ve tried to help, she is a Gryffindor, but she just brushes us off as unimportant,” Lavender said softly. “We did finally get her cat to behave. It was Padma who asked Flitwick about it. He showed her, then she showed us, a spell that would pop up a spray bottle and squirt water on the cat anytime it starts chewing on clothes, so that’s one less thing for her to stress over, not that she’s thankful.”

“Well, I know how important you two are and my gloves are grateful of that spell,” Gary said as he patted their hands in consolation. “If it weren’t for you two Harry and I would’ve been blamed for that whole Chamber of Secrets thing last year. So don’t let them get you down.” He winked at them and then turned his attention back to his two male roommates.

Harry was sitting at the Ravenclaw table, enjoying his meal of steamed fish, vegetables and rice. He was glad that there were healthier choices now than there had been in his first year. He wasn’t sure who talked to the Board about better meals, but he was just happy someone did.

Terry and Mandy were discussing what they might get for Christmas. Padma was talking with Luna about the Longbottom’s ball and what she and Parvati would be wearing. The Patils didn’t celebrate Christmas, but they enjoyed going to the parties held during that season. The Mutineers, thanks to their childhood lessons, understood this and didn’t try and get them to celebrate, though they did give them gifts on Boxing Day, so they had everything the other Mutineers had. The Patil parents understood and allowed their girls these gifts.

“Hey, Spencer, is your family going to the Longbottom ball?” He asked just before pudding popped up.

“Yeah, we’re real excited about it. Mum said that it has been a rough year for the parents, so she’s happy that we get to kick back for a day,” the younger boy said with a bobbing of his head. His mum had been manning the map in Hogsmeade; even on the days the kids weren’t there. The parents were determined to get the escaped convict.

Harry nodded his head in understanding. His parents looked like they had had little sleep in the past few months as well. He knew from his nightly talks with them that the hunting teams were at a standstill. Sally could only tell him that Voldemort was not seen by anyone passing over. So they had no idea if Peter had found his master or not. Everyone was getting frustrated with the lack of progress.

The meal ended with Dumbledore’s usual cheery Christmas message, though he did add a warning to keep alert. Gary and Harry met up in the Entrance Hall so they could have a face to face talk. Mental talking was all well and good, but sometimes it was nice just to see someone’s face and body language.

“You know that warning you gave about Hermione crashing? I think it is going to happen soon,” Gary said as they leaned against the wall just inside the large doors. They watched as Ron and Hermione passed by, arguing as usual.

Harry looked at the girl in question and noted how frazzled she looked and nodded his head in agreement. “Just keep a watch; you’ll know when to step in. You might have to get on Ron’s and Seamus’ bad side, but if you think she is worthy of friendship, it should be worth it. Do you have any idea what’s going on with her?”

“Only that she is doing more studying than three elective classes warrant.”

“Three, Gary, she’s taking all five,” Harry corrected in a slightly louder voice.

“How do you know that?”
“Well, I was talking to Sally Anne and she told me that Hermione is in her Divination class. But she is in our Arithmancy class as well. Spencer told me that she has been seen leaving Muggle Studies at the same time you guys are in Runes,” he explained with a sad shake of his head. He did wonder how the two gossips of Gryffindor missed those tidbits of information. They were in Divination as well, but then again with the whole group watching for the rat; it was easy to overlook one girl. While Harry didn’t like her, he kept an eye on her for Gary’s sake.

Gary shook his head as well. “Well that at least explains why she’s so stressed out. She must be using a time turner or something. I wonder how they got that past the Board. Those things are dangerous, and to give it to a thirteen year old girl, what are they thinking?”

“Don’t know, but if you’re right she’s not using it to sleep. So she will be crashing soon, unless she gets extra sleep during the holidays. Knowing what little I know about her though, she’ll spend most of her time doing homework and not resting.”

“Yeah,” Gary said knowingly, he figured that as well. He then he pushed himself off the wall and faced his twin. “I’m going to get moving. I told Lavender and Parvati that I needed to talk with them. So, I’ll catch you later.”

“Yeah, for some reason Padma and Luna think I need consulting on my dress robes, so I’ve got to go as well,” Harry said as he straightened and gave his brother a clap on the shoulder. “Good luck with Hermione. Still don’t know what you see in her, but I trust your judgement.”

The two parted and went to their dorms, had their talk with their dorm mates and made sure they were packed for the next day.

The same night at the Manor

All the parents were gathered once again at the Potter Manor, they were in one of the larger dining rooms. They were all chattering about the kids coming home for the holidays and of course the Longbottom ball.

“Alright everyone, settle down,” Lily said loudly as she stood by the head of the table. “I’m glad you all could make it, what with Christmas right around the corner. We only have a few things to discuss and then we’ll let you get back to your preparations.” She looked tired, her normal bouncy hair was pulled back in a sloppy ponytail, and her face was devoid of any makeup charms. The bags under her eyes were pronounced, making the dullness of the normally bright green eyes more noticeable.

The group calmed down and gave their attention to the Potters, hoping it wasn’t bad news. Though with the way this year was going so far, it probably was.

“We have a favor to ask. We need all of you to look in your Family Grimoires and see if you can find a spell that will transfer a horcrux to another object,” James said with a bleak look on his face. Sirius, Frank and himself had already combed through theirs and found nothing — only ways to destroy the items. Mayur’s spell was the only thing that came close and they did study it, but like the man said, it pulls the soul directly from the object, so they couldn’t use it on Harry. They were hoping to not have to use the powder on his eldest son, even though it wouldn’t kill him, it would put him into a coma and they wanted to prevent that.

“Why?” Aric Davis asked. He had no problem doing what they asked, but Family Spells were usually kept in the… well, family. So they better have a really good reason for asking.

“We have reason to believe that Riddle made a human horcrux. If we use the powder then we’d have to explain why that person was in a coma. We can’t tell you who it is, we’re under a vow,”

“Redemption”
James answered running his hand over his exhausted face. It had been a hard couple of months with the opening of the library, watching for Peter, hunting and cleansing the *horcruxes* and worrying over their headstrong boys—he and Lily were exhausted.

“I don’t understand. Why can’t we just put the person into a coma?” Rachelle Brocklehurst asked, many of the parents nodding with her.

“I can’t tell you without breaking my vow. Needless to say, if this person goes into a coma it would draw too much attention to us and the kids. That’s all I can tell you,” James sighed his face took on an earnest expression trying to convey that it really was all he could impart.

“Alright, James, we can see how it is hurting you. We will do our best,” Mayur said looking around the table and seeing that most of the parents agreed, even if they didn’t understand.

“Thank you,” Lily said sincerely her face brightened with hope.

Remus stood and got everyone’s attention. “On to some better news, well sort of. I have talked to the Hufflepuff Soldier and he had talked to the Bloody Baron. He informed me that the Baron died going after Helena Ravenclaw when she fled the castle. It seems that Helena at some point after graduating stole her mother's diadem and ran away to Albania. When Rowena became fatally ill she had hoped to see her daughter one last time, so she sent the Bloody Baron, who harbored an unrequited love for Helena, to find her.

“He chased her down to Albania and in a rage the Baron murdered Helena when she refused to return with him, before he committed suicide out of regret for what he had done. He and Helena eventually returned as ghosts to Hogwarts, where as you know both became their House Ghost. The diadem was hidden in the jungle, thought to be lost in time.”

He paused to take a drink of tea then continued. “The Hufflepuff Soldier has tried to talk to the Grey Lady, but she won’t talk to him. We know, because of Quirrell, that Riddle was in Albania before the kids started Hogwarts, so it only stands to reason that he somehow picked up the diadem and possibly made it a *horcrux*. We only have to find a way to get the Grey Lady to let us know what she talked to Riddle about when he was in school,” he finished with a half-hearted shrug and then slumped to his seat, he was just as worn-out as the Potters. Plus, he had teaching and the full moon to add to his weariness.

“Why this is good news, is because we think it’s the last *horcrux* to be found, besides the human one they talked about earlier,” Sirius added pointing at the Potters, who just unenthusiastically nodded their heads. “All we have to do is see if one of the new ghosts can talk to the Grey Lady and then hopefully we’ll be one step closer to ending Riddle for good.”

This news did garner a lot of hopeful whispers and put the parents in a better mood. James and Lily weren’t quite as confident, they had talked to the boys to see if Sally could talk to the Grey Lady, but even she wasn’t able to get that shy ghost to talk. Sally told the boys she was going to bring Rowena back for a night during the Christmas break, on the winter solstice, to see if the mother could talk some sense into her daughter. So there was some hope. Too bad they missed out on Samhain when it was easier to bring the dead down to earth.

The meeting broke up on that positive note and the group assured the Potters they would look in their Family Grimoires and libraries to see if they could find what they were looking for.

*December 22, 1993*

Harry was sitting in his room getting ready for Sally, he had on some workout clothes and was eager
to do some dueling. He and Gary needed to get with the Mutineers over the vacation and talk about getting some exercise done during the school year. Maybe they could use the courtyard that flying lessons were held in.

Sally popped up on his bed. “Sit down a minute, I have some news,” she said as she sat cross-legged on the foot of the bed.

“What’s up?” Harry said settling at the head of the bed.

“I brought Rowena down yesterday to talk to her stubborn daughter. It was a huge emotional scene,” she said with a shake of her head and a waving of her hands. “You try and get two crying ghosts with centuries of angst to talk rationally — it was hard, I tell ya. Anyway, after what felt like hours of hormonal wailing, I finally got them to talk about Riddle. It seems that he charmed Helena into telling him where the diadem was and when he came for the interview with Dumbledore he hid it in the Room of Requirements. So when you boys get back to the castle we’ll go and get it. Make sure you bring a lead box with you.”

“That’s great,” he said and when he heard his voice crack he blushed. ‘Damn puberty.’ It was bad enough that he and Gary had hit a growth spurt, making them all awkward and clumsy, hence the need for exercise. The voice cracking was just plain embarrassing.

Sally just giggled and nodded. “It is good news.” She wasn’t worried about the one in his forehead, though she did understand why his parents were.

Harry told his family the good news the next day and plans were made involving a lead box and Tilly the house elf. The rest of the holiday vacation was spent relaxed and joyful. The Potters had given out gift certificates to the kids, the Quidditch fanatics were given a week at a summer training camp. For the ones less sports enthused, they handed out passes to museums in France and Rome. Gary gave the backpack to Hermione and signed it from Secret Santa.

The Longbottom ball was a complete success, everyone relaxed and let the worries they held onto all year melt away and just enjoyed the time with friends and families.

Hphphp

AN: Oops I forgot all about the Animagus training for the kids, so add your two knuts worth and let me know who you think should be able to transform (remember only a few will be able to), and what they should be. Thanks to, sgdghsrth, the reviewer who reminded me. Also thanks to, JannaKalderash, for the spray bottle spell.
It was the day before the kids were to go back to Hogwarts and the Mutineers and their parents were holding a party at the Greengrass Manor for the children. They wanted the kids to have one more day of relaxation before the stresses started again. Now that each estate was manned with a map, all of the parents felt safer letting the teens gather.

The Greengrass Manor was as big as the Potter Manor, though not as old. It had many dining areas and sitting rooms. Their game room wasn’t as large, because they never hosted twenty-seven children at one time. So the kids gathered in the largest sitting room, while the parents were in one of the dining areas going over schedules to patrol Hogsmeade.

The room was done in Slytherin colors with high priced couches and chairs. There were really nice coffee and end tables, in front of and next to each seat. All the furniture had a green and silver pattern that was almost reminiscent of snakes, but not quite, it was more of a swirly design. The tables were dark wood with a silver inlaid border, which complemented the seats. There was a large rug colored in the same green with a silver design. The light fixtures were also silver. All and all it felt like you were in the Slytherin common room.

“Did everyone have a good holiday?” Daphne asked being the good pure-blood hostess she was raised to be.

“I know I did,” Spencer answered. His announcement was followed by affirmatives from around the room.

“I actually can’t wait to get back to school,” said Harry as he settled on the couch he shared with Daphne and Astoria.

“Why?” Padma asked her brow wrinkled slightly. She would have thought the Potter twins would be reluctant to go back to Hogwarts.

“My parents are being short-tempered. Mum has been snapping at me and Gary all through this vacation. I am hoping that they catch that rat soon, so things can go back to normal,” the messy haired teen said with a sigh.

“I know she doesn’t mean it, but she is really stressed out,” Gary said defending his mum. “At least the uncles run interference.” Sirius and Remus had spent the entire holiday at the Manor. With Sirius’ jokes and pranks and Remus’ calming manner things were much better than then could have been.

“My mum is the same,” Mandy said and a lot of the students nodded their heads.
“We’re going to have to pay extra attention to the maps, so we can help catch the traitor,” Terry said firmly. They would do anything to make their parents less worried.

“Yeah, if it will help the parents I guess we can give up an hour’s sleep,” Susan said. Her aunt was also anxious over the whole Pettigrew escape.

“Just make sure you’re not the one chasing him. For all Peter is a weak wizard, he is sneaky. Don’t underestimate him,” Harry warned sternly.

“We won’t,” was the chorus response.

“Keep using the ghosts like we have been,” he advised looking at all his friends and wishing all their efforts bore fruit soon.

“On to a better topic,” Gary said sitting up and putting on a cheery face. “Who has been doing the Animagus meditation?”

Instead of cheering the group up, there was a collection of moans. “I completely forgot about that,” Hannah said from her place next to Susan. “With everything that’s been happening this year it is no wonder.” She slumped down on the couch.

“Well, cheer up. We can start when we get back to school. Maybe we can get Luna,” he stopped to wink at the younger girl, “to make up a crystal to help us.”

“Yes, I believe I can do that. We still have many empty crystals from when Mummy was making them. I only made a dent in them with the new one. I’ll have Daddy do that spell for my voice and see if I can’t make them tonight. If not then we might have to wait until Spring Break,” Luna said airily, she knew she could probably create a good crystal tonight.

“So what animal do you think you’ll be?” the normally quiet Ellie Godfrey asked.

“I want to be something small,” Gary said surprising everyone. “Like a spider or something,” he made some wiggling motions with his fingers.

“I would have thought you’d want to be a lion,” Parvati said with a giggle. Lavender nudged her friend and then giggled too.

“When we first thought about doing this, I did. Then with all the trouble we’ve had catching Rita and Pettigrew, I thought something small would be a good thing.” He shrugged a shoulder. It was an obvious answer to him; he could do loads of sneaking around with a smaller form.

“I, on the other hand, still want to be something larger. Maybe, not a lion, but a dog, like Sirius, wouldn’t be bad,” Harry said thoughtfully, he wanted to run with the Marauders during the full moon.

“Well, unlike your dad and uncles, if we do this we are going to register. I’m not getting Auntie in trouble by breaking the law,” Susan said sternly glaring at the rest of the group.

“Of course, we will,” Hannah said putting her hand on her friend’s arm to calm her. “We have always done things inside the law. It is one of the lessons the Potters taught us since we were kids.”

“Yeah, just because the Marauders didn’t, doesn’t mean we won’t,” Gary said compliantly. He looked to his brother for confirmation and received a nod in return.

“It’ll probably take years of study anyway,” Harry said waving away the issue. “If we even achieve
a form before we’re of age, we’ll register.”

“Well, alright then,” Susan said mollified.

The group went back to discussing what they would be if they could transform and enjoyed a few hours of fun before they all went home.

Gary stepped into Harry’s room right before bedtime. “Are we really going to register?” he asked a little confused. He figured it would give them a heads-up to have a secret form.

“We are, right after the Dark Wanker is caught or dead,” Harry confirmed. He was checking his trunk to make sure everything was ready for the morning.

“Oh, how are we going to keep it from the group?”

“We’re not. If there is one thing we’ve learned it is to not keep secrets. No, we’re going to let them know why we’re waiting. But, I don’t want to get on Susan’s bad side, so let me talk to her privately when we get the first hint of our animal,” Harry said straightening up and looking at his brother.

“Yeah, you’re better at convincing people to bend the rules,” Gary nodded in agreement. “I’m beat, so I’ll see you in the morning, yeah?” Sally had already put him through his paces tonight.

“Good night, Gary,” the eldest twin said as he gathered up his night clothes to ready for bed.

The next day, on the train, they all gathered in their usual compartment and noisily chatted among themselves. Luna was one of the last to arrive and she had a bag full of crystals to hand out.

“These are mostly the same as Mum’s crystal, so you don’t have to worry about your Occlumency or the nargles, there is just an added meditation at the end about searching for your animal,” she said as the group lined up and each took their crystal from the bag. Hugs and kisses were given out to the young girl with statements of thanks.

“Do you know if these are going to be sold?” Terry asked, looking at the purple crystal.

“Daddy says that they will be sold with a warning that anyone achieving Animagus form needs to register,” Luna said dreamily, basking in all the attention she was getting from her friends.

“Sounds about right,” the Ravenclaw boy said putting his crystal way.

The rest of the train ride was uneventful, though there was plenty of traffic through their carriage. No one was staring at the Boy-Who-Lived anymore. They just treated him like any other student, about which Gary and the rest were glad, it is what they had been trying to achieve for years. Well, maybe a couple of the first-years still goggled, but it was still an improvement.

Young Draco showed up to ask the Potter twins how their holiday went. He didn’t stay long and didn’t talk to anyone else in the compartment. He was actually well behaved and didn’t spout off his usual slurs. A lot of the students wondered if that was due to him changing or by orders of his deceitful father.

January 9, 1994

The twins took a few days to get back into the swing of school. Their classes were getting progressively harder, which was to be expected. It was now Saturday and they were going to go to the Room of Hidden Things after curfew to get the diadem. They enlisted the help of the Hufflepuff Soldier to see if he could talk to the Grey Lady into showing them where it was in the room.
The two boys met outside the Room of Requirement, the Grey Lady was floating beside them, wringing her hands. This item was the cause of much discontent in her life and death and she hated being anywhere near it.

“Don’t worry, my lady, we’ll make sure it is taken good care of,” Gary said wishing he could pat her hand or something to give her comfort.

“What do you plan on doing with my mother’s diadem when you have rid it of the foulness that Riddle placed upon it?” the ghost asked in her soft, shy voice, her pale eyes full of worry.

“We are going to make sure that all the items are given back to their owners. In this case that is Hogwarts, since your line died… well, with you. Which is sad to hear,” Harry answered gently, this particular ghost needed to be handled delicately.

“Yes, it was foolish of me to run away,” the Grey Lady sighed, she had gained some peace after talking to her mother. She still held the Bloody Baron in contempt; he had killed her after all.

“Let’s just find the diadem and get it to Mum. The adults can figure the rest out,” Gary said and paced up and down the hall three times. ‘I need a room to hide things.’

A plain wooden door appeared and Harry opened it and peeked inside. “Whoa, that’s a lot of junk,” he said in awe. “I’m glad you know where to go, Lady,” he added looking fondly at the shy ghost.

The room was full of piles and shelves of treasure and junk. The ceiling was high and the piles reach almost to the top. Some of the things they noticed were: broken and damaged furniture, thousands and thousands of books (either in tottering piles or in bookcases), chipped bottles of congealed potions, corked bottles whose contents still shimmered evilly, what looked like dragon eggshells, hats, jewels (including a trunk full), cloaks and much, much more.

The Grey Lady nodded and wove her way through the maze the piles and shelves made. She went towards the middle of the room and sitting upon a shelf was the diadem. It was a golden crown that had a blue oval sapphire in the middle and what looked to be wings, made of gold, bloomed out from the jewel. Etched upon its surface was Ravenclaw’s famous quote: ‘Wit beyond measure is man’s greatest treasure.’ The daughter of Rowena sighed at the sight.

“Gary, get the box out,” Harry said as he levitated the diadem off the shelf.

Gary hurried to comply. When he had the lead box out and open, he placed it on the floor. Harry quickly floated the cursed item into it and closed the lid. “Tilly,” he called.

The Potter’s head elf popped into the room. “Master Harry is calling Tilly?” she squeaked.

“Yeah, can you take this to Mum? She’s expecting it,” Harry answered kindly pointing at the box.

“Tilly can do,” the little elf said and with a snap of her fingers the box and the elf disappeared. In her wake the Hufflepuff Soldier came through the wall of the room and floated to the boys.

“You need to hurry, one of the Aurors is outside the door,” he whispered urgently.

“Shite, I forgot about them,” Harry said as his head snapped to the door. “Gary, follow along,” he said turning to his brother. The Grey Lady and the Hufflepuff Soldier vanished through the walls.

“Okay,” Gary said confused and a little worried.

The door opened and Shacklebolt entered. “What are you boys doing in here?” he called out.
“Auror Shacklebolt, is that you? Come and look what we’ve found,” Harry yelled back.

“You kids should be in bed. There is an escaped criminal running about, remember?” the tall dark man chastised.

“We’re sorry, but look at this room,” Harry said waving his hands to indicate the treasure all around them.

“What is this room? And why isn’t it on the Map?” Shacklebolt asked looking around at all the things piled up around the three. He knew the Potter twins had maps of their own, but he was under vow not to disclose that bit of knowledge.

“The Hufflepuff Soldier told me about it and I wanted to show Gary before we tell our friends. It’s a brother thing,” Harry said with a shrug of his shoulders. Gary nodded along. “I can only guess that the makers of the map never found it.”

“Yeah, think of all the cool things we could find,” Gary said excitedly, like the young teen he was.

“I don’t think so, boys,” Kingsley said shaking his bald head. The boys took on a crestfallen look, as if they were told they couldn’t have pudding. “From what I can see, some of this stuff could be harmful. I’ll call Madam Bones in the morning and let her know about it. Besides, that doesn’t explain why you’re sneaking around after curfew. I am supposed to be protecting you two. I can’t do that if you are not where you’re supposed to be.” He glared at the twins.

“We’re sorry,” came the twin response. They hung their heads giving off a perfectly contrite image.

“Come on, let’s get you guys back to your common rooms,” the Auror sighed, grabbing each boy by the elbow and leading them out of the room. Gary was dropped of first as his dorm was the closest. He waited for ten minutes before calling his brother mentally.

‘Did he buy it?’

‘Seems like it, though I did get a long talk about sneaking out after curfew,’” Harry grumbled. The Auror had gone on and on about putting his brother in danger, like it was all Harry’s fault that they were out after hours, which according to their cover story it was, but it was the principle of the thing. Shacklebolt didn’t say anything to Gary about causing mischief.

“Sorry you got one and I didn’t. I wonder why,” Gary mused, feeling his brother’s discontent over the bond.

“I think Shacklebolt is one of Dumbledore’s people,” Harry replied thoughtfully. Though Madam Bones said she trusted the man, he still came off as someone Dumbledore could control.

“It’s too bad we didn’t get to explore the room. Well at least we had a small adventure, plus, we’re one step closer to finishing off Voldemort,” Gary said distractedly.

“Yeah, Mum and Dad will be happy about that.”

“You should go to bed, you sound tired.”

“Yeah, Good night, Gary, don’t let Sally work you too hard,” Harry replied and you could hear the yawning in his thoughts.

“Night,” Gary said and cut the link.
The Weasley twins dropped down on either side of him, Fred draped his arm over Gary’s shoulders and winked at his brother. “Look who was out after curfew, brother of mine,” he said with a smile.

“Breaking rules and sneaking about,” George said bumping Gary in the side. “We couldn’t be prouder.”

“Best not let Oliver find out you were being naughty,” Fred warned with a playful smile and a shake of his finger. “If you get suspended from the team, well that might just do him in,” he finished dramatically.

“Leave off, you two. It was important,” Gary said elbowing each twin.

“Oh, were you meeting the fair maiden Susan?” Fred asked with a wink and a nudge.

“Our ickle Garykins is all grown up,” George said placing his hand on his heart. Fred nodded in agreement and wiped fake tears from his eyes.

“Come off it,” Gary snarled. “I wouldn’t break the rules for a girl.”

“Pray tell, what had you creeping around the castle in the middle of the night?”

“We found a room that’s not on the map,” the younger boy said with a bounce. Then deflated, “But, we were caught by Shacklebolt. Shame too, because that room had loads of treasure.” He slumped in his seat.

“A room not on the map?” both Weasley’s asked excitedly.

“Yeah, but Shacklebolt said he’s going to tell Madam Bones about it tomorrow, so we can’t explore it. And don’t think you can sneak out and find it yourselves, remember he has a map,” Gary sighed in defeat. “That’s how he caught us.”

The twins deflated at the missed opportunity.

“There are other things the room can do, but I don’t want to tell you here,” Gary whispered, sitting straighter and with a mischievous smile playing on his lips. “When we can get everyone together we’ll tell you all about it.” Like Harry had said earlier, they were going to keep as few secrets from the group as possible, Sally being the biggest, which is why they hadn’t told the rest of the kids about the room until now.

The twins perked up at that tidbit of information and the three boys started making plans. Soon enough the older boys went to join their girlfriends and left Gary to his thoughts.

Hermione plopped down in the chair across from his and glared at him. “Why were you out after curfew?” she demanded, her arms crossed and her forehead crested in agitation.

“I’m sorry, what?” Gary asked innocently, breaking from his thoughts.

“You were out of the common room after hours. Why?” she asked crossly.

“And you need to know because…?” he asked openly.

“I don’t want you losing us house points,” she said defensively leaning forward almost invading his space.

“Hermione, you are not a prefect, nor are you my mother. I don’t have to explain myself to you,” the teen boy rebutted. When the bushy haired girl opened her mouth to argue, Gary held up his hands
and stated, “Look, I like you, I think you’re smart, and when you want to be, you’re nice. But, I stand by my statement, you are not my mother, nor are you in a position of authority. When you get made a prefect you can demand answers, until then leave it to the people in charge.” Without waiting for her to answer he got up and went to wait for Sally. He never noticed the thoughtful look on her face.
Almost Had Him

AN: thanks to my betas, darreldeam and alix33, for checking this over. All mistakes are my own, especially since I have a bad habit of adding things and not sending it back to them.

Disclaimer: I don’t own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belongs to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her.

Hphphp

A short narration

The Hunting Team was at a standstill, the only horcrux left was the one in Harry’s scar, they hoped. It didn’t stop them from looking though, they just weren’t finding anything.

The Potters and the other parents were still poring over the Grimoires to find a spell to transfer Harry’s to another object that the boy could carry. There were a few that they hoped they could tweak to be used, they were almost there. The Potter parents wanted it out of their son.

The Room of Hidden Things had been scoured for Dark objects and potions. The treasures were donated to the Hogwarts funds and all the books were given to the Hogwarts library. If there were many copies the Board decided to donate them to the Hogsmeade Library for the villagers to use. Items were sold to the shops in Hogsmeade and Diagon Alley and the proceeds were put in the school funds. Things that couldn’t be sold were given to the Junk Shop or donated to the poor.

The Hogsmeade Library was a success, the computers were used by everyone and the witches and wizards of the community were learning a lot. Plans were in the making for a larger facility in Diagon Alley, though the paperwork for that area was much more complex than what had been needed for Hogsmeade.

The Animagus crystals sold like hot cakes. The registered wizards and witches had bloomed from five to twenty-five. Everyone knew there were unregistered magical folk, and some worried that the Death Eaters were among them. However it was reasoned out that the pros outweighed the cons. Anything that gave the common folk an edge was considered a good thing.

The Mutineers where still trying to find their animals. They weren’t that discouraged this type of magic was for those much older than them. Even the Marauders couldn’t do it until their fourth year. Some did come to the conclusion that they wouldn’t be able to transform. Gary was getting his wish, in that he knew his animal was tiny. Harry’s animal was too cloudy to know.

January 10, 1994

Gary was quite worried about Hermione. She was studying all the time, every time he saw her she had a book in her hand. Or she was helping the rest of her group with their homework. He never saw them studying on their own, only doing their homework at the last minute and causing their friend to stress out more, like it was up to her to make sure they got good grades. He was unhappy, because these four students knew better, they had all been taught good study habits at his house after all. He worried that his mum’s spell had wiped all the good they taught the ex-Mutineers. He would have to ask her or Sally.

He was in the common room after curfew and noted Hermione sitting on her own at a table surrounded by books. He made his way over, sat across from her and pulled out his own Runes
homework. Silently they worked for about a half an hour. Then the girl suddenly broke the silence and asked, “What do you want?”

“What do you mean? I’m just doing my homework,” Gary asked his head tilted in confusion.

“Nobody sits by me to do homework unless they want help,” she stated with and exasperated sigh.

“Then those people are stupid or lazy,” he said firmly and bent over his essay.

“Don’t talk about my friends like that,” the bushy haired girl snapped.

“Friends? Are you sure? Because friends don’t use friends to do their homework,” Gary snarled back, putting his quill down and glaring at her.

“That’s not all they do,” Hermione said defensively.

“Really, what else do they do with you? Because I’ve been watching and the only time I see you guys together is when homework needs to be done or at meal times. They even let you wander alone on Hogsmeade weekends, which is very dangerous, considering there’s a criminal on the loose,” he stated firmly.

“We just… well they… we don’t share a lot of common interest, that’s all. I like books and studying. Ron and Seamus are sports fans and Faye and Leanne are more into clothes than I am,” she mumbled looking down at the table.

“Hermione, I’ve said it before, I like you. You’re an interesting person. I think you can do better. I don’t always share the same interests with my friends, however we make sure we spend time together and discuss things we do have in common,” Gary said softly as he lifted her chin gently and looked into her eyes. “I know what you’re doing,” he said and when her eyes filled with shock and then worry he added, “I’m not going to try and stop you, but I have to say that you’re doing too much. If you were only working on your homework then you might be okay, but you’re doing the studies of five people. Hermione, not even adults would take on that much by themselves.”

“I can do it,” she said defensively. She jerked her chin out of his fingers and started gathering up her papers and books. “What business is it of yours anyway? You don’t like it when I ask you questions, why are you bothering me?”

“I just don’t like seeing people used. If you ever need someone to talk to I’ll be here,” he offered as he watched her gather up her things. “Besides, I’m not demanding answers from you. I’m simply telling you what I’ve noticed and offering my advice. Whether you take it or not is up to you.” He shrugged and made sure to keep his voice even.

“Well for future reference— don’t,” she shoved her things into the expandable book bag and stormed off.

Gary sighed and went back to his homework, hopeful that he at least planted a seed of doubt in her mind. She was a smart girl, just a little ignorant about how friends acted. Maybe he could get Parvati and Lavender to work with her.

February 12, 1994

Monday would be Valentine’s Day and it was a Hogsmeade weekend. The Mutineers were all going to the village and like last time, they were going down in a large group and then splitting up when they got there. Harry was going to shop with his usual study-buddies, Daphne, Terry, Padma, and Mandy. Though the Mutineers were still one big group they tended to separate into like-minded
groups. Gary was going with Dean, Susan, Hannah, Parvati and Lavender. He got a lot of ribbing for hanging around mostly girls. Dean loved that he was surrounded by females, hormones were a good thing.

Breakfast was over and the kids went to get their winter cloaks. Harry and Gary had yet to decide what to get the girls in the group for Valentine’s Day. They didn’t want to do what they had done last year, but there really weren’t that many options for just friends. They did talk about getting their crushes something special and would be talking to their mum about it today.

The twins let each group know they were going to the library to talk to their mum and that they could either come with or they would meet up with them later. Harry’s group, being mostly Ravenclaws, went to the library. Gary’s group, being mostly girls, went to Gladrags.

Lily was manning Pandora’s Box for the cashier who was on an early lunch. The twins went to join her. “Mum, we don’t know what to get the girls this year. Any ideas for just friend gifts?” Harry asked as he leaned against the wall behind the booth.

“Well, there are quite a few actually. You can get a small stuffed animal or a picture frame. There are also pens or quills, for the more studious ones. Or some personalized stationary for letter writing. There are really lots of things to choose from. Aren’t you putting this off a little late? It’s not like we don’t talk nightly,” she asked with a quirk of her lips. It was fun to tease hormonal boys.

Gary slumped at his mother’s teasing and answered, “We were hoping to come up with something ourselves, but everything we thought of could be taken the wrong way. We also wanted to ask what we could get Susan and Daphne. Nothing big, like a ring or anything, but something that lets them know we are still thinking about them.”

“If you want to keep it simple then a small locket or charm bracelet would be best,” Lily suggested reaching over and mussing up their hair. It was good to see the boys unwind a little. Now if they could only catch that rat, then everyone could relax more. The schedule that the parents were going through just to patrol this village was wearing on everyone’s nerves. All the near misses weren’t helping. “I do suggest that you don’t get matching gifts.”

The boys blushed at that, sometimes it was hard to separate their thoughts. Both had been thinking about lockets for the two girls.

“You’re right, thanks, Mum,” Harry said pushing himself off the wall and giving his mother a hug. “I’m going to get the gang and we’ll go shopping.” He turned to Gary and asked. “Teddy bears for our together friend gifts. You buy them and get them to the post office… oh wait, most of your group is girls. Maybe we should split off from our friends after lunch and shop together,” he suggested looking at his brother.

“That’s actually a good idea,” Gary said with a shrug. “I’ll let the gang know. How does around one sound? We can meet up at The Cheerful Duck and get the teddy bears. Maybe we can get them with t-shirts with Valentine wishes printed on them. Then we can go to Blue Stone Jewels and pick out something for the girlfriends.” he mused lost in thought.

Harry whacked him upside his head and said, “Those are actually good ideas, but let’s wait until we get there. So I’ll see you at one.”

“Ohay, Harry. Thanks, Mum.” Gary gave his mother a hug and left the library to look for his friends. Harry waved to his mum and went to find his group. They were in the computer room looking up Valentines for friends, he smacked his head and wondered why he didn’t think of that. They spent a
few more minute cruising the sites and then decided to go shopping. It was an enjoyable afternoon, with much laughter and joking.

At noon all of the Mutineers, and what seemed like the rest of the students, met up at the Three Broomsticks. It was quite crowded, but Madam Rosmerta was in her element and everyone was served in due time.

Harry and Gary split off from their groups and told them they would make their way back to the castle together. Not many were worried, with the parents patrolling. So the twins said their good-byes and went to the toy shop.

Inside were walls and walls of toys. Many were flying around above their heads and some of the stuffed animals were moving or talking. The boys decided that they wouldn’t get animated toys and stuck to their plan.

They approached the cashier and told her what they wanted. She was more than happy to help them out. Magic was a wonderful thing, because the one they choose was limited, but the clerk could copy it. The teddy bear they picked was a simple one. It was a light brown with a button nose and blue glass eyes. It bore a white t-shirt and the phrases they chose for each girl was spelled on. All in all it took about an hour to get every girl taken care of.

They took their purchases to the Post Office and arranged for them to be delivered on Valentine’s Day morning, before the normal morning post. It cost them extra, but their friends were worth it.

They went to the jewelry store and spent a half an hour choosing the gifts. Gary went for the charm bracelet and Harry picked a nice locket. They paid for their purchases and left the store.

“I hope Susan likes this bracelet,” Gary deliberated as he looked at the simple chain linked bracelet that had a charm depicting a snitch.

“She will,” Harry offered, not really paying attention as he was looking at the heart shaped locket in his hand.

They were walking past Zonko’s when suddenly a hand grabbed Harry by the collar and dragged him into the alley. Gary dropped the bracelet and immediately followed. His wand out and a curse on his lips. When he got further into the alley he heard a man mumbling “Master will be so proud of me. I will bring him the Boy-Who-Lived.”

“Let my brother go, you bastard,” Gary yelled at the same time Harry was yelling, “Let me go, asshat.” Harry struggled in the firm grip. Kicking his feet backwards to hit the crazy man’s shins and get away from him.

“No, no, I must bring Gary Potter to my Master,” the skeletal man said frantically never once loosening his grip. His prison robes hung off his boney frame, his grey-brown hair was long and matted. There was a desperate look in his eye, which made Gary very cautious. Azkaban had done this man no favors; he looked nothing like the pictures they had seen of him. Gone was the plump, shy man, present was a crazy hardened criminal, whose only desire was to gain favor with his absent Master.

Pettigrew dragged Harry further into the alley. He whipped out a knife and pressed against the boy’s neck. Harry stopped struggling, his eyes caught Gary’s and they started frantically communicating plans mentally.

There was a noise at the mouth of the alley and a bushy haired girl entered with her wand drawn.
“Harry, Gary? What can I do?” she said staying at the entrance to the alley with a determined look in her eye.

Knowing the girl had no training Gary quickly glanced sideways at her and said, “Go and get my Mum. She’s in the library.” He hoped Hermione would do as he asked; she was a liability if she stayed.

“I can’t leave you here,” the girl said defiantly, a true Gryffindor. Gary had always been truthful with her. Blunt and sometimes hurtful, but he never lied. She couldn’t leave him and his brother to a mad man. She firmed her shoulders and stood straighter, her arm rose until it pointed at Pettigrew’s head. Unfortunately Harry was in the way of any clean shots.

“Hermione, trust me. Go and get my mum,” Gary said more firmly as he edged closer to Harry and Wormtail.

Peter pressed the knife firmer into to Harry’s neck when he noted Gary’s movements. He turned and made sure he had a human shield no matter whose wand was pointing at him. He ducked his head behind his captive and continued mumbling about how his Master would be proud.

Harry hissed at the pain and Gary stopped moving when he saw a bead of blood run down his brother’s neck.

Hermione looked torn. Her eyes were darting around as she looked to see if there really was anything she could do. After about a minute she decided to do what Gary said and ran from the alley.

Gary let out a small sigh of relief, never taking his eyes off the scene in front of him. He observed a lot of garbage in the alley and quickly sent a message to Harry. There was a broken cauldron behind Wormtail and he was going to try and knock him out.

Harry had to be careful to move with the man so he didn’t get badly cut. Harry inched his hand up to grab the arm with the knife to limit any damage. He was hopeful that an adult would get here soon and made a mental note to start studying healing spells.

Gary levitated the broke cauldron up until it was right behind the desperate man, wandlessly and wordlessly, almost with his mind the movements with his left hand were so small. He nodded his head minutely and slammed the pot on to Peter’s head, which caused the man to jerk forward.

Harry moved with the man and then grabbed the hand with the knife. He head-butted the man holding him. Now Peter’s head jerked back and his eyes rolled. Harry quickly got loose, his neck bleeding steadily, but the knife seemed have missed the vein.

The boys both shot an Incarcerous spell at the rat, but just as the ropes were wrapping around him he transformed and stumbled drunkenly behind the trash bins. The twins quickly started to levitate the bins away from the wall. But the rat wasn’t there. They cast an Accio spell trying to bring the escaped prisoner to them, but it didn’t work.

Just then more noise came from the alley opening and the twins whipped around, wands up and saw it was the adults. They both let out a collective sigh and dropped their wands to their side.

Lily saw her eldest son’s pale face and the blood still streaming down his neck. She gave a cry of despair and practically Apperated to her injured child. She quickly cast an Episkey to try and stop the bleeding. It took four passes, but the wound finally closed. She made the same mental note Harry had about learning better healing spells.

“Oh, Merlin, are you boys alright?” Sirius asked breathlessly, not seeing Harry behind Lily. The
parents had just noticed Peter and the twins on the map and had run to get him away from the boys. They passed a hysterical Hermione on the way, but they couldn’t take the time to calm the girl. None of the parents had been on this side of the village; they had all been either escorting other students back to the castle or regrouping for the change of shift, which is why he was there. He was on the night shift.

“No, Harry is not okay,” Lily snapped causing Padfoot to turn to her. Upon seeing the boy’s robe drenched in blood Sirius almost fainted. Instead he went to Gary and started making sure there were no injuries on his godson and heir.

“I’m okay, Padfoot. Just shaken and pissed off that we missed him again. Damn him and his rat form. We almost had him,” Gary shouted the last sentence in frustration.

Hermione was leaning against the wall of the alley trying to compose herself. She had been listening to Ron all this time and he had been telling her that the twins were making up the danger they were supposed to be in. Now she knew that they really were being hunted. Maybe it was time she listened to others besides her friends.

“We need to get Harry to the Infirmary, he has lost a lot of blood,” Lily said gathering up her eldest and started walking to the castle. “Sirius, use the mirror and tell Madam Pomfrey what has happened. Then call Flitwick so he knows too. Also call Savage, he should still be on duty, and tell him the rat got away—again,” she barked out orders and grabbed Gary as they passed by.

Sirius, never one to defy an angry Lily, pulled out his mirror and did as she demanded.

Gary snagged Hermione’s robe as they walked past, he wasn’t leaving her there alone. She resisted for a second and shook her head and followed along. He stopped at the street and picked up the jewelry they had dropped, noting that some cleansing charms would be in order. He tucked the items in his robe and followed his mum and Harry, still very worried about his brother. He kept Hermione close, not trusting that rat bastard to be gone.

A few more adults joined the group as they quickly walked up the trail to the castle. They were met by the Nurse and she stopped them to cast diagnostic spells. Her lips firmed at the results; nevertheless, she nodded reassuringly to Lily. Harry would be alright.

Professor Flitwick ran as fast as his little legs allowed and met them at the gates. “Oh my, what happened?” he said seeing his student’s robes and pale face. Sirius had only told him that Harry was injured and on the way back.

“Pettigrew,” Lily snarled, still holding Harry tightly to her side. Gary and Hermione were trailing behind. The other adults fanned out, wands drawn.

“Oh my,” the diminutive professor repeated with a worried shake of his head. “Well, let’s get him to the Hospital Wing. There is nothing Poppy can’t cure. Rest your mind, Mrs. Potter.” He patted the distraught woman’s arm.

Three Aurors passed them on the way to the front doors. They stopped long enough to ask where they had last seen the convict and then ran to the village. Nobody was hopeful they would catch him, but glad to see the men doing their job.

Dumbledore met them in the Entrance Hall and was looking at the hurt boy with concerned eyes, though you could see disappointment in them as well. He fell in step with them. “Poppy told me what happened before she left,” he said looking at the Mediwitch then back to Harry. “I do hope your injuries are not serious, my boy.”
“No, sir, it wasn’t a deep cut, it just bled a lot,” Harry offered from his place in his mother’s arms. He was leaning against her, his head woozy and he couldn’t stand up on his own.

“That is good news indeed,” the Headmaster said his eyes twinkling. Then he shook his head a little and said, “Though I must express my disappointment in you two. Had you not left your friends this might not have happened. I once again offer my services for your training, perhaps with time and proper instruction, you can prevent such occurrences.”

“Now is not the time, Dumbledore.” Lily snapped not once stopping the trek to the infirmary. “And don’t you dare chastise my children. That is up to me and James and I, for one, don’t think they did anything wrong.” She was actually quite proud of her sons.

“You are, of course, correct, my dear. Perhaps we can take up the discussing another time. Mr. Potter, I do hope you feel better soon,” he offered and then broke off from the group to reassess his plans.

Harry had to stay the night in the Hospital Wing and take some Blood Replenishing potion. He was fine the next day, but for the slight trauma of almost being kidnapped. Gary was more protective of his brother than ever. They kept their link open most of the time now.

Valentine’s Day went off without a hitch and all the girls loved their gifts. Tension was tight and defense training started to be more strenuous, however no one wanted to be off guard again.

*Time skip*

Gary and Harry were never left alone, as schedules were formed within the Mutineers to make sure they were escorted everywhere they went. They were denied access to Hogsmeade and even though they were disappointed, they did understand.

Hermione seemed to be less stressed as the months passed and Gary only hoped that meant she had dropped some of her classes. She kept closer to the Mutineers and even joined their Study Group occasionally. Her friends berated her about it, saying the Mutineers were not the type of people she should be hanging around. They couldn’t remember why, just that they didn’t like them much. Without a concrete reason for such statements Hermione defended her actions to them, but still helped her friends with their homework.

Once again the Mutineers were at the top of their classes and the Study Group was going strong, more and more students joined as the final exams came closer. They welcomed everyone.

The Headmaster only made one more attempt to offer extra studies for the twins. When asked if the other Mutineers could get said studies also, he dropped the subject.

Only glimpses of the rat were seen the rest of the year. The students started to relax, since he was never seen around the castle. That was until a chilling prophecy was made to Parvati when she stayed after class one day. She wanted to ask Trelawney about her tarot card reading from her final exam. The Professor stopped in the middle of her explanation and her voice took on a deep, hollow and haunting tone. Her eyes were vacant and she was staring at nothing.

"*It will happen tonight. The Dark Lord lies alone and friendless, abandoned by his followers. His servant has been chained these twelve years. Tonight, before midnight... the servant will break free and set out to rejoin his master. The Dark Lord will rise again with his servant's aid, greater and more terrible than ever he was. Tonight... before midnight... the servant... will set out... to rejoin... his master...*"
Parvati got so scared that she ran from the room, immediately got on the mirror and called Gary. “Trelawney just made a prediction. If I understand it correctly then Pettigrew is going to find Voldemort soon and they are going to bring him back,” she said loudly when Gary’s face showed in the mirror.

“Shite,” Gary swore and sent a mental message to his brother, who got on his mirror to his dad. Gary then turned back to his mirror and saw the worry on his friend’s face. “Don’t worry too much, Parvati. You know the adults are still on the lookout in Hogsmeade. I’ll have the uncles and Mum and Dad keep a closer watch on the village, maybe they can stop him.” He tried to calm his hysterical friend. “Why don’t you come to the Great Hall where you can be around friends? Lavender will want to hear what Trelawney said.”

“I’m just so worried,” the distraught girls said as she practically ran down the halls, thankful that there were lots of students roaming around.

“I know, but the Mutineers are here for you,” Gary said calmly. “Try not to run with your mirror. How about you mentally talk to Padma, she can help you over this shock.”

“You’re right. I’ll put this away. I just thought you should know,” Parvati said slowing down.

“I know and I thank you for that. I just don’t want you to hurt yourself,” Gary said sedately.

“Okay. Done.” And the mirror went blank.

“Harry, what did the parents say?”

“Mostly things like ‘You’re never leaving the house again,’ and stuff of that nature,” came the blunt reply.

Gary groaned. Summer was not going to be fun.

**Hphphp**

**AN:** I made up the toy and jewelry store's names. There aren’t any in Hogsmeade, which is kind of silly, what with kids of every age in the castle.

I have only written one action scene before, so I hope this one doesn’t disappoint. I thought about splitting this up, but decided to just give you a long chapter instead.
The Dream

AN: thanks to my betas, darrelldeam and alix33, for checking this over. All mistakes are my own, especially since I have a bad habit of adding things and not sending it back to them.

AN: Peter is going to be OOC because he was in Azkaban for three years, making him a little crazy.

Disclaimer: I don’t own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belongs to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her.

Hphphp

A short narrative

Gary was right, summer was long. True to their word the Potter adults didn’t let the boys out of the house. It reminded them of when they were younger. The Mutineers were allowed to visit, but the boys had to stay home. The Greengrass girls spent a lot of time at the Potter Manor. Susan was also there most days, with her aunt’s blessings.

Remus was going to continue as the DADA professor - they finally broke the curse last summer - so he was busy with class plans. Sirius was diligent in his duties as godfather and made sure the boys were entertained while under house arrest. Lily could be found doing research most days. James was at the Wizengamot making sure that laws were not passed that would give Voldemort an upper hand. It helped that Malfoy was still playing the good boy card.

After several sightings of Pettigrew out of the country, the Aurors were not scheduled to be back at Hogwarts the next year. Much to the protest of the Potter household. Sally said she would make sure the ghosts still patrolled the halls.

The boys’ and Neville’s birthday passed with a huge party at the Potter Manor. Everyone in the Mutineers and most of the neutral pure-bloods came.

Many of the students were disappointed that the Potters wouldn’t be doing a field trip this year; however, they still came and learned on the computers.

So while the boys were confined to the Manor, they still had lots of company.

August 8, 1994

The house was mostly quiet, everyone was sleeping. The only noise that could be hear was the tossing and turning of one teenage boy. He was having a nightmare. In this dream Voldemort was laying out his plans to Wormtail.

“You have done well, Wormtail,” a hissing voice said from a chair by a fireplace. “When you came and found me, I was quite surprised. Now I consider you one of my most loyal followers. With my other devoted servant our plans will not fail.”

“Thank you, My Lord,” the rat said humbly, though there was a note of pride in his voice. He was quite mad; Azkaban cracked his mind to the point that all he wanted to do was please his Master. “I was lucky to stumble upon Bertha Jorkins.”

“Yet the information we got before her death will make our plans much easier. Do not be humble,
Wormtail.” The Dark Lord said. “We must be diligent; I will ask many things of you this year.”

“For you, My Lord, I will do anything,” the skinny, balding man said. Gone was the prison uniform, in its place was true wizarding robes. His Master insisted on proper attire.

“Where is Nagini? I must feed soon,” the small figure asked moving restless in the large chair.

“She is hunting, My Lord. I will milk her when she returns,” Wormtail said moving towards his Master. “Allow me to move you closer to the fireplace.”

“Yes, a little closer, I think,” was the quiet reply.

“Our plans are moving well, Master. Soon Gary Potter will be in your grasp. Should we do something for the World Cup?” the balding madman asked as he moved the chair. The small form within settled more comfortably now that it was warmer.

“I think not,” the figure said. “There will be too much security. They will be checking everyone there. No, we will proceed as planned. Gary Potter will be ours by the end of the next school year and I will rise again. My faithful servant at Hogwarts will make sure of that,” there was amusement in that voice now.

“Of course, My Lord.”

A large snake slithered into the room and communicated with the being in the chair. “Nagini has news, Wormtail. She tells of a Muggle in the hall. Invite him in,” the Dark Lord said softly.

Peter swiftly moved to the door and threw it open. He grabbed the old man listening there and drew him into the room.

“Did you hear everything, Muggle?” Voldemort asked nonchalantly.

“What’s that you’re calling me?” the old man replied grasping his walking stick as though he could use it to fight his way out.

“You are a Muggle, a non-wizard,” was the being’s response.

“Of course, I’m not a wizard. I heard enough to get the Bobbies here. Killed someone already, plans to do someone else in. You are in trouble,” the old man said shaking his walking stick. “My wife…”

“You have no wife, Frank Bryce, former gardener of the Riddles. Accused of their death, were you not? Such a shame I could not claim that honor. I know all about you and you are just an old man that lives here alone and shunned by the town folk. No one will listen to you,” Voldemort hissed still facing the fire.

“And you’re a coward. Face me like a man,” Frank bellowed to the back of the chair.

“You heard the man, Wormtail, turn me around so that this Muggle can face Death,” the figure said with a dry chuckle.

Wormtail went across the room, grabbed hold of the chair and turned it around.

Frank, seeing what was in the chair, screamed in fear at the hideous figure. A green light flashed and the man fell dead. A haunting laughter filled the air.

Many miles away, Harry Potter woke screaming as well. Soon enough the whole family piled into
his room, wands at the ready, looking for danger. When they saw he was alone they went to calm him.

“Sweetie, what happened,” Lily said running her hands through her child’s hair.

“Voldemort,” Harry gasped out. Sweat was still pouring down his face, his body shaking at seeing someone die and hearing the madman’s plans.

“What about him?” James asked sitting next to Harry on the bed.

“He and Wormtail are planning something. Something to do with Gary. They said something about a faithful follower at Hogwarts and plans for the end of the school year. They murdered someone named Bertha Jorkins. They said they got information out of her and then they killed her.” Harry was still shaking on his bed, his mum’s arms wrapped around him and his dad patting his back. Gary was sitting next to his dad and was now just as shocked as Harry was.

“I know Bertha from the Ministry. She went on vacation about two weeks ago. She’s late coming back, but everyone just thought it was her usual flighty self. Are you sure she’s dead?” James asked softly, not wanting Harry to think he thought he was lying, yet not wanting to believe it was really starting again.

“If my dream is true, then yeah. They killed a Muggle too, some bloke named Frank Bryce. He was the gardener for the Riddles. Dad, I think that means that Voldemort is in the country,” Harry said pulling himself together.

“Shite,” Gary said ignoring his mum’s reprimand about language. “This sucks.” He flopped back on the bed.

“Yeah it does,” Harry agreed much calmer now. “We need to start making plans. That lunatic will stop at nothing to get Gary.”

“We will, we’ll call everyone together in a few days,” Lily said patting Harry’s leg. “You know this means you can’t go to the World Cup.” Protests from all three men started immediately. “NO! I’m not taking the chance,” she shouted over the top of them.

“But, Mum, Voldemort said they weren’t going to do anything for the Cup. Wormtail asked him about it and he said the security would be too tight. Please, Mum, this was supposed to be the only time me and Gary got out of the house,” Harry said with big doleful eyes.

“Yeah, Mum, we’ve been cooped up for months, don’t take this away,” Gary pleaded.

“Lily, there are going to be thousands of witches and wizards there. The boys will stay with me and the guys the whole time. Besides, you can change your mind and join us,” James said trying to make his wife see reason.

“I’ll think about it,” was all she offered.

The three males groaned, but at least it wasn’t a no.

Since it was early in the morning the Potters decided to stay up. They had an early breakfast and talked about mundane things. Everyone was on edge, this was big, and if Voldemort was in the country then they were all in danger. The biggest problem was they couldn’t take it to the Ministry because it was a dream. James had tried to take Trelawney’s second prophecy to the Minister, but Fudge brushed him off.
James was worried; he knew what was being planned for Hogwarts this year. He also knew that Bertha was an organizer for the event. If there was even the smallest chance that Voldemort had an agent at the school then the boys could somehow get caught up in it. They were too young, but… thoughts were running through his head about plans to prevent it.

“Harry?” Lily said bringing the men’s attention to her. “How does your scar feel?”

“Itchy,” Harry replied rubbing said scar. It didn’t feel any different, but it was scratchy.

“That’s good. I was worried that the horcrux would make it hurt. We’re going to find a way to get that out of you,” his mum said determined.

“We’re really close, Lily-flower,” James said giving his wife a one armed hug from his place next to her.

“I know, I know, I’m just so worried,” she said leaning into the hug.

They finished their breakfast and went to the game room to watch the telly until it was late enough to call the other families.

That night they talked to Sally. James and Lily were on one couch and Sally and the boys were on another.

“Sally,” Lily began, “we need to tell the others about Harry and Gary.”

“Yes, we can’t make plans with everyone if they don’t know all the facts,” James added.

“You still can’t tell them about me, but I absolve you from the vow about the boys,” Sally said her arms crossed, as if this was something she was loath to give up. She understood their worries, but if one hint got out about Harry’s scar it could be disastrous.

“I don’t see why you’re apprehensive. They’ve all taken a vow,” Lily said cocking her head to the side.

“There are always ways around vows, but you trust them, so, if you must, let them know,” Sally said, still wary.

“We’ll be careful,” James said with a placated voice.

It was two days later that they could get everyone together. Adults and children filled the largest dining room. Chatter was heard about what could be important now.

James stood and everyone quieted. “We have some really bad news,” he said a grave look on his face. “Harry had a dream a few days ago, we believe it was real. Voldemort is back in the country. He is still weak at this time, but if Harry’s dream is correct, he plans on kidnapping Gary and using him to regain his body.”

Harry stood up and relayed his dream in a resigned voice. Gasps of fear and shouts of denial sounded around the table. They had known it was going to happen, because of the prophecy, they just hoped it wouldn’t be so soon.

Suddenly a voice spoke above the crowd. “Wait a minute, why is Harry having dreams about You-Know-Who?” Aric Davis asked.

“We wanted to tell you, but we were under a vow,” Lily said gently making a what-could-we-do
motion with her hands.

“Harry is the Boy-Who-Lived. He is the person we are trying to remove the horcrux from. We think that is why he is having these dreams,” James said. His face was regretful and he slumped in his chair and waited for the outcry. The twins tense at his side.

There were whispers of conversation and soon a chuckle was heard. “We already figured that out actually,” Wayne Sr. said. “We just wanted to make sure.”

“What? How did you know?” James asked flabbergasted.

“Well, the parseltongue was a big giveaway,” Mayur said with a small smirk. “Then the worry you showed when you want to find the spell.” He shrugged his shoulder as if it was obvious.

“I would have thought you understood that we are all in this together,” Daphne piped up from her mother’s side. She got up and took Harry’s hand and gave it a squeeze. Susan followed suit, only with Gary.

“You mean you kids knew too?” Lily asked in just as much shock at her husband. There were still worried faces seen, but no one seemed surprised about Harry being the boy hero.

“Did you really think we didn’t talk to each other?” Dora Godfrey asked with a lifting of her eyebrows.

“We gathered many times to discuss things that we were worried about. When you told us you were under a vow, we decided to meet without you so you wouldn’t break it,” Xeno said looking around the table for confirmation. Nods were seen and the Potters relaxed.

“So now what?” Sirius asked.

“We do what we always do, search for answers and protect the children,” Wright Corner said disregarding the protest from the teens that they didn’t need protection and they weren’t children.

“I think a new crystal is in order,” came the dreamy voice of Luna Lovegood.

“What do you have in mind, moonbeam,” her father asked when he noted her vacant expression.

“The public needs to have confidence in itself, so a morale boosting crystal might be what they need. Judging from the earlier protest, some of us could use it as well,” she said looking at the worried faces.

“That’s a wonderful idea. You kids work on that while we continue to search for the spell,” Lily said full of hope for her son.

“Let’s lighten up for a bit,” Sirius said, never one to let things stay serious for long. “How many of you have found your animal?”

Five hands rose from the kids and three from the adults. Lots of disappointed faces were seen, they all hoped to be Animagi.

“So that’s Harry, Gary, Ellie, Michael and Mandy for the kids. Not surprising at all really. Wren, Keaton and Wayne for the adults, that is a bit of a shock, usually if the parent can, so can the child,” Sirius said confused. “Unless the child is Muggle-born, of course,” he said looking Ellie and her parents.
“Junior might still be able to, he just has a hard time meditating,” Wayne Sr. defended his son, patting said teen on the back.

“Oh, okay, well, I guess we’ll see later,” Sirius said with a shrug.

“So, Gary what are you?” Susan asked. She had been curious since he told her he was something small.

All faces turned to the boy in question. “I’m a snidget,” Gary said proudly.

Jaws fell open. “But… but… that’s a magical creature,” Lily said gobsmacked.

James took a minute and then looked proud. “I knew you were powerful,” he said getting up and hugging his youngest son.

“What about you, Harry?” Daphne asked concerned about the blank look on his face.

“I am a Grim. Not a dog like Padfoot, but a real Grim,” he said seriously. He had been shocked to discover this, Sally wasn’t surprised though.

“Well, ummm, well, that’s great,” James sputtered. It was still a magical creature, but one with a dark history. His boy never seemed to catch a break.

Sirius turned quickly to Ellie. “What about you, my dear,” he asked the shy Hufflepuff.

“I am a cat,” she said softly.

“Michael? Keaton?”

Keaton nodded to Michael and let him answer. “Well, I’m a raccoon and Dad is an elk,” he said.

“Mandy? Wren?” Sirius asked turning to the Brocklehurst women.

“I’m a screech owl,” Mandy said. Happy she was a bird.

“And I’m a tiger,” her mother chimed in.

“So that leaves Wayne,” Remus said turning to the last Animagus.

“I am a humming bird,” the man replied. “Not as good as a snidget, but I’ll still be able to get into tight places.” He nodded to Gary, who was still beaming proudly.

“That might come in handy in the future,” Lily said soberly thinking about war.

“Right,” Sirius said clapping his hands together drawing the attention to himself. “Now all you need is the potion. Remus and I can whip some up tomorrow.” Remus nodded and the two bent together to make plans.

“The rest of you don’t feel left out, like Wayne Jr., you might just not have found yours yet,” James offered with a smile remembering that the four Marauders took different times to get their animals. Pettigrew, of course, was the last.

Most of the teens perked up at that, though the parents weren’t concerned. This was mostly for the kids anyway. The kids went to the game room and the parents remained in the dining room.

“I have one more piece of information,” James said standing and holding up his hands. “Whether
you tell your kids or not is up to you, but I made a promise not to tell any student. For some Merlin 
forsaken reason, the Tri-Wizarding Tournament is being held at Hogwarts this year.”

The parents expressed their excitement, until James called for silence again.

“The reason we’re,” he pointed to himself and Lily, “worried about this is because of Harry’s dream. 
There is a good chance someone will enter Gary’s name. We know from the dream that Voldemort 
will have an agent inside Hogwarts. Now, we have the maps, so hopefully we’ll catch him before 
that can happen, but the maps aren’t foolproof. You all remember how hard it was to find Pettigrew.”

Affirmatives were given and they waited for James to continue. “I would like it if you told the kids, 
just in case Gary’s name does appear. If that happens he will need his friends at his side. I can’t tell 
him, but his friends can.”

“I think we can do that,” Natalie Greengrass offered. Who better to tell than the girlfriends?

“Do you know where Riddle is?” Amelia spoke up for the first time. She had been going over plans 
in her head about beefing up the Aurors.

“We think he is in his Muggle family’s home, but we don’t know where that is. They killed the 
family gardener, a Frank Bryce, but Harry doesn’t know what they did with the body,” James 
explained.

“I’ll look into it,” Amelia said determined. She needed to look into Bertha’s disappearance as well.

The meeting went on for another hour until they exhausted many ideas. Everyone gathered their 
young and went home, most to research that spell. If Harry was getting dreams from Voldemort it 
couldn’t be good.

Sirius and Remus had the eight people come to the Manor and handed out the potion the next day. 
Soon enough animals and birds were roaming or flying in the yard. The rest of the Mutineers 
tried to meditate harder after seeing the fun.

When the Potters weren’t doing research, the men, including the uncles, were badgering Lily about 
the Quidditch World Cup. After two days of constant nagging, she finally conceded that they could 
go for the game only. No camping and no after game parties. To the game and home, that was it. It 
was more than they thought they would get out of her, so they were happy to comply. The boys 
were disappointed that the party was canceled, but in this house Lily’s word was law.

Hphphp

AN: I’ve hit a snag so updates may be longer in the wait. Due to a few reviews I am not sure 
where to go from here. I have an outline, but now it seems superficial— too many open 
plotholes. So I have to rework it. So for those reviewers that asked about fourth year, I can’t 
answer your questions at this time. Thanks for your patience.
The Quidditch World Cup

AN: thanks to my betas, darrelldeam and alix33, for checking this over. All mistakes are my own, especially since I have a bad habit of adding things and not sending it back to them.

AN: I adapted most of the game from the book. I can’t write sports to save my life. Also I know Crouch Jr. didn't show up until after the WWC but hey, my story, my timeline.

Disclaimer: I don’t own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belongs to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her.

Hphphp

August 21, 1994

The Potter twins were excited; tomorrow they would finally get out of the house and go to the Quidditch World Cup. Their dad had gotten a booth that held twenty-five people so only the most sports driven would be attending with them. Daphne and Astoria gave up their seats to Spencer and his dad.

The Mutineers decided after the big meeting that they would be more diligent in guarding Hogwarts this year. None of them wanted either Gary’s or Harry’s name to come out of whatever was used to pick the champions. They had taken the fact that Harry was the Boy Who Lived with as much decorum as the parents had. In other words, they already suspected.

Lily was still looking up spells, but now she was turning to the Internet for exorcisms to see if they could be combined with wizarding spells. She was actually very hopeful that she had found one and wanted to go over it with her research team while the boys were at the Cup.

Harry went to sleep that night and once again was drawn into a dream.

The house was the same, dusty and dark. He was in the same room as before and there were three people this time.

“Master,” Wormtail said tentatively as he milked Nagini, “I think I have found a slight flaw in our plans.”

“You dare,” the small homunculus hissed.

“Forgive me, Master; it’s not your planning that has a flaw. It’s a tool the blood-traitors may have that might lead your agent to being caught,” the rat hurriedly explained.

“And what tool might this be, Wormtail?” Voldemort asked snidely.

“A map of Hogwarts. We made it our fourth year. It shows the names of all who are in the castle,” Wormtail said as he blended the venom with a potion.

“Very good, Wormtail. I am pleased you brought this up to me before we executed our plans. Tell me what this map does,” the being purred from his place in the chair.

“As I said, My Lord, it shows all who are in Hogwarts, be they polyjuiced or Animagus. There are
very few ways to fool the map. I believe it’s one of the reasons I could not get close to the boy last year.”

“Yes, that may explain it,” the baby-like creature said as it turned its head to the man kneeling at his side. “My agent, we must make other plans. We know the wolf will keep his position so you must find someone else to impersonate. If Wormtail is correct then you will not be there the whole year. You must get into the castle and put Gary Potter’s name in the cup. How you get his signature I will leave to you. Don’t get caught, my loyal follower.”

The man who was as skinny as the diminished Pettigrew, had a narrow face, it was all angles and bone. His hair was messy and his nose was long, though not as long as Snape’s or Dumbledore’s. His tongue flickered much like a snake’s. He lifted his head and looked adoringly at the Dark Lord. “Your word is my command,” he said with absolution.

“Very good….”

Harry woke with a curse on his lips. He was that close to finding out the name of the spy. He cast a tempus and saw it was only four in the morning. Since he didn’t wake screaming this time none of his family was up. He got up and went to his desk and immediately wrote his dream down. His scar itched again.

He was in a bit of a quandary, should he tell his mum or not. He knew if he told her this morning she wouldn’t let him go to the World Cup. He really wanted to go, but he didn’t want to lie to his mum. Maybe he would give her this right when the portkey took off or at least let her know about it, or…

“Hey Sally,” Harry called into the night.

“What’s up, Harry,” the cute little girl faded into the room. She was now dressed in tight jeans and a ruffled blouse. She looked like any of the other girls that were in the Mutineers. Her hair was still in pigtails and her face was cute as button.

“I had another dream about Voldemort. I wrote it all down, but if I tell Mum she won’t let us go to the Cup today,” he said rubbing the rest of the sleep out of his eyes. “So I was wondering if you could let her know I wrote it down after we leave,” he requested with big puppy dog eyes.

“Harry James Potter, you want to use me as a messenger?” she said hand on her hips with a glare in her eyes. Harry could see however it wasn’t a real glare.

“Ummm, yeah?”

“Fine, but only this once and only because I know you boys have been cooped up all summer,” Sally said and then giggled.

Harry chuckled back. He knew she would do this for him. “Thanks, Sally. You’re the best,” he said with a brilliant smile.

“Are you going back to bed?” the deity asked as she sat cross-legged on the bed.

“Nay, the rest will be up soon,” Harry answered with a shrug as he folded the parchment with the dream written on it and then addressed it to his mum.

“Tell me about the dream then. And tell me what the Dork Lord looks like, how he sounds. I want to know everything,” she said settling in.

“Well, it wasn’t much, mostly that they know about the Marauders’ Map and that they were going to
wait until the night of the drawing. They still think that Gary is the Boy Who Lived. Voldemort is a homunculus, with a flat face, no nose and red eyes. He is really creepy. They are keeping him alive with a potion and snake venom. He seems pretty weak, but I won’t underestimate him, his mind seems completely intact,” Harry said staring vacantly at the wall trying to recall everything he could about the being they were discussing.

“That is good news and bad,” Sally said when he had looked at her indicating he was done. “I mean his weakness is probably because of the destruction of the horcruxes. But, I wouldn’t be too sure about his mind being intact, I think what you need to watch out for is craziness. Crazy people do desperate things, so you are wise not to underestimate him.” She nodded with a thoughtful look.

“Yes,” was all Harry said also deep in thought.

They both sat thinking until they heard the rest of the family start to stir. Once Gary was up Harry mentally told him about his dream and the letter he left for their mum. Gary agreed it was the best course of action.

Most of the Mutineers left early that morning, but the twins weren’t allowed to go until right before noon. That would give them a few hours to buy souvenirs and chat with their friends. So they moped around the house until it was time.

“All right you guys, it’s time to go!” James shouted from the front door. The twins, who had been eating in the dining room, shot out of their seats and ran to the door. They had to take a portkey from outside the wards. James had to get one specifically made just for them, because they were arriving so late.

The three Potter men walked to the end of the long walkway and exited the gate. James held out a rusty tin can and the boys grabbed a hold and waited a minute until it activated.

After the whirlwind ride, they landed in a greeting area.

“Ah, the Potters, glad yer could join us,” a grumpy man said insincerely.

“Thanks for waiting for us,” James said politely looking at the unkempt man in front of him. The unnamed man looked very put out to have to come and greet someone so late.

“I were told to direct yer to the ‘opkins tent; it’s at the end of the campsite, row 2b,” the man all but growled as he pointed in the general direction of the campsite.

“Thanks again,” James said with a nod of his head and grabbed the boys and started walking.

The site was a complete mess, with many older wizards and witches running around in colorful clothes. Many of the younger generation were wearing much more modern attire. Like the Potters the kids and young adults were clothed in shorts and t-shirts, some with weird sayings on them, but most plain.

The tents were a mix of the gap as well. You could tell some were wizard tents from the moving patterns and the too tall annexes. Cauldrons were set up with stews and potions and they were stirring themselves. Officials were handing out reprimands left and right. There were even some who were fined.
On the other hand there were much more conservative tents that looked non-magical. They were in muted colors with regular campfires that had grates and pots set upon them. These campfires were manned by a younger person, who looked like they were nothing more than a regular camper.

Many people waved at the Potters as they walked by, the men returned the waves with calls of ‘Can’t stop, sorry,’ or some variation of that. They quickly walked to the Hopkins tent and soon enough saw Wayne Sr. sitting outside stirring a pot of beef stew.

“Hello James. Boys, Junior is getting some water and will be right back. Have a seat and I’ll serve you up some stew,” he said directing the men to the chairs around the fire.

“No thanks, Mr. Hopkins,” the twins said, “we just ate.” But they did take a seat and waited for Wayne or any of the other Mutineers to show.

Wayne Sr. shook his head at the twin speech; he never got used to that. He raised the ladle in a silent question to James. James sat and held out a bowl to receive some delicious smelling stew.

Mutineers, mostly boys and Susan, dropped by and greeted the two boys. Their fathers and one or two mothers also gathered around. They sat and talked for a while and soon enough Sirius and Remus showed.

“James, since we know where everything is, why don’t Moony and I take the boys to go and buy some trinkets?” Sirius asked, looking at his poor godson. Gary was looking longingly at the booths he could just see peeking from the tents.

“That’s a good idea, but remember be back here in one hour. The games starts at two,” James said putting his empty bowl on the ground next to him and reaching in the large side pocket of his cargo shorts for his coin purse. He took out ten Galleons and hand it to the boys. “Buy something for yourself and your mum,” he commanded in a mocking voice.

“Sir, yes, Sir,” the boys mocked back standing and giving a jaunting salute.

James just chuckled and waved them and their friends away.

They with their friends bought some Omnioculars, a shamrock for their mum, and magical action figures that could walk of their favorite players. Harry bought Viktor Krum and Gary bought Aidan Lynch, opposite seekers.

“I can’t believe you bought Lynch, that man sucks,” Harry said laughing.

“I have to support my team,” Gary defended himself with a glare, and then smirked. “At least my team made it to the World Cup.”

Harry, of course, had to defend his team. “Hey, they were close. it’s not their fault that their seeker was out that day.” He poked his brother in the chest.

“You two stop it,” Susan said sternly, yanking Gary’s hand so he didn’t retaliate. “We’re here to have fun, not argue.”

“Let’s go back to the tent. It’s almost time,” Sirius said grabbing Harry’s arm and dragging him away from his brother. There was little the boys argued about but Quidditch was one thing they never agreed upon.

They made it back to the tent and saw the fire was out and the chairs were put away. James and Wayne Sr. were waiting for them. “Ready to go?” James asked.
“Yeah,” the two disgruntled boys said. James looked to Sirius and Sirius mouthed “Quidditch.” James nodded that he understood and got between his sons.

“Let’s go then,” he said and led the way to the forest. The woods were dark and lanterns lit the dirt path. They could hear the sounds of thousands of people moving around them, shouts and laughter, snatches of singing. The atmosphere of feverish excitement was highly infectious. They walked through the wood for twenty minutes, talking and joking loudly, until at last they emerged on the other side and found themselves in the shadow of a gigantic stadium. Though they could see only a fraction of the immense gold walls surrounding the field, Harry could tell that ten cathedrals would fit comfortably inside it.

“The Ministry has been working all year to get this up,” James said almost proudly then he sighed. “They had to put up hundreds of Muggle repelling wards. This campsite has lost tons of money while they worked. Hikers were turned away by the wards, when they inexplicably wound up back at their sites they demanded refunds.” James shook his head at the casual way the magical government dismissed the plight of the business they were damaging.

They made their way to the entrance and handed over their tickets. “Up the stairs,” the ticket collector said.

The stairs into the stadium were carpeted in rich purple. They clambered upward with the rest of the crowd, which slowly filtered away through doors into the stands to their left and right. Their party kept climbing, and at last they reached the top of the staircase and found themselves in a medium box, set at one of the highest points of the stadium and situated partway between the golden goal posts. About twenty-five purple-and-gilt chairs stood in two rows.

“Everyone grab a seat,” Sirius said joyfully and ran to one of the seats in the middle of the front row.

The rest of the group did as suggested and soon enough the seats filled with Mutineers mostly in the front and the taller parents in the back.

A hundred thousand witches and wizards were taking their places in the seats, which rose in levels around the long oval field. Everything was suffused with a mysterious golden light, which seemed to come from the stadium itself. The field looked smooth as velvet from their lofty position. At either end of the field stood three goal hoops, fifty feet high; right opposite them, almost at eye level, was a gigantic blackboard. Gold writing kept dashing across it as though an invisible giant’s hand were scrawling upon the blackboard and then wiping it off again; watching it, they saw that it was flashing advertisements across the field.

They all settled and chatted until they heard a booming male voice say. “Ladies and gentlemen … welcome! Welcome to the final of the four hundred and twenty-second Quidditch World Cup!”

The spectators screamed and clapped. Thousands of flags waved, adding their discordant national anthems to the racket. The huge blackboard opposite them was wiped clear of its last message (Bertie Bott’s Every Flavor Beans — A Risk With Every Mouthful!) and now showed BULGARIA: 0, IRELAND: 0.

The voice who Sirius said was someone named Ludo Bagman then announced the Bulgarian mascots. “And now, without further ado, allow me to introduce … the Bulgarian National Team Mascots!”

A hundred beautiful women filled the stadium and started to dance. The faster they danced the more the men seemed to go into a dazed trance, faster and faster the women went. The boys of the booth started to edge closer and closer to the railing to get as close as they possibly could to the women
dancing. Just as most of them were about to put a leg over the rail… the dancing stopped. Angry voices of many men filled the stadium.

“What was that?” Harry asked, vaguely disappointed that the women stopped. Then he blushed and remembered his girlfriend.

“Those, my dear son, were Veelas,” James smirked, he was unaffected by the women and had held tight to the men around him to keep them in their seats. He wasn’t surprised that the boys were affected: they were only teenagers — hormones will do that.

Before the teens could ask what a Veela was Ludo’s voice filled the air again.

“And now,” roared Ludo Bagman’s voice, “kindly put your wands in the air … for the Irish National Team Mascots!”

Next moment, what seemed to be a great green-and-gold comet came zooming into the stadium. It did one circuit of the stadium, and then split into two smaller comets, each hurtling toward the goal posts. A rainbow arced suddenly across the field, connecting the two balls of light. The crowd oooohed and aaaaahed, as though at a fireworks display. Now the rainbow faded and the balls of light reunited and merged; they had formed a great shimmering shamrock, which rose up into the sky and began to soar over the stands. Something like golden rain seemed to be falling from it — gold coins. Lining the field on the Irish side were Leprechauns.

“Don’t bother collecting those, it’s Leprechaun Gold,” Wayne Sr. said smiling. “It’ll disappear soon enough”

The teens groaned, but put down the gold they had gathered.

“And now, ladies and gentlemen, kindly welcome — the Bulgarian National Quidditch Team! I give you — Dimitrov!”

A scarlet-clad figure on a broomstick, moving so fast it was blurred, shot out onto the field from an entrance far below, to wild applause from the Bulgarian supporters.

“Ivanova!” A second scarlet-robed player zoomed out.

“Zograf! Levski! Vulchanov! Volkov! Aaaaaaand — Krum!”

Harry, Wayne Jr and Spencer cheered along with the Bulgarians.


Seven green blurs swept onto the field; the word “Firebolt” on each of their brooms and you could see their names, embroidered in silver, upon their backs.

“And here, all the way from Egypt, our referee, acclaimed Chairwizard of the International Association of Quidditch, Hassan Mostafa!”

Once the announcements were over the teams flew to the middle of the pitch. Mostafa kicked the wooden crate he’d been carrying and released the four balls within.

This was one of the fastest games the Mutineers had ever seen. The players were going so fast that they had a hard time keeping up with them with their Omnioculars on normal, but they didn’t want to miss anything by slowing them down.

“TROY SCORES!” roared Bagman, and the stadium shuddered with a roar of applause and cheers. “Ten zero to Ireland!”

Gary, Neville, Terry, Michael and Susan cheered with most of the parents. The crowd roared and shamrocks were waved around.

And within ten minutes, Ireland had scored twice more, bringing their lead to thirty-zero and causing a thunderous tide of roars and applause from the green-clad supporters. The match became still faster, but more brutal. Volkov and Vulchanov, the Bulgarian Beaters, were whacking the Bludgers as fiercely as possible at the Irish Chasers, and were starting to prevent them from using some of their best moves; twice they were forced to scatter, and then, finally, Ivanova managed to break through their ranks; dodge the Keeper, Ryan; and score Bulgaria’s first goal.

“Hands over your ears,” James shouted as the Veelas got up to dance for the score.


One hundred thousand wizards gasped as the two Seekers, Krum and Lynch, plummeted through the center of the Chasers, so fast that it looked as though they had just jumped from airplanes without parachutes. Harry followed their descent through his Omnioculars, squinting to see where the Snitch was, but at the very last second, Viktor Krum pulled out of the dive and spiraled off. Lynch, however, hit the ground with a dull thud that could be heard throughout the stadium. A huge groan rose from the Irish seats.

“It’s time-out!” yelled Bagman’s voice, “as trained mediwizards hurry onto the field to examine Aidan Lynch!”

“Yes,” Harry said pumping his hand in the air. “A perfect Wronski Feint. Take that,” he said to his brother, who was complaining with the rest of the Irish supporters.

“Do I need to separate you boys?” James asked sternly.

“You just might have to. Hey, Spencer and Terry change seats with me,” Harry said as he got up from his seat, he knew his limits. The two boys complied and the group discussed the game so far, until the Irish Seeker could play again.

Lynch was back on the field and after fifteen more fast and furious minutes, Ireland had pulled ahead by ten more goals. They were now leading by one hundred and thirty points to ten, and the game was starting to get dirtier.

As Mullet shot toward the goal posts yet again, clutching the Quaffle tightly under her arm, the Bulgarian Keeper, Zograf, flew out to meet her. Whatever happened was over so quickly Harry didn’t catch it, but a scream of rage from the Irish crowd, and Mostafa’s long, shrill whistle blast, told him it had been a foul.

“And Mostafa takes the Bulgarian Keeper to task for cobbing — excessive use of elbows!” Bagman informed the roaring spectators. “And — yes, it’s a penalty to Ireland!”

The leprechauns, who had risen angrily into the air like a swarm of glittering hornets when Mullet had been fouled, now darted together to form the words “HA, HA, HA!” The Veela on the other side of the field leapt to their feet, tossed their hair angrily, and started to dance again.
All the men in the Potter party stuffed their fingers into their ears. Susan, who hadn’t bothered, was soon tugging on Gary’s arm. He turned to look at her, and she pulled his fingers impatiently out of his ears.

“Look at the referee!” she said, giggling. He looked down at the field.

Hassan Mostafa had landed right in front of the dancing Veela, and was acting very oddly indeed. He was flexing his muscles and smoothing his mustache excitedly.

“Now, we can’t have that!” said Ludo Bagman, though he sounded highly amused. “Somebody slap the referee!”

A mediwizard came tearing across the field; his fingers stuffed into his own ears, and kicked Mostafa hard in the shins. Mostafa seemed to come to himself; Gary, watching through the Omnioculars again, saw that he looked exceptionally embarrassed and had started shouting at the Veela, who had stopped dancing and were looking mutinous.

“And unless I’m much mistaken, Mostafa is actually attempting to send off the Bulgarian team mascots!” said Bagman’s voice. “Now there’s something we haven’t seen before. … Oh this could turn nasty. …”

It did: The Bulgarian Beaters, Volkov and Vulchanov, landed on either side of Mostafa and began arguing furiously with him, gesticulating toward the leprechauns, who had now gleefully formed the words “HEE, HEE, HEE.” Mostafa was not impressed by the Bulgarians’ arguments, however; he was jabbing his finger into the air, clearly telling them to get flying again, and when they refused, he gave two short blasts on his whistle.

“Two penalties for Ireland!” shouted Bagman, and the Bulgarian crowd howled with anger. “And Volkov and Vulchanov had better get back on those brooms … yes … there they go … and Troy takes the Quaffle …”

The game got downright nasty from there; fouls were called almost every minute. The Veelas and the Leprechauns started fighting and the Ministry had to break them up. Harry groaned when Krum got smashed in the face with a bludger.

“Look at Lynch!” Gary yelled. For the Irish Seeker had suddenly gone into a dive, and Gary was quite sure that this was no Wronski Feint; this was the real thing. …

“He’s seen the Snitch!” Spencer shouted. “He’s seen it! Look at him go!”

Half the crowd seemed to have realized what was happening; the Irish supporters rose in another great wave of green, screaming their Seeker on … but Krum was on his tail. How he could see where he was going, Harry had no idea; there were flecks of blood flying through the air behind him, but he was drawing level with Lynch now as the pair of them hurtled toward the ground again —

“They’re going to crash!” shrieked Susan.

“They’re not!” roared Terry.

“Lynch is!” yelled Harry.

And he was right — for the second time, Lynch hit the ground with tremendous force and was immediately stampeded by a horde of angry Veela.

“He’s got it — Krum’s got it — it’s all over!” shouted Harry.
Krum, his red robes shining with blood from his nose, was rising gently into the air, his fist held high, a glint of gold in his hand.

The scoreboard was flashing BULGARIA: 160, IRELAND: 170 across the crowd, who didn’t seem to have realized what had happened.

Then, slowly, as though a great jumbo jet were revving up, the rumbling from the Ireland supporters grew louder and louder and erupted into screams of delight.

“IRELAND WINS!” Bagman shouted, who like the Irish, seemed to be taken aback by the sudden end of the match. “KRUM GETS THE SNITCH — BUT IRELAND WINS — good lord, I don’t think any of us were expecting that!”

Everyone in the booth except Harry, Wayne Jr, Spencer and a few of the parents cheered.

“Why do you think he caught the snitch, Harry?” Spencer asked.

“They were never going to win. He just wanted to end the game,” Harry answered with a shrug. He could understand it, but he didn’t have to like it.

“Let’s wait until the crowd lets up then we have to go,” James said. They had made a promise to Lily after all. “No complaints,” he said firmly at the puppy dog eyes that were coming in to play. The twins sighed and nodded their heads. So as they waited they said their good-byes and when the crowds had thinned they went to the portkey site and went home.

All in all it was a great game so they couldn’t really complain. Until they got home to an angry Lily.
AN: thanks to my betas, darreldeam and alix33, for checking this over. All mistakes are my own, especially since I have a bad habit of adding things and not sending it back to them.

AN: I used the google translator for the spells, it took forever to get something close to what I wanted, but since I don't speak any form of Latin, I am sure it is wrong. Feel free to correct me if it is.

Disclaimer: I don't own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belongs to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her.

Hphphp

Same Day… well, night

As the Potter men walked toward the house, Harry started getting a bad feeling. A niggling memory was tickling his mind, something he was supposed to remember, and something that was going to take away his good mood. He stopped dead, all the blood drained from his face. He looked to his brother to see Gary looking at him with wonder for a minute, and then he too paled and stood still.

Both boys turned to the house with twin looks of horror.

“What’s gotten into you guys?” James questioned after he noted they stopped. He was still feeling excitement from the great game.

“Mum,” they intoned together with a great deal of dread lacing their voices.

“What about her? Did you guys prank her before we left?” James said coming slightly down from his game high. Lily was never in a good mood if she had been pranked and had no one to vent too.

“Worse,” came the duo answer, the twins looked at their dad now and tried to convey just how bad it was going to be, with the looks upon their faces.

James looked at his sons and when he saw their drawn faces and that they were truly scared to go to the house, he said, “You better tell me what you did, and I’ll see if I will side with you or your mum.”

“I had one of those dreams last night, but I didn’t want to miss the Cup, so I wrote it down and had Sally tell mum where the letter was —after the game started,” Harry explained hurriedly.

“Let me get this straight, you had one of those dreams?” Harry nodded. “You didn’t want to miss a Quidditch game, granted the biggest game of the year, nevertheless still a game?” Harry nodded again, this time a little sheepishly. “So you wrote it down and had Sally, of all people, tell your mum where it was… after the game started?” Harry opened his mouth to defend himself and stopped when James raised his right hand. “I’ll help, only because I understand, but only after she’s yelled at you for at least five minutes,” he said firmly.

The twins looked at each other and then at their dad and nodded. At least one of their parents understood the need to get out every now and then. Besides, it was the Quidditch World Cup, how often would one of their teams make it? They shared a look and decided that five minutes of yelling
was worth it. How bad can it be?

It was worse, Lily didn’t yell, she stood there with her arms crossed and an extremely angry and disappointed look on her face. Her big green eyes were narrowed as she looked at her two contrite sons. Her jaw tightened as she remembered the fear she felt when she read the letter. “Just why didn’t you boys answer you mirrors?” she asked through gritted teeth.

“We didn’t hear them,” Gary said, taking her anger off his brother. “The noise in the stadium was very loud. I doubt we would have heard them even if you were yelling.” He looked to his dad to back him up. James nodded his head in confirmation, but still stayed silent, standing behind the boys.

“Okay, I’ll buy that. Harry James Potter, explain,” she said forcefully. She reached into the back pocket of her jeans and brandished the letter to her oldest son.

“Mum, you know we love you, right?” She nodded her head with a small furrowing of her brow. “We put up with you keeping us in the house for the whole summer, with little complaint.” The confused look deepened, Lily didn’t like where he was going with this. “We could’ve whined and complained; we could’ve stomped around the house and ignored you. There were lots of ways we could’ve shown you that we didn’t agree, but we love you, so we didn’t. However, I knew if I told you about this dream, you would’ve kept us home for one of the few days we wanted to go out. That’s why I didn’t tell you.” He lifted his eyes to look at his mum, showing her the look of defiance that had been missing all summer.

“He has a point, Lily. I know if my parents had made me stay at the Manor for the summer, I would’ve made their lives hell,” James spoke up, even though it hadn’t been five minutes. He had to agree, their sons behaved better than most teens would have.

“That explains why he left the letter. I don’t like it. I’m still angry. I want to punish you more…” she bit out, fuming that Harry had a logical reason for his actions, but still angry at the fear she felt all day and wanting to strike at something. Lily slashed her hands in the air and got back to the reason she was angry to begin with. “The point is you left to go to a sporting event when you knew about information that we needed to have. We could have called a meeting and discussed plans…”

“No, Lily, we couldn’t have,” James said firmly, interrupting her tirade. “Most of the parents and children were already at the event and had been for days. You’re being unreasonable if you think they should have thrown away their chance to see the biggest game of the decade, because of a dream. The whole group has been on edge trying to help us. They are, however, not at our beck and call.” He looked at his wife, chin raised, arms folded and a defiant look in his eyes.

“For your information, I did have a meeting—” Lily said defensively as she turned to face her husband.

“With someone who doesn’t like Quidditch,” he said back firmly, figuring she met with Albert.

“—about,” she continued as if he hadn’t spoke, “a couple of spells to get rid of the horcrux in Harry’s scar.”

“Which could have waited until tomorrow” her husband rebutted. “Look, Lily, we get you want to get everything done right away, but it shouldn’t be at the cost of people’s home life. Everyone needs a day off. You need a day off, but no matter how we try, you won’t take one. It’s not fair for you to demand us to do the same,” James said running a hand down his face.

He gestured to the silent boys and stated, “The twins are correct they’ve been far better behaved than anyone else would have. I think they’ve suffered enough, so I am putting my foot down and saying
that Harry will not be reprimanded for going to the game.” He turned to the twins and said, “Go and change, then call you friends and talk about the game.” He waved to the stairs and shooed them away.

The twins took off like a shot, glad someone else was willing to face an angry Lily. They did as suggested and kept their conversations to the Cup. They did tell everyone they had other news, but didn’t want to talk about it right now.

Lily and James argued for almost an hour, until Lily finally vented enough to see reason. She agreed that as soon as the horcrux was out of Harry, she would take a day with the girls.

When the special edition of the Daily Prophet showed up depicting the chaos that happened at the Cup, the fight almost started all over again. It did start mirror calls that lasted into the night to make sure everyone from the group was okay.

According to the article the parents made a good showing of themselves, by standing up and fighting the Death Eaters, surprisingly it seemed a lot of the campers did. The Hopkins men were credited with saving the camp manager and his family. The Mutineer teens that were still on the camping grounds were given the duty to guard the children in the woods. There were a few injuries, but nothing serious, so a meeting was called.

The Death Eaters got away, with emergency Portkeys. The Aurors had been late in showing up, but soon enough to Obliviate the non-magicals. Amelia was going to be pissed.

The next day the Mutineers and their families gathered in the usual dining room. After verifying that everyone was indeed okay, the Potters told everyone about the dream, causing the kids to promise they would be vigilant. Plans and schedules were made up; the children would be taught a disillusionment charm before they went back to school. Pepper-up potion would be given for those who stayed up all night. There were contingency plans drawn, they wanted to cover all bases. If anyone was caught trying to enter either boy’s name, they were to defend themselves with extreme prejudice.

A small committee was created to do the spells on Harry’s scar. Lily and James were the primary casters, Remus, as his godfather, would be backup, and Gary was needed to anchor Harry down. Mayur was going to guide the soul piece where they needed it. The Longbottoms, sans Neville, were going to be on the outside of the room, to prevent anything escaping or to do the spell if the soul piece entered anyone in the room. They figured keeping it as close to the prophecy people as possible would help with the removal of the partial soul.

The group met three days later. This gave Harry enough time to meditate, fast and do a cleansing ritual. It was time.

Harry dressed in a cotton floor length robe, and nothing else, was laying on a marble table, that had been brought into the warded room just for this ritual. He knew this was going to hurt, so he steeled himself for the pain and waited for his mum and dad to get started. His body tense and his eyes clinched shut.

James stood on Harry’s right and Lily on his left, both were also clothed similarly to Harry. Gary was next to James holding Harry’s hand. Remus stood at the foot of the bed, ready to cast if things went sideways. Mayur stood behind Lily with a necklace at the ready. It was a masculine necklace, with a rune covered silver disk about the size of a Galleon.

Lily ran her hands in Harry’s hair and asked, “Are you ready, sweetie?” Lily felt frustrated that it was such a simple spell, but it wasn’t in any of the wizarding books they researched. She found it on
Harry simply nodded and kept his eyes shut tight.

James and Lily lifted both arms and joined hands above Harry’s head and started chanting, “Repel aliena anima.” They had to recite this thirteen times, and then the piece should free itself from the scar.

Mayur stood at the ready, the necklace hovering between their joined hands.

On the third chant the area around Harry’s eyes pinched and he started tearing; on the seventh chant his whole face pinched and his jaw tightened to the point of grinding, the grip on Gary’s hand was brutal; on the thirteenth chant he yelled and his body arched, he pulled so hard on his brother’s hand that Gary almost collapsed on top of him.

Gary kept his thoughts focused on keeping his brother grounded to the present, he took as much of the pain as he could, while keeping standing and reciting over and over through their link, ‘I’m here, I’m here,’ never once stopping. He felt the pull of the horcrux through the link and chanted louder in Harry’s mind keeping him from following.

A grey mist rose from the scar and Mayur quickly wrapped it in a bubble spell and directed it to the necklace, which was only a few inches above the scar. “Animaligaveris” he incanted once the mist surrounded the necklace. The mist seemed too dissolve into the rune covered disk and everyone relaxed.

Harry almost passed out with relief. While he trusted Sally, he didn’t want someone else’s soul in his forehead. He would wear the necklace and hope that it would serve the same way the scar would have.

“That went better than I thought it would. That soul piece didn’t even put up a fight,” Mayur said in mild disbelief. “Also the mist was grey and not black in nature, most unusual.” He rubbed his chin in thought his forehead creased with confusion.

“I’m just glad it’s over,” Harry said, using his brother’s grip to rise off the table. His head felt lighter, almost muzzled as it readjusted to its horcrux free state.

There was a knock on the door, and Frank peeked in. “All done? We heard the yelling, then nothing. When there wasn’t anything trying to escape, I figured I’d better check.”

“All clear,” Lily said with the biggest smile she had all summer. “Tomorrow, I’m going to the spa—for a week,” she announced. “You men can take the children to Diagon Alley instead of me and the girls for once.” She looked pointedly at James, who always seemed to be busy that day.

He just nodded his head in agreement and patted his sons on the back “Well, done, guys. Why don’t you go and get changed,” he suggested. “We’ll make sure that soul piece is locked nice and tight on that necklace and then we’ll give it to Harry.”

The tired boys nodded and slowly Harry got up and joined his brother at the door. “Thanks, everyone,” he said and then made his way up to his room. There was a bottle of pepper-up waiting by his bed, so he took it and then changed into some shorts and a t-shirt.

Gary came into his room, wearing much the same. “We’d better call Daphne and Susan first, then they can chain call everyone else,” he said pulling out his mirror and getting comfortable at the head of Harry’s bed.
Harry nodded and removed his mirror from his bedside drawer and made his call from the desk. Needless to say both girls were relieved that they were okay and promised they’d be over later that day. Both boys had no problem with this and soon enough they got off the mirrors to go and find the adults.

They met them in one of the sitting rooms and Harry took the necklace with good grace after it was explained to him that the soul piece didn’t register as Dark. Since there were no compulsions on the necklace, they felt that it would be safe. None of the adults could explain why, but it was a huge weight off everyone’s shoulders. Harry and Gary knew, but were bound by vow never to tell anyone, because of the closing vow on the twin ritual circle. Sally knew, but felt it wasn’t her secret to share.

Lily disappeared the next day along with most of the wives. The men grudgingly took the teens to Diagon Alley. The kids were happy to once again be together, as a group, on an outing. They didn’t split up like they usually did; they stayed as one big group, which made for crowded shops. Madam Malkin chastised James for not giving the usual warning to the shop owners.

The men mostly hung around the outsides of the stores, making sure that no one entered while the kids were shopping. They used the excuse that the place was full, which it was, and they were waiting for it to empty. It worked like a charm. See, they didn’t need women around to corral kids. Unfortunately, because they were hanging outside, they didn’t see what the kids were buying. Nothing too bad, but the totals at the registers were high. Especially at the robe shops and the Quidditch store.

A very tired group of men went home that day with much lighter pockets.

Hphphp

AN: I am not completely happy with this one, but it does get the job done. I am trying not to hurry and make the rest of the story sound rushed. So once again if updates come sporadically, then it is because I am getting frustrated with plot holes.
A short narrative

The train ride was just as fun as always, many of the Mutineers and their friends gathered in the carriage. Laughter and excitement over the World Cup was heard for most of the ride, though there were some that were worried over the Death Eaters. It did occur to many that the public was standing up for themselves, unlike the last time the Death Eaters plagued the magical community. They could place it all on Pandora’s crystals.

Many of the other children, outside the Mutineers, were told about the Tri-Wizard Tournament and that Harry or Gary’s name might be called. The two boys made sure to tell everyone that they didn’t want this to happen. Most believed them after the years of knowing the two helpful boys.

The opening feast went well, though Dumbledore was a bit shocked that not many students below fourth years seemed surprised that the tournament was going to take place. He blamed the Mutineers, rightfully so, but there was little he could do about it. There were many grumpy students. Quidditch had been canceled for the year, and they couldn’t really understand why.

The months passed until it was time for the other two schools to join Hogwarts. The Mutineers made sure to keep a good eye on everyone in the castle, no one that didn’t belong showed on their maps and the ghosts heard no word that anything was out of the ordinary.

Harry didn’t have the dreams anymore, so he had no idea what Voldemort was up to. Gary was glad of this, he hated those dreams.

October 30, 1994

It was a cold and crisp autumn day, the students and staff were all outside waiting for the other two schools to show. They didn’t know how they were going to arrive so the students mostly just fidgeted looking around the grounds waiting for something to happen.

“There!” yelled a sixth year, pointing over the forest.

Something large, much larger than a broomstick — or, indeed, a hundred broomsticks — was hurtling across the deep blue sky toward the castle, growing larger all the time.

“It’s a dragon!” shrieked one of the first years, losing her head completely.

“Don’t be stupid … it’s a flying house!” said Dennis Creevy.

And he was almost right, it was an enormous, powder-blue, horse-drawn carriage, the size of a large house, pulled by a dozen winged horses, all the size of elephants. When the carriage stopped a young
boy jumped out and placed some steps at the door. A gigantic woman emerged, along with a dozen boys and girls. They were all dressed in blue uniforms and appeared to be freezing. Dumbledore greeted the woman, who must be the Headmistress, as Madame Maxime. They seemed to be old friends.

While the two Heads talked the Beauxbatons’ students shivered in the Scottish cold. The twins felt sorry for them and were about to offer their cloaks, when it was decided that the chilly students would wait in the Great Hall. Hagrid came and cooed over the winged horses as he led them away.

The Durmstrang School arrived a bit later, via the Black Lake in a large boat that bubbled up from the depths of the water. These students were dressed much warmer that the Beauxbatons’ students had been and they were sturdier built. Dumbledore greeted the Headmaster much the same way he had Madame Maxime. This person was addressed as Headmaster Karkaroff; the twins didn’t like him at first sight. They would do well to keep an eye on this guy. Among the Durmstrang students was Viktor Krum, much to the delight of Ron.

Everyone made their way into the Great Hall. Since it was a feast they all sat at their appropriate tables. Beauxbatons sat at the Ravenclaw table and Durmstrang sat with the Slytherins. The Mutineers made sure that all the visiting students were made welcome.

When all the guests settled Dumbledore stood. “Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, ghosts and — most particularly — guests,” said Dumbledore, beaming around at the foreign students. “I have great pleasure in welcoming you all to Hogwarts. I hope and trust that your stay here will be both comfortable and enjoyable.”

One of the Beauxbaton students sat shivering next to Harry. “Here,” he said, pulling off his outer cloak, “this might help.” He offered it to the girl. She smiled and thanked him as she pulled it over her uniform. The others boys at the table did the same and soon all the French pupils were covered in warm cloaks. Even the boys were grateful.

“The tournament will be officially opened at the end of the feast,” said Dumbledore. “I now invite you all to eat, drink, and make yourselves at home!” he then sat and started a conversation with Karkaroff.

Many of the Hogwarts students felt the same pull they had during the World Cup. One of the girls from Beauxbaton was a Veela, or at least part. Pulling themselves together they enjoyed the feast, there were many new dishes added to the normal fare. Some of these were; Bouillabaisse, Ratatouille, Pieds paquets, Soupe au pistou, Salade Niçoise for the French students and; Pelmeni, Kholodets (or Studen’), Shchi, Okroshka for the pupils of Durmstrang.

Harry made sure to try a bit of each; it wasn’t often that he got to taste non-British food. Others followed his example. The foreign students seemed pleased that Hogwarts would go out of their way to make them feel welcome. After the dessert was completed, which also had cuisine from the other schools, the plates disappeared and Dumbledore stood once more gaining everyone’s attention.

“The moment has come,” said Dumbledore, smiling around at the sea of upturned faces. “The Tri-wizard Tournament is about to start. I would like to say a few words of explanation before we bring in the casket, just to clarify the procedure that we will be following this year. But first, let me introduce, for those who do not know them, Mr. Bartemius Crouch, Head of the Department of International Magical Cooperation and Mr. Ludo Bagman, Head of the Department of Magical Games and Sports.”

The crowd politely clapped as each man stood, though they did clap louder for Bagman, who seemed to enjoy the attention.
“Mr. Bagman and Mr. Crouch have worked tirelessly over the last few months on the arrangements for the Tri-wizard Tournament,” Dumbledore continued, “and they will be joining myself, Professor Karkaroff, and Madame Maxime on the panel that will judge the champions’ efforts.”

At the mention of the word “champions,” the attentiveness of the listening students seemed to sharpen. Perhaps Dumbledore had noticed their sudden stillness, for he smiled as he said, “The casket, then, if you please, Mr. Filch.”

Filch, who had been lurking unnoticed in a far corner of the Hall, now approached Dumbledore carrying a great wooden chest encrusted with jewels. It looked extremely old. A murmur of excited interest rose from the watching students.

“The instructions for the tasks the champions will face this year have already been examined by Mr. Crouch and Mr. Bagman,” said Dumbledore as Filch placed the chest carefully on the table before him, “and they have made the necessary arrangements for each challenge. There will be three tasks, spaced throughout the school year, and they will test the champions in many different ways … their magical prowess — their daring — their powers of deduction — and, of course, their ability to cope with danger.”

At this last word, the Hall was filled with a silence so absolute that nobody seemed to be breathing.

“As you know, three champions compete in the tournament,” Dumbledore went on calmly, “one from each of the participating schools. They will be marked on how well they perform each of the Tournament tasks and the champion with the highest total after task three will win the Tri-wizard Cup. The champions will be chosen by an impartial selector: the Goblet of Fire.” Dumbledore now took out his wand and tapped three times upon the top of the casket.

The lid creaked slowly open. Dumbledore reached inside it and pulled out a large, roughly hewn wooden cup. It would have been entirely unremarkable had it not been full to the brim with dancing blue-white flames. Dumbledore closed the casket and placed the goblet carefully on top of it, where it would be clearly visible to everyone in the Hall.

“Anybody wishing to submit themselves as champion must write their name and school clearly upon a slip of parchment and drop it into the goblet,” said Dumbledore. “Aspiring champions have twenty-four hours in which to put their names forward. Tomorrow night, Halloween, the goblet will return the names of the three it has judged most worthy to represent their schools. The goblet will be placed in the entrance hall tonight, where it will be freely accessible to all those wishing to compete.

“To ensure that no underage student yields to temptation,” said Dumbledore, “I will be drawing an Age Line around the Goblet of Fire once it has been placed in the entrance hall. Nobody under the age of seventeen will be able to cross this line.

“Finally, I wish to impress upon any of you wishing to compete that this tournament is not to be entered into lightly. Once a champion has been selected by the Goblet of Fire, he or she is obliged to see the tournament through to the end. The placing of your name in the goblet constitutes a binding, magical contract. There can be no change of heart once you have become a champion. Please be very sure, therefore, that you are wholeheartedly prepared to play before you drop your name into the goblet. Now, I think it is time for bed. Good night to you all.”

The Mutineers all looked at each other, this would be a long night, and they would have to stay awake to make sure that no one entered the Potter twins’ name. Everyone in the Great Hall stood and the Beauxbaton students were told they could return the cloaks in the morning, so they wouldn’t get cold as they returned to their carriage.
Harry and Gary shared a look and understood they would have a mental talk when they got to bed, after they talked to their parents. They would also have to talk to Sally about having the ghost patrol the area.

The Mutineers and some friends gathered in the Entrance Hall.

“So what do we do now?” Susan asked as she held on to Gary’s hand.

“Well,” Harry said, making him the center of attention, “we need to make sure no one gets near the cup with mine or Gary’s name.”

“Me and George have the latest curfew,” Fred said, from Harry’s right.

“Yeah, we can stay and watch everyone until ten,” George nodded in agreement.

“That would be great, guys,” Harry said sincerely.

“Yeah, now, how about the Hufflepuffs use the mirrors and maps until bedtime,” Susan said. The Hufflepuff students voiced their agreement. “that way we can call you two,” she pointed at the Weasley brother, “if we see anything strange.”

“Then the Ravenclaws can do the same until one in the morning,” Harry offered, his housemates nodded.

“We,” Daphne said, pointing to the Slytherins, “will take the midnight to three.”

“That leave the Gryffindors to take the three to six,” Dean said, looking to Gary, who nodded.

“But, what do we do if anyone beside Hufflepuff sees someone? I mean the twins will be in the dorms by then,” Hannah asked, a little warily, she understood how important it was, but didn’t know how to stop someone from doing what they were planning.

“The mirrors in the common room,” Mandy said with a snap of her fingers, “They added them at the end of last year, in case someone got hurt. Call your Head of House if you see anyone that doesn’t need to be out past curfew.”

“Yeah, we’ll keep watch in the common rooms, that way they’ll be right there,” Spencer said.

“But how are we going to convince them?” Hannah asked.

“Tell them a ghost told you, or better yet call out to your House ghost and tell them to run and tell a professor,” Gary suggested. “Don’t forget Remus has a mirror too,” he added, causing many students to relax.

The Soldier floated through the students, making them shiver, and looked around at the youngsters. “We ghosts will be patrolling the area, if you call to your House ghost they will answer,” he said.

“Ohkay,” Harry said clapping his hands together, “we have a plan. Everyone try and get some sleep. We’ll all meet up at the Goblet in the morning and keep a closer watch. Make sure to bring your maps. We’ll figure out a way to hide them. I have an idea, but we better break it up now before were out past curfew.” It wasn’t the best of plans and many things could go wrong, but it was all they had.

Good-nights were said all around and the group broke up and went to their dorms. After everyone called their parents the Mutineers settled down for a long night.

“Hey, Mum,” Gary said, smiling into the mirror. She looked much less stressed now. She had taken
a day out of her spa visit to make sure they got on the train. Then she and the other mums went back for an extra week.

“Tell me some good news,” Lily said with a returning smile.

“Well, we have a plan, it’s not foolproof, but it’s a start,” he said with a shrug and then proceeded to tell her about their plan and now the names were chosen.

“You kids do your best, but leave us to handle any intruder. Your dad and some of the other fathers will be in the Shrieking Shack tonight and they will switch off with others tomorrow,” his mum said.

“Why there and not in the Library?” Gary asked with a yawn.

“It’s closer, silly. Besides, it has a tunnel into the grounds. You must be tired to ask that, why don’t you get some sleep?” she suggested gently.

“Yeah, that’s a good idea. I’m going to talk to Harry a bit then I’ll get some,” he said stifling another yawn.

‘Harry,’ Gary thought to his brother, ‘how are we going to know who has what name on the papers they submit?’

‘I don’t know, maybe a show of force or have Sally read them or something,’ his brother thought back.

Sally appeared and tapped Harry on the shoulder. He looked at her and held up a finger for her to wait a minute. She nodded and settled next to him on the couch he was sitting on in the Ravenclaw common room.

‘Sally is here, you get some sleep. I can feel how tired you are,’ Harry sent.

‘Okay, tell me what she says later,’ his brother answered.

“What’s up, Sally?” the green-eyed boy asked, after he looked to make sure no one around.

“What were you and Gary talking about?” she asked with a tilt of her head.

“We’re worried that we won’t know what the slips say. I mean, anyone could put our names in the Cup and we wouldn’t even know. We’ve got everyone watching the maps, but what good does that do if we can’t read the slips?” Harry said a bit loud, venting some frustration. When the older students turned his way he just shook his head sheepishly and waved them away. Many just nodded back. It was getting on bedtime and so they gathered up their things and after bidding Harry a goodnight, they went to bed.

“That’s a good question,” Sally said, tapping her chin in thought. “I could read them for you, or have one of the other ghosts do the same.”

“That would be helpful, but you said you couldn’t interfere with the living,” Harry said.

“And I won’t, if someone has your name on the paper it will be up to you to stop them. I can only warn you.”

“Oh, did you want to train for a while? I know I could be doing something and my friends are all in bed getting a nap before our shift.” He looked around the common room to make sure they were alone. The other students of the House knew Harry stayed up late, though nobody knew why.
“Okay, let’s go blow off some steam.” And she jumped from the couch and all but ran to the door.

It wasn’t until eleven that evening that anything happened. Harry was watching the map when he saw Peter Pettigrew appear in the Forbidden Forest.

“James Potter,” he called in the mirror.

“We see him, Harry. You keep a look out for anyone else and call Remus if you see anyone,” his dad said as soon as his face appeared in the mirror. “We still don’t know who the other guy is.”

“I’ll keep watching. Done,” Harry said quickly, not wanting to impede his dad.

With the parents

James, Sirius and the other two men crept out of the Shack and followed the tunnel until they were in the grounds. They kept to the shadows and followed the progress of Pettigrew. They silently made their way to the Forest and when they spotted the rat they fired off a barrage of deadly spells. They weren’t going to let him get away this time if they could help it.

Different colored spells filled the air; the target was small though and ran as fast as it could through the trees to get away from the men chasing it. He almost got to the end of the maps boundaries when Sirius sent a Blasting Curse to the area the rat was in and the ground blew apart under him, causing the body to be thrown in the air. It smashed into a tree and was knocked out cold.

“Let me kill him, James,” Sirius said as he stomped towards the limp rat. Sirius had always been the more bloodthirsty of the Marauders. It took a lot of time for him and Snape even speak to one another.

“No! You’ll wind up in Azkaban and we need you here,” James said as he conjured a cage just big enough for the rodent.

“Sirius,” said Wright as he held the grey-eyed man back. “you promised Amelia that if we could capture him, we would.”

“Fine,” Sirius said, yanking himself out of the other man’s grip, “that doesn’t mean I have to like it.”

“Come on, let’s get out of here before Dumbledore gets here,” Derryl Jackson said, after James put Pettigrew in the cage. He didn’t want to have to explain why they were on school grounds.

“Yeah,” James nodded and quickly looked at the map. No one was moving their way, so they made it back to the Shrieking Shack unmolested. James called Amelia and let her know they had her escaped prisoner. Derryl volunteered to take him to the Three Broomsticks. James cast an impervious spell on the cage and handed it over.

James called Harry to let him know that they captured Pettigrew and that they were keeping watch again.

Back with Harry and the Ravenclaws

The kids watched and saw the parents’ names converge on the rat. Harry let out a sigh of relief when his dad called with the all clear. They were just getting their stuff together to let the Slytherins take over when they saw another name on the map, this time coming from the front gates.

It was Bartemius Crouch.
“It’s going on midnight, why is he here?” Harry mused out loud. So he called his dad and informed him.

“Not much we can do about him,” James said with a shrug. “As long as the tournament is here, he can come and go as he pleases.”

“Okay,” Harry said with a yawn, “I thought I’d let you know.”

“Go to sleep, Harry, Daphne has already checked in. I’ll call Remus and have him guard the Goblet for a while,” James said, to put the boys mind at ease.

“Okay, Dad, goodnight. Done,” the tired teen said and put the mirror away. He and the rest of the exhausted kids went to bed.

Hphphp

AN: Sorry for taking so long, I’m still battling plot holes, so updates will still be sporadic. I also wanted to get the story back to where I wanted it to go in the first place, and that is the boys not having to confront everything on their own. The whole premise for this story it so the Potter twins have their parents backing them. So sorry if that’s not your cup of tea.
The Imposter

AN: thanks to my betas, darrelldream and alix33, for checking this over. All mistakes are my own, especially since I have a bad habit of adding things and not sending it back to them.

Disclaimer: I don’t own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belongs to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her.

Hphphp

October 31, 1994

Harry was just waking up when he got a mirror call from Daphne. “What’s up, Daph?” he said, rubbing the sleep out of his eyes.

“Just checking in to let you know the only weird thing that happened last night was Mr. Crouch was around the Goblet most of the night. Remus seemed to chase him off though,” she answered with a yawn. “I let Gary know when it was his shift, so you’re going to have to ask him if he was still there later,” the Slytherin girl concluded.

“Alright, thanks for telling me,” the green-eyed boy said. “You look like you need a bit more sleep. Did you take a Pepper-up?”

“Harry, you are not supposed to tell a girl when she is not looking her best,” Daphne chastised. “No, I haven’t taken mine yet. I will do it in a minute.”

“Oops sorry, I’m still learning all about you girls,” Harry blushed and ran his hand over his face.

Daphne’s face softened. “It’s alright, Harry, I forgive you, but don’t do it again.” She shook her finger at him in mock disapproval.

Harry smiled. He was glad he wasn’t in real trouble. “I’ll see you at breakfast. Will you be joining us or keeping the Durmstrang students company?”

“I think I had better keep an eye on our visitors. We don’t want their only contact with the school to be the uppity pure-bloods.”

Harry nodded in agreement, while he and Draco never really got along, they didn’t fight either. However, Draco’s views on blood supremacy didn’t bode well for good relations. “Then I’ll see you at lunch. Done,” he said and then put away his mirror. He took a half a dose of Pepper-up and got ready for the day, all the while talking to his brother. ‘So anything happen last night… well this morning?’

‘Yeah, that Crouch guy kept hanging around the cup. Remus was there the rest of the night, so he didn’t get near it,’ Gary answered groggily. He would need a full dose of the Pepper-up potion in order to complete this day.

‘Did you talk to Dad?’

‘Yeah, he told what happened with Pettigrew. That was kinda neat,’ the tired Gryffindor answered.

Harry felt a surge of energy through the bond and knew that Gary had taken his potion. ‘Well, we’re going to have to go and make sure our names don’t wind up in the Cup.’
‘Okay, let me get dressed and we’ll meet in the Entrance Hall,’ Gary suggested.

‘See ya then, Bro,’ Harry said as he cut the link.

Harry finished getting dressed and grabbed the Invisibility Cloak and his map and made his way to the Entrance Hall. His dad had given him the Cloak this summer, for security purposes. He said he had held off this long, because there was only one Cloak and two sons. It was only because Harry was the oldest that it was passed on to him.

He met up with a large group of the Mutineers. They all made their way into the room that housed the Cup. It was a large room off the side of the Entrance Hall. It was square and the Cup was sitting in the middle of the room on a large pedestal. There were a few benches littered around the room, so people could watch who was submitting their name.

“So, how are we going to do this?” Terry asked as they all settled in a circle around one of the benches. “It’s Monday and we have classes.”

“It’s a good thing we’re all in different Houses and years. We can split up a rotation, every time you don’t have class, come here and watch the cup. The ghosts are going to try and read the slips of the people entering. If they see our names on the paper, they’re going to warn us and then the teachers. If you can, try and stop or stall them until a professor comes. Don’t do anything that will get yourself hurt,” Harry said as he looked over his group of friends. It was a very warm feeling to have so many people look out for him and Gary.

“We can do that. All it will take is a simple Stunning Charm. The only problem I see is if it is one of the visitors, I mean, we don’t want to start an international incident,” Susan said thoughtfully.

“Yeah, that could be a problem. Try and do something less aggressive, like a Hovering Charm or something. That way they won’t get hurt, but can’t move forward. Or maybe a Sticking Charm,” Gary said, rubbing his head in thought.

The rest of the group nodded in agreement and they all pulled out their schedules and started going over who would be where, and when. Luna, Spencer, Ginny and Astoria being in third year helped. Sally’s ghosts hung around the fringes listening in on the students. While all this was going on one of the ghosts was keeping an eye on the Cup and the students submitting their names. So far nobody was acting suspicious, though the caretaker, Mr. Filch, was hanging around, watching the Mutineers, but that wasn’t unusual, that man hated them.

All but two of the group headed to breakfast. It was decided that they would go to their own table this morning and most of them would meet up as the study group later. They didn’t want to overwhelm their guests with too many people at once. Harry decided on hot cereal this morning and while he was doctoring it up, he looked to the visitors.

“Hello, I don’t believe we were introduced last night. My name is Harry Potter,” he said to the lovely girl sitting next to him. She was quite beautiful, as were most of the Beauxbaton students. Her hair was long and almost white blonde. She was willowy and well put together.

“I am Fleur Delacour,” she said, a bit haughtily, like she was speaking to a commoner. “You are ze bruther of Gary Potter?”

“Yeah, I’m his twin,” Harry said with a lifting of his eyebrow. She came off as a bit stuck up, maybe it was defensive.

“I ’ave ’eard many things about your bruther. Et is said that ‘e is powerful, oui?” the blond asked an
eager look in her eye, which put Harry on edge a little bit. Then he felt the pull of a Veela.

‘Gary, watch out for this one, seems she is the Veela we felt last night and she seems to have taken an interest in you,’ Harry sent to his brother. He felt the acknowledgement through the bond and saw his twin glance their way. “Well, I wouldn’t go that far. I would say he is okay, power wise,” Harry hedged.

“Maybe you are jest jealous,” Fleur said with a bite to her tone. She threw her hair over her shoulder and went to turn away from the little boy.

Harry laughed, banging his hands on the table, causing Fleur to turn her attention back to him with a confused look upon her face. “I and my brother are very close. You won’t find many siblings closer than we are. There is no need for me to be jealous of Gary,” he said between chuckles.

“Maybe what you say is true. We shall see, oui?” This time she did turn away and start a conversation with the French girl next to her.

Harry just shrugged and finished his meal. He wanted to be around the Cup as much as possible today. When he was done he made his way to the room, he slipped in the back and got his Cloak out of his backpack and put it on. He took out his map and watched the cup. Sally was there looking at each slip that passed her. So far nothing went wrong. When the time came for class, he left the room and ducked behind a tapestry and put his Cloak away. He then went to class like normal.

The eldest Potter twin’s first class was History, which thankfully was still taught by Professor Watts. She waited until the class entered and settled down before going over the history of the Tri-wizard Tournament.

“Today we’ll be learning about the history of the Tri-wizard Tournament. The only reason I didn’t go over this before is because I wanted to wait for our visitors to come. As you can see we have guests in this class. Madame Maxime has giving her blessing to her students to attend our classes for this week so that they can see what different types of learning there are.” The Professor floated back and forth in front of the class, tapping her ever present ruler in her hand.

Harry looked to the back of the class and sure enough there was a group of six Beauxbaton students there. They looked like they were mystified as to why a ghost was teaching this class. There were also three Durmstrang students on the other side of the class; their faces were blank as they studied the teacher.

“Let us not forget our other visitors from Durmstrang,” Professor Watts said with a nod to the three boys. “We should also not forget that the entire reason behind this competition is to promote International relationships. You would do well in finding people among our guests with similar interests and attempt to make friends. They could be quite helpful in understanding foreign relations that could become lifelong friends.”

The visiting students looked a bit shocked at that remark. They had been told that the students of Hogwarts were not interested in making friends with foreigners. The Heads of their schools based this on the treatment they received from the British Ministry—which, needless to say, was lacking.

“Everyone, stand up,” the Professor instructed. Everyone complied. “Now I want you to mingle a bit and see if you have common interests. Take five minutes and ask non-invasive questions, like ‘do you like Quidditch?’ then sit with the person you think you might share something with. Then I will resume the class.”

They class did as they were told, tentatively. Harry went up to one of the Durmstrang boys and
asked if he like dessert and what kind.

“I did enjoy the treacle tart that vus served last night,” the boy answered. “But I prefer the Kiev cake of my country,” he added in a heavy accent, though his English was quite good.

“I love treacle tart,” Harry enthused; he clapped the boy on the shoulder and led him to a desk in the middle of the room, with Terry shaking his head as he followed. “I think I would like that cake you spoke of. I wonder if they will serve it tonight. My name is Harry, by the way, and this guy behind us is Terry. What’s yours?”

“I am Baan,” the confused boy said with a curt nod.

“Glad to meet you. We should get to know one another at lunch. You can sit at any table if you want, so you might as well join us and we’ll bond over dessert,” Harry said quickly as he noted their time was almost up. The three boys sat down and turned their attention to the front of the room.

Professor Watts was tapping her ruler on her legs, anxious to get started on her lesson. “Okay, everyone, take a seat,” she called over the ruckus. The students complied and they were quite a bit more mixed up then they had been previously. She then launched into a lengthy description of the Tri-wizard Tournament. How it was started between the three schools in 1294 and continued until the death of all three participants in 1792. She went over the past trials— who won and who died. She could only speculate on why it was restarted this year.

All in all it was a good class and there were many notes taken, because if there was one thing they learned in this class, is that if the professor was teaching something, there would be a test.

_Meanwhile with Gary_

Gary’s first class was Defense Against the Dark Arts, with the Slytherins. They were learning about the tournament as well. They didn’t have Beauxbaton visitors, but they did have three students from Durmstrang. Remus, or Professor Lupin, was teaching about the tasks and the spells used to overcome the obstacles. Like Professor Watts, he made sure to name the champions who completed the tasks and those who died trying.

At the end of the class, Gary went to Remus to ask the tired looking man about Crouch. “Hey, Uncle Remus, what was with Crouch hanging around the Goblet all night?” he inquired with a questioning look in his eyes.

“What are you talking about, Gary, Barty wasn’t anywhere near there last night. I couldn’t use the map because Filch was hanging around all night,” Remus asked confused.

“Oh, this is bad,” Gary said as he pulled his uncle into the office. He whipped out his map and looked for Crouch. “Remus, there are two Bartemius Crouchess,” he said seriously.

“What?!” Remus shouted as he took the map from the upset boy. “Dammit, I’m calling Amelia.” And he pulled the mirror from the special pocket on his robe and called the head of the DMLE. “Amelia, we have a problem,” he said as soon as her face showed.

“What is it?” the woman asked.

“Gary just pointed out that there are two Crouches on the map. Isn’t Jr. supposed to be dead?” Remus asked.

“Yes, he died in Azkaban years ago. Barty was quite upset for months. It was around the same time his wife died,” Amelia answered, her face scrunched in confusion. “I’ll be there as quick as I can.
Use the map and try and find who the impostor is,” she commanded.

“Right. Done,” Remus intoned blandly and then turned to Gary. “Go to class and we’ll handle it. Be careful. Don’t go anywhere with anyone, even someone you know. If you have to, take your map out and make sure it is not the imposter;” he instructed as he led the boy from the office. “I need to tell Albus, it is still his school after all.” He wrote a quick note to hang on the door that the next class was canceled.

“Okay, Uncle Remus,” Gary said as he made his way out of the classroom. ‘Harry, there is an imposter in the school. Be careful and check your map to verify anyone asking you to go anywhere.’

‘Right, do we know who he is posing as?’ came the reply.

‘No, but Remus said that Filch was hanging around the Cup all night,’ Gary answered.

‘Okay, thanks for the warning. I’ll see you at lunch,’ Harry said and cut the link.

Harry told the Mutineers that were in his Potions class and Gary told the ones in Charms. When it was time for lunch they all decided they were going to eat at the same table. It was a good thing Hufflepuffs were used to the group taking over their table. Most of them had friends in other Houses thanks to having to sit elsewhere at meals and study time, though they did note that the fourth years of that group were rather tense.

The third year Mutineers quickly joined their peers and asked what was going on. They were told what happened and they too started to get anxious. When Baan and four other Durmstrang students joined them they tried to lighten the atmosphere.

“Hey, Baan, this is my brother Gary,” Harry said pointing to his twin, who sat on his left.

“Da, I could tell the… resem… likeness,” the older boy said with a bit of difficulty. “You are worried about somethin’?” he said noting the tension.

“Yeah, but don’t worry, the adults got it covered. I hope,” Harry said waving it away.

“We could maybe help,” Baan offered. Then he turned to his fellow students and introduced them as Schmitt, Kyle, Kurt and Viktor.

“Hey guys, welcome to the Hufflepuff table,” Harry said as he shook their hands, which impressed Viktor because they didn’t make a big deal out of him being there. Harry introduced all of the Mutineers and they all settled down to eat lunch, which still had dishes from all the nations represented in the school.

“Thanks for the offer, but I’m not sure how anyone can help,” Gary said bringing the subject back to their worries.

“We could maybe understand, if ve knew vat the problem vus,” Viktor replied.

“Well, we didn’t want to worry anyone, but we think someone is trying to enter Gary in the tournament,” Harry said with a very concerned look on his face.

“Why would somevon do dis?” the Quidditch star asked, his own face scrunched up.

“Well, you know they call Gary the Boy Who Lived, right?” nods were seen from the visitors. “We think that someone is trying to kill him, because he is a celebrity,” Harry said in a whisper, not wanting to alarm the foreigners that Voldemort was still out there.
“Da, dis I understand,” Viktor nodded and then turned to Gary and gave him a sympathizing look. “Ve vill keep vatch.”

Gary expressed his thanks and the discussion turned to mundane things for the rest of the meal.

**Meanwhile with the adults**

James just got off the mirror with Remus with a sigh. They had been in the Shack all night and were just getting ready to switch over with the next group. “We need to keep an eye on the map. Moony says there are two Crouches. So we want to watch both of them,” he said to the eight men gathered in the torn up living room of the Shack.

“How are we going to tell from here who is who?” Wright asked, stifling a yawn.

James noted they were all tired and started handing out Pepper-up. “We can only tell who is leaving and how. If one of them goes to the Forbidden Forest then we’ll go and intercept him.”

“Isn’t Jr. dead?” Sirius asked. He remembered the reports of all the Death Eaters in prison, one less Death Eater was one more they didn’t have to worry about.

“That’s what we thought, who knows what Sr. has done. I wouldn’t put it past the man to break the law. Remember how he tried to get you thrown in Azkaban, even after we told him that Pettigrew was the Secret Keeper?”

“No time to speculate now,” Derryl said. “We have to keep watch.” And he sat down with the map in his lap as his eyes roamed over the Forbidden Forest.

Everyone else did the same, but took different parts of the map until they found both Crouches. “I’ve got a Barty with Dumbledore, looks like Remus is with them. Man, I hope he doesn’t have to tell that old man about the maps,” Sirius said, keeping an eye on the Headmaster’s office.

“Me too, but if he does, hopefully he will tell him that his is the only one,” James answered still looking for the other Barty.

“Hey, I found the other one, he isn’t in red though, I wonder how that happened,” Aric Davies said, pointing to the moving figure. “He’s moving awful fast, going to the main gate.”

“Sirius, Wright, your with me,” James said, jumping up from the lumpy couch and running to the tunnel. “Call the Library and let them know he might be headed their way.”

Derryl whipped out his mirror and called his wife, who was manning the map in Hogsmeade.

The three men ran through the tunnel and froze the Whomping Willow; they then made their way to the gate. Seeing a running Filch they yelled for him to stop and started firing incapacitation spells. The man didn’t even turn, he just kept running to the end of the wards, ducking and weaving to make himself a harder target. Just as a Bone Breaking Curse hit his leg, he made it to the ward line and Disapparated away.

“Dammit,” James said.

“Now what?” Sirius asked panting from the run.

“We still keep a close watch. Are the other two schools on the map? We need to learn the names of the students so we will know if there are more than there should be,” James asked.
“Beauxbaton is on the map, but Durmstrang is just outside the border,” Wright said as he looked over his map. “Oops, we’d better beat it, Dumbledore is coming.”

The trio ran to the ward line and Disapparated to outside the Hogsmeade Library. They let everyone there know what was going on and they snuck their way back to the Shrieking Shack. They spent the rest of the time trying to figure out how the imposter fooled the map into thinking he was not an enemy. The only thing they could come up with was Pettigrew somehow found out about the color coding and Voldemort charmed him in some way. They would have to spend some time going over the charms to prevent it from happening again.

**Back to the teens**

Rumors started floating around Hogwarts and the two other schools. Bartemius Crouch Sr. was arrested by Amelia Bones. They didn’t know what for, just that the man was pulled as an official from the tournament and taken in for questioning.

Harry and Gary spent the study hour around the Goblet. Sally was reading every name that went by her. They were keeping a close watch. Harry was under the Invisibility Cloak watching the map for Crouch Jr. Suddenly Sally tensed and signaled Gary.

‘Sally just signaled me. That guy with the buzz cut has one of our names,’ Gary said moving to intercept the boy. ‘It looks like he is in a daze. Try and subdue him. I think he is under the Imperius,’ he told Harry. He moved in front of the curse boy and said, “Hey, my name is Gary Potter. What’s yours?”

Harry in the meantime shot a Levitation Charm at the Durmstrang student causing him to lift off the ground by a couple of inches. Just high enough that he couldn’t walk.

“I must put dis name in da Goblet,” the boy intoned, you could see in his eyes he was trying to fight the curse.

“I can help you,” Gary suggested, feeling the strain his brother was feeling, to lift such a large object for so long. “How about you give me the name and I’ll make sure it gets where it needs to go.”

“Da, yes, I can do dis,” the struggling boy answered and handed the slip over to the Boy Who Lived. He felt himself lowered and that seemed to give him enough of a jolt to break the curse. They were taught how to overcome the Imperious at Durmstrang, this just happened to be a strong one, which he fought all the way to the Goblet. He didn’t even know how it happened, he was just outside the ship when he was handed a piece of paper and had the overwhelming urge to put it in the Goblet. Now, he felt in his pockets for his own entry and moved to add his name.

Gary saw Sally nod that that piece was okay and he moved out of the other boy’s way. “Thanks,” Gary beamed at the poor teen. “I’ll make sure this is taken care of.” He turned away and then ripped the paper in two and went back to his brother. They kept a close eye on the Goblet for the rest of time it was there. Then they went to the Great Hall for dinner.

Since it was Halloween there was a feast that night and everyone had to sit at their own tables. The visiting schools were not held to such and Baan, Viktor and two of their friends joined the Gryffindor table, causing Ron to sputter his admiration for Krum. Viktor made sure to sit by Gary to get away from the rabid fan.

“Good luck on getting your name drawn,” Gary said with a smile, ignoring Ron’s glare.

“Da, tank you,” Viktor said, outside he looked calm, but Gary could see the tension around his eyes.
They ate and enjoyed the meal, similar to the one they had just last night. All eyes turned to the front of the Great Hall when Dumbledore stood and moved to the Goblet of Fire. The Mutineers tensed: did they make in time to stop the imposter?
The Choosing

AN: thanks to my betas, darrelldeam and alix33, for checking this over. All mistakes are my own, especially since I have a bad habit of adding things and not sending it back to them.

AN: the drawing of the names is adapted from cannon, because J.K. Rowling is a much better author than I.

Disclaimer: I don't own anything related to Harry Potter, that privilege belongs to J.K. Rowling and all those who she lets make money for her.

Hphphp

Same night

At long last, the golden plates returned to their original spotless state; there was a sharp upswing in the level of noise within the Hall, which died away almost instantly as Dumbledore got to his feet. On either side of him, Professor Karkaroff and Madame Maxime looked as tense and expectant as anyone. Ludo Bagman was beaming and winking at various students. Percy Weasley looked on eagerly; he must be the replacement for Mr. Crouch, since he was in that department.

The Mutineers felt the tension, hoping they did everything they could to stop either Potter from being chosen. The Goblet of Fire had not been left unattended all day. No one went near it that wasn’t putting their name in and there had been only one failed attempt to enter Harry’s name. They discussed it with the adults and since Durmstrang was outside of the maps, they had no idea who Imperioused the poor student. After the adults chased away the imposter they didn’t see his name on the map the rest of the day, that and they hoped they injured the man enough to give them a small reprieve.

“Well, the goblet is almost ready to make its decision,” said Dumbledore. “I estimate that it requires one more minute. Now, when the champions’ names are called, I would ask them please to come up to the top of the Hall, walk along the staff table, and go through into the next chamber” — he indicated the door behind the staff table — “where they will be receiving their first instructions.”

He took out his wand and gave a great sweeping wave with it; at once, all the candles except those inside the carved pumpkins were extinguished, plunging them into a state of semidarkness. The Goblet of Fire now shone more brightly than anything in the whole Hall, the sparkling bright, bluey-whiteness of the flames almost painful on the eyes. Everyone watched, waiting. … A few people kept checking their watches. …

Gary’s eyes were glued to the too bright flames. He was starting to sweat with anticipation; it beaded up on his forehead and dampened the back of his neck. He could feel his brother reacting the same way. They didn’t want to be in this stupid tournament. The only time they ever heard of any of the former champions was in the classes that were taught today. There was no glory to come from these gladiator type games.

“Any minute now,” Viktor said, his was an eager anticipation. Gary nodded with a tight smile.

The flames inside the goblet turned suddenly red again. Sparks began to fly from it. Next moment, a tongue of flame shot into the air, a charred piece of parchment fluttered out of it — the whole room gasped.
Dumbledore caught the piece of parchment and held it at arm’s length, so that he could read it by the light of the flames, which had turned back to blue-white.

“The champion for Durmstrang,” he read, in a strong, clear voice, “will be Viktor Krum.”

“Way to go, Viktor!” Gary yelled over the sudden noise, clapping his new friend on the back.

Viktor rose and slouched up toward Dumbledore; he turned right, walked along the staff table, and disappeared through the door into the next chamber.

“Bravo, Viktor!” boomed Karkaroff, so loudly that everyone could hear him, even over all the applause. “Knew you had it in you!

The clapping and chatting died down. Now everyone’s attention was focused again on the goblet, which, seconds later, turned red once more. A second piece of parchment shot out of it, propelled by the flames.

“The champion for Beauxbatons,” said Dumbledore, “is Fleur Delacour!”

“Congratulations, Miss Delacour,” Harry said from his place next to her. She gave him a tight nod and rose from the Ravenclaw table and shook back her sheet of silvery blonde hair, and swept up between the Ravenclaw and Hufflepuff tables.

“Oh look, they’re all disappointed,” Mandy said over the noise, nodding toward the remainder of the Beauxbatons party. “Disappointed” was a bit of an understatement, Harry thought. Two of the girls who had not been selected had dissolved into tears and were sobbing with their heads on their arms. Luna was patting one of them on the back, probably telling her that the nargles had infested her or some such thing. Harry just shook his head fondly and smiled at his quirky friend.

After the Veela too had vanished into the side chamber, silence fell again, but this time it was a silence so stiff with excitement you could almost taste it. The Hogwarts champion next …

And the Goblet of Fire turned red once more; sparks showered out of it; the tongue of flame shot high into the air, and from its tip Dumbledore pulled the third piece of parchment. Everyone in the Mutineers tightened their grip on whatever they were holding and waited…

“The Hogwarts champion,” he called, “is Cedric Diggory!”

Hufflepuff and the Mutineers rose as one to cheer the Hogwarts champion on. They stamped their feet and raised their voices to call congratulations to the seventh year Hufflepuff. Cedric made his way past them, grinning broadly, and headed off toward the chamber behind the teachers’ table. Indeed, the applause for Cedric went on so long that it was some time before Dumbledore could make himself heard again.

‘Look at Dumbledore; he keeps looking at the Goblet, like it is supposed to shoot out another name. Do you think he was behind that Durmstrang student getting cursed?’ Gary thought to his brother.

Harry looked at the Headmaster and narrowed his green eyes. If you weren’t looking for it you would have missed the glances. ‘He might have been, since it was my name and not yours. Voldemort would have entered you, but I think Dumbledore would have entered me, to see if he could cause a rift between us,’ he answered.

They both started to get nervous, Dumbledore was a very powerful wizard and who knew what he had up his overly bright sleeve. They kept their eyes glued to the blue-white flames.
“Excellent!” Dumbledore called happily as at last the tumult died down. The twinkle in his eyes seemed dimmer. “Well, we now have our three champions. I am sure I can count upon all of you, including the remaining students from Beauxbatons and Durmstrang, to give your champions every ounce of support you can muster. By cheering your champion on, you will contribute to a very good relationship between them. Now, I, and the other officials, must attend the champions so they know what they’re going to endure for these games. Mingle with our remaining guests or return to your common rooms. I advise you do the former.” And with that said, after one more disappointed glance at the goblet, Dumbledore adjourned to the chamber were the champions disappeared. Madame Maxime and Headmaster Karkaroff, along with Bagman and Percy, joined him.

Harry went to join Gary at the Gryffindor table, smiling like he had won a contest. Gary’s smile and sense of reprieve was just as overwhelming. Team Potter dodged another bullet; relief could be seen in the other Mutineers’ eyes. Teamwork was what it was all about. They’d call the parents first chance they got.

“Baan,” Gary said to the stoic boy, “sorry your name wasn’t chosen. Your Headmaster seemed to approve though.”

“Da, the Headmaster has always favored Viktor, it is to be… expected,” the older boy said with a curt nod.

“Still, sorry, I know you were hoping to be picked,” Harry said as he clapped Baan’s back and took the seat next to him.

“Don’t be stupid,” came Ron’s voice from down the table, “of course Krum was chosen, he’s the best.”

The three Durmstrang boys glared at the redhead, making him shrink into himself. “Da, he is the best, however, I vill let you know dis, little boy”—he tapped his finger on the table—“he also hates, vut you call— fanboys,” Baan sneered at the cowering boy. And then dismissed him as unimportant and resumed his conversation with the twins. “I am glad you names vere not chosen,” he said politely.

“Boy, so are we,” the twins said together. Then they grinned at one another.

“Ve vere vorried, your Headmaster vus on our boat dis afternoon. Ve did not know vhy he vus dar,” Baan whispered, leaning forward as he spoke.

“Well, we don’t want to accuse anyone of doing anything we can’t prove, but we stopped one of your peers from entering Harry’s name. He was under the Imperious Curse. We didn’t hurt him, just gave him a reason to fight harder,” Gary whispered back.

“Den, you have our tanks. Ve are taught to fight dis curse, so whoever cast it vud have to be much powerful,” the Durmstrang boy said as he nodded to the twins. The other two nodded as well. You could see the calculating looks in their eyes though. The twins didn’t feel one bit sorry for the Headmaster.

“Let’s talk about something a bit more cheerful. We’re supposed to be celebrating our champions,” Harry said with a bright smile, though it was a bit forced and didn’t quite reach his eyes.

“Da,” Baan said and lifted his cup, which was refilled with pumpkin juice, “to the champions and may the best man”—“or woman” Parvati was heard to say—vin.” The rest of the group joined him with cries of their chosen’s name.
The rest of the time, before curfew, was spent mingling among the guests. The Mutineers were especially cheerful and friendly. Harry and Gary introduced their girlfriends to their new friends and everyone went to their respective dorms, or housing, in good moods. Even the Beauxbatons students cheered up with all the welcome they received from the Hogwarts students.

Harry went back to the Ravenclaw dorm with his friends and they spent the rest of the night, until bedtime, doing their homework. Professor Watts had given them a twelve inch essay on the Tournament due in two days.

When he got to his bed he pulled out his mirror and called his dad. After his father’s haggard face showed, he all but shouted, “We did it, Dad.”

James forced a smile on his face and answered, “We know. Terry had his mirror on him, so his parents listened to the whole ceremony.”

Harry blushed, why didn’t they think of that? “Sorry, Dad, we didn’t think. I guess we were too nervous or something,” he said as his face got brighter red.

“Don’t worry, son, we’re just happy neither one of you were picked. But, don’t let your guard down. We still have someone out there trying to hurt you guys,” James said forcefully. This wasn’t over; there was still a threat to his family.

“We’ll keep on the lookout. We think Dumbledore tried to imperious one of the Durmstrang students into putting in my name. We stopped him, but that was only because he was fighting the curse and Gary gave him a choice that went with what he was told,” Harry said, rubbing his face wearily. He was so tired of trying to catch people out to harm them. He was only a fourteen year old boy whose only thoughts should be classes, Quidditch and girls. Well, he still had time for Daphne. No matter how much training his parents and Sally did, that didn’t prepare him for real fights.

“That rat bastard!” James shouted, suddenly not tired anymore. “It is bad enough we have to worry about Voldemort”—he spat the name—“and his minions, now we have to continue worrying about that manipulative old man. I thought he was going to leave us alone. After trying all summer to get us to let him teach you two. Damn him.” He threw the mirror on the bed and got up pacing and shouting.

Lily was heard yelling much the same thing in the background, so Gary must have just told her as well. Harry kind of felt sorry for his parents; though he was also very proud of all the work they did keeping him and Gary out of the fight. He let his dad rant a while longer and then shouted to be heard, “Dad! Calm down, we don’t know it was him for sure! We only think it was!”

James stopped his pacing and fuming, picked up the mirror and looked to his son. “Sorry, Harry, I’m just tired, I guess. We’ll get together with the parents and figure this out. You and Gary keep with a group at all times. Make sure you stay together. Now, tell me about the visitors, have you met any interesting people?” he asked with another forced smile, changing the subject.

Harry let him and told him about his chilly meeting of Fleur, then his friendship with Baan and his friends. He expounded on his relationship with Viktor Krum and how he was glad he was chosen as the Durmstrang Champion. James grinned and nodded in all the appropriate places and congratulated his sons on making international friends.

They talked until midnight and then the Potter twins, after they finally calmed their parents down, went to bed.

Gary woke up the next morning ecstatic, he wasn’t picked, Harry wasn’t picked, and nothing could
bring him down today. He got up, did his morning rituals and got dressed. He woke Neville and Dean and then went into the common room. The youngest Potter twin waited for his friends by the fire, he took out his charms book and read on the current assignment, since he missed study hall yesterday.

He heard someone coming down the stairs and looked up, hoping it was his friends, but it was Ron and Seamus.

“Bet you’re disappointed your name didn’t get chosen,” Ron sneered. Gary was saddened at how far Ron had removed himself from his childhood friends. “Don’t think I don’t know why your fans were hanging around the goblet,” the redhead snapped, “you were trying to figure out a way to enter. I’ll bet you’re the reason Fred and George tried to get over the age line. Too bad for you, Dumbledore is smarter than you.”

“Ron, you’ve known me since we were five. Do you really think I would do that?” Gary asked calmly, not even his ex-friend would bring him down.

“Yes,” was all the youngest male Weasley said.

Gary just shook his head and went back to his book. He noted that Hermione was coming down the stairs. The look on her face let him know that she agreed with Ron and Seamus. Nodding to himself, he decided it was time to give up on the girl. He had other things to worry about, but not today. Today he was going to make as worry free as possible.

Lavender and Parvati were behind the bushy-haired girl and giving her looks of contempt. They took their seats next to Gary and glared at the other three Gryffindors. Neville and Dean soon joined them and with an expression of confusion, went to stand behind Gary.

“What’s going on?” Neville said, regarding the two groups facing off.

“Ron thinks Gary was trying to add his name to the goblet yesterday,” Lavender snarled, “and Hermione agrees with him.” She turned her glare on the bookworm.

Gary closed his book and said, “Leave it, guys. We’ll never convince them otherwise. They are too far into Dumbledore’s pockets.” He got up, dismissed the three glaring fourth years and casually made his way to the portrait, ignoring the outraged shouts.

When the rest of the Gryffindor Mutineers joined him in a solid front, he just whistled a merry tune and made his way to breakfast. The others exchanged amused glances and then whistled along with him. The Weasley twins, of course, changed the tune. They made quite a sight, bouncing along the halls whistling as loud as they could. Other students just shook their heads and grinned, they were quite used to the weirdness of this group of students.

They joined the rest of their gang at the Hufflepuff table, along with the friends they made yesterday (the five Durmstrang students and three Beauxbatons) and had a wonderful meal. Chatter was plentiful as they congratulated the champions.

When Cedric Diggory came into the Hall all of Hogwarts stood and cheered, even the Slytherins joined, clapping their hands and shouting their joy. The seventh year Hufflepuff blushed and then bowed to each table. He then went and joined his friends, who were sitting at the Ravenclaw table. He sat next to Fleur and tried to engage her in conversation. She was having none of it though.

**Meanwhile with the parents**

Once again the largest dining room in the Potter Manor was filled with concerned parents. This time
though there was breakfast at the table, so they could eat while they talked. Hopefully that might make the meeting less tense. That and some people had work in a few hours, so they were going to have to make it a quick meeting.

Lily’s face once again had stress lines; it was as if her weeks at the spa never happened. Though James could only speculate how much worse it would be if she hadn’t gone.

James rose to his feet and tapped his coffee mug with his wand, having forgone tea for the much more caffeinated beverage. “Thanks again for taking time out of your busy schedules to join us. Enjoy the meal while we talk, I know it is bad manners, but needs must.”

Everyone tiredly nodded their heads. Gifford Abbott, after filling his plate and cup, said, “James you know we want to help you as much as we can, but, I, for one, can’t take any more time off work.” You could see the remorse on his face. Many of the parents nodded in agreement and voiced their worries and regrets as well.

James stood once again and with a strained, yet thankful smile, he said, “I know and I can’t thank you enough for all that you’ve done for us. We won’t ask you to put your jobs in jeopardy, all we ask is, you keep the rumor mill going about Voldemort.”

The workers looked at one another and then turned to James and Lily. “We can do that. With Pettigrew caught once more, I see no reason to keep quiet about Voldemort,” Gifford said and then returned to his meal.

“Don’t forget, we’re going to be questioning Barty today. We’ll find out if it was his son in the school yesterday, and maybe he can give us some insight about Voldemort,” Amelia added, thinking of the questions she would be asking her one time friend. Like how he got his son out of prison, and how he hid the boy. It didn’t look good for Crouch Sr.

“And once again, you have our thanks. Xeno, are there any more crystals you can put out to encourage the public to continue standing for themselves? I don’t want them conforming back into putting all their hopes on my son,” the mussy-haired man asked, turning to his strange friend.

“I’ll have Luna make one up when she gets the chance. I’ll also continue to run articles in the same vein,” the white-haired man answered. He was trying to figure out how to get the crystals to Luna while she was at school.

“Wonderful,” James said, and then looked over the group. “Those of you already in the Hunter committee, we just got a new purpose. We’re going to be watching Hogsmeade and Hogwarts continuously. I know you guys don’t have jobs, and I won’t try to keep you from your family. We almost caught the intruder yesterday, so with teamwork hopefully we can keep the kids out of trouble. Lily and Albert are going to try and figure out why the color coding didn’t work. Augusta, you keep up with your teas and try and keep them away from gossiping about our family.” He turned to each person as he spoke in a suggestive tone, not wanting to come off as some sort of dictator. He was relieved when they just smiled and nodded.

“Yeah, and Remus is at the school so that helps. The ghosts also promised to keep watch,” Sirius said from his place on James left.

“Don’t forget Severus,” Lily spoke for the first time, ignoring the snorts from the two Marauders. “He promised to keep watch as well. He has to be more careful about it, because Dumbledore still thinks he is in his pocket.”

“Right, Snape, well, I hope he stays true to his word,” James said with a strained smile, not wanting
to cause Lily to get mad. The snort was automatic.

“We’ll work together with our wives,” Wright said. “Well, those that don’t have jobs. We men can be in the Shrieking Shack and the women can watch from the Library,” he added thoughtfully.

“Yeah, that’s a plan,” James agreed and then started his meal. The rest of breakfast was spent in discussion on schedules and then everyone left.

They would worry about Dumbledore when the time came. They had no proof of his involvement, so there was little they could do. Maybe Augusta could start spreading seeds of doubt about the old man’s power. That might knock him down a few pegs, and keep him too busy to interfere with the Potter family. James made a mental note to talk to her later; it would have to be done delicately.

James, Lily and Sirius went into the game room and tried to relax. “We’ll have to think of something extra special for everyone for Christmas, especially since the kids have to stay at Hogwarts this year,” Lily said as she snuggled into her husband’s side.

James pulled her close and hummed an agreement, thinking of things they could do for their friends.

Sirius started to snore from the other couch, making the two Potters chuckle with amusement. Since it wasn’t their shift they would relax— for now.

Hphphp

AN: so there you have, Team Potter wins another one. Sorry for those of you who I will lose because of this, but, it was decided when I wrote the outline that they would not be in the Tournament. The whole premise behind the story is to stop the trials the boys would have had, it took me a while to get back to that.

Don’t think the boys are out of trouble yet, I still have to get rid of the Dark Lord.

For those of you who continue with this story, maybe you can give me suggestions on how to treat the parents for Christmas, like names of theatres and restaurants in London from that year, for a fun night on the town.
A short narration

The month passed quickly, everyone continued to keep an eye out for Crouch Jr., but now that his father was incarcerated for using the Imperious Curse, there was little chance of him showing. That didn’t prevent the Mutineers or their parents to constantly watch. Regardless of all that, the Potter twins were in good moods, very little would get them down. They were safe for now and so were their friends.

The questioning of Pettigrew was a bust, the man died (he choked on his own tongue) when he tried to answer where the Dark Lord was and what the plans for the tournament were. The only thing they got out of him was that it all involved Gary.

Sally and her ghosts reported nothing new; even with Sally’s connection with the dead, no news came her way. She had no idea what was going on with Voldemort. Since the Dark Lord hadn’t killed anyone since the caretaker at Riddle Manor that source dried up.

Pettigrew’s spirit was tight lipped; Sally figured his death was enough to put the fear of Voldemort in him. The scared man thought that the Dark Lord would somehow reach through the veil and torture him even in death. So with great frustration she sent him on to his final reward, maybe after a few years in hell, he would realize his mistake.

The Mutineers made great headway in making friends with all the visitors. Luna had a special relationship with two of the Beauxbatons boys. They thought she was a wonderful gift to mankind.

Gary and Harry continued their friendship with the Durmstrang boys and were being taught some spells not taught at Hogwarts. They in return were teaching Baan and his friends meditation, along with the crystals.

All in all, almost everyone was getting along. Fleur Delacour was a bit of a hold up; she didn’t want to make friends with anyone in Hogwarts. She stuck mostly to the Beauxbatons’ students. Harry still couldn’t shake the feeling that it was all a mask, but he wasn’t going to force a friendship.

Then came the day after the Weighing of the Wands, Rita wrote another article. The headline: Did the Boy Who Lived try and enter the Tri-wizard Tournament? The article went on about how one student, who wasn’t named, gave an interview on how Mutineers stayed around the Goblet that day. It questioned as to why this would be. And speculated that Gary, or Harry, were trying to take the glory away from the real champions. Needless to say, the Potters were furious; Lily went straight to her lawyer and told him to bury that woman.

Both boys had been brought to the Headmaster’s office and questioned on why they were there. It
was a good thing they both had alibies. They were never alone when they were watching the Goblet, so it couldn’t be proven they tried to enter. The one time the Durmstrang student tried to enter Harry was hidden under the Cloak and Gary was surround by friends. The student in question supported their story. He was just thankful for the help they gave him. Lily also heard of this and the howler she sent to the Great Hall, caused ears to pop and many students to snicker.

Gary was positive it was Ron who Skeeter talked to, thank Merlin he had Lavender and Parvati. If anyone could nip rumor in the bud, it was the gossip queens of Gryffindor. Susan and Hannah made sure to take Cedric aside and let him know the real reason they guarded the Cup that day. He said he understood, after all neither Potter boy ever tried to take glory before. He remembered how the twins turned down the special privilege of playing Quidditch their first year. If they were glory hounds then they would have snapped that up right away.

Augusta was diligent in squashing rumors caused by the article; she used this time to start planting those seeds of doubt on whether the Headmaster had finally gotten too old to hold so many titles.

**November 19, 1994**

Harry was looking at the map, just before bed. He had already done his training for the night and he was tired. But it was now habit to make sure all was well within the castle. He had just finished looking around the empty halls of Hogwarts, when a movement to the side of the map caught his eye. There were names in the Forbidden Forest. One was Charlie Weasley, what could he be doing in the Forest? Harry didn’t want to speculate so he took out his mirror and called Sirius. When the dark-haired Animagus showed Harry asked, “Are you guys seeing this?”

“You mean all the people in the Forest?”

“Yeah, do you know who they are?” the tired teen asked. Hoping they weren’t hostile, Sirius didn’t seem to be worried.

“Yup, we saw them earlier and me and your dad changed to our animals and went to investigate. It was dragon tamers and three dragons. They’re here for the first task,” Sirius said with a huge yawn. Surveillance was boring, even with the excitement of dragons.

“Dragons!” Harry yelled, waking up a bit more. “They have to fight dragons?” he asked, now worried for his friends.

“Nah, they just have to get passed them,” the grey-eyed man said as he waved Harry’s worries away.

“Oh, and that’s so much better,” Harry said sarcastically.

“Sure it is, if you think about it. Done the right way, it is easier to sneak passed a dragon then it is to slay one. Beside, dragons are a protected creature, not even for this tournament would they sanction killing one. Especially a nesting mother,” Sirius explained.

“Oh, yeah, I guess I’m more tired than I thought,” Harry said sheepishly. “Should we warn the champions?”

“I wouldn’t worry about anyone but that Diggory kid. The other two Heads were both in the Forest, so they probably told their students. So, yeah, tell the Hufflepuff, just to make it fair.”

“Alright, I’ll let him know first thing tomorrow,” Harry said. His face cracked with a large yawn and he rubbed his eyes. “I’m going to bed. Good night, Padfoot.”

“Good night, Harry. Done.” And the mirror went blank.
Harry started his crystal and Luna’s misty voice soon had him asleep.

The next morning the Ravenclaw Mutineers went to the Great Hall. Harry’s eyes roamed the Hall looking for the Hogwarts’ champion. He spotted him at the Hufflepuff table surrounded by his friends. They were laughing and ribbing each other good-naturally. Harry almost didn’t want to disturb them. Heaving a great sigh, he made his way to Cedric.

“Hey, Diggory, can I talk to you for a second?” Harry asked as he approached the seventh year.

“Why?” one of the other boys asked, suspicious about this fourth year, he was one of the few that believed Skeeter.

Harry ignored him, having had to deal with him in the past; he kept his eyes on Cedric and only concern showed on his face.

Cedric, seeing that concern, got curious and nodded his head to his friends letting them know he’d be right back. The two boys left the Hall and made their way to the far wall of the Entrance Hall. They leaned casually against the wall, side by side.

“So, you know my dad and his friends are keeping an eye on the castle?” Harry asked. Everyone knew about the impostor, thanks to Crouch Sr.’s trial and Pettigrew’s death. Though, they all thought the parents were just wandering around Hogsmeade. Thank Merlin, Remus managed to keep the map from Dumbledore, or they wouldn’t be able to watch from the Shack. Harry had no idea how Remus convinced the Headmaster there were two Crouches, and the werewolf wasn’t telling.

“Yes,” was all the blonde boy said.

“Well, yesterday they noticed a group of wizards in the Forest. They went and investigated and found it was dragon tamers,” Harry hinted, seeing if the other boy got it without him having to flat out say what the first task was. He didn’t want to be accused of cheating, even though it wasn’t technically against the rules. With Dumbledore always watching him, he didn’t want to give the Headmaster any excuses.

Cedric mulled over that piece of information and then his face paled. He nodded his head to Harry and rushed back into the Great Hall. He made his excuses to his friends and ran back out. Harry could only assume he was going to the library. He shrugged a shoulder and went to join his friends. Viktor and the other four Durmstrang boys came and sat next to them.

“Viktor,” Harry said with a nod, “I get the feeling your Headmaster gave you some disturbing news.” There was a questioning note in that statement.

“Da,” the stoic boy said. He too was looking a little pale. “I came to ask if your champion knows vut I know?”

Harry flashed him a beaming smile and nodded his head. The Bulgarian lost some of the tension in his shoulders and started to serve himself breakfast. The rest of the meal was spent talking about Quidditch and other sports. The Durmstrang students were actually interested in the Muggle sports the Mutineers were telling them about.

“So, someone kicks a ball across a field, while others try and stop them. But, the players cannot use their hands? Dis is correct, da?” Baan asked trying to understand football.

“Yeah, that pretty much sums it up. Well, the goalie can use his hands, but that’s all,” Terry explained. “Maybe we can teach you guys this afternoon? You know, blow off some steam,” he said excitedly. It had been awhile since they had a pick-up game.
“That’s a great idea,” Susan said. “I’ll tell everyone else and we can get some teams together.” And with that breakfast was forgotten and she ran to do just that.

“That girl and football,” Gary said, shaking his head fondly.

Everyone finished their meal and the Mutineers told the Durmstrang students what would be best to wear. It was going to be cold, but after they played for a bit, they would be warmed up. It was good thing it hadn’t started snowing yet, this might be the last afternoon they could play before winter hit in full force.

They all went to their dorms, or boat, and got dressed. The players put on sweats and long sleeved t-shirts, their robes thrown over their clothes until they hit the field. The spectators just grabbed winter clothes; cloaks, gloves and scarves. They gathered in the Entrance Hall and waited for the Durmstrang students. When the wayward students joined them they went to the courtyard and set it up for the game.

Baan, Schmitt, Kyle, Kurt and Viktor decided they were going to play. Other Durmstrang and Beauxbatons’ students were going to watch. Harry and Gary were goalies; it had been decided long ago that because of their tight connection, they could not be on the same team. Terry decided to be the referee. Lee Jordan, of course, amplified his voice to be commentator.

The game lasted two hours, with Gary’s team the winner. The visitors wanted to play one more, since it was a narrow win. They all agreed, but switched up teams. The second game lasted one and half hours, with Gary’s team the victor by a landslide. Everyone cheered and laughed, the stress that had been hanging off Viktor melted with the good fun. Which was one of the reasons they suggested it in the first place.

Other Houses took over the field and Cedric joined in the fun.

It was a large group of happy teens that went to lunch, after they changed of course. Chattering about the games lasted the entire meal and the professors were glad to see such international cooperation. Ron and his little group of friends were extremely put out that none of the foreigners would have anything to do with them. Krum especially snubbed the boy, after his attempt to get an autograph. When the rumor circulated about Ron’s talk with Skeeter, more and more students had nothing to do with that minority group.

November 22, 1994

It was a biting winter’s day, the first task was this afternoon and the excitement in the air could be felt all over England. The students prattled all through breakfast, giving encouragement to all the champions. Viktor wouldn’t tell either of the twins what his plan was. He would just smile and shake his head. It wasn’t that he didn’t trust them, but rumor started somewhere.

No one was paying attention to class, soon enough the professors just started lecturing on past first tasks and spells or charms that were used. Though they had given these lessons prior, it seemed like a good idea to go over them again. Well, all but Snape and Watts, they didn’t tolerate the children being distracted. With a firm hand they got their lessons complete.

It was at lunch that the champions disappeared, causing the excitement to build. After the meal everyone trooped out to the stadium that was built just for this task. It was a huge wooden structure that was at least three stories high. There was a large box midway, where the judges and officials would be seated.

The round stadium, held rows and rows of seats, and stairs climbed on the outsides and the middle.
The Mutineers all gathered as one unit and made their way to the top of the chairs. Most of them had Omnioculars from the World Cup, so they didn’t mind being that far from the action. They would share with those that didn’t, since Omnioculars recorded the other students could see the tasks, between contestants.

There was an enclosure off to the left of the field, which had a large screen, probably where the dragons were hidden. There was a tent off to the right that was housing the champions.

This time the parents weren’t left out, those that couldn’t attend the games, were huddled around the mirrors. Thanks to Terry’s suggestion, all the Mutineers brought their mirrors to the event, much to the thanks of those men in the Shrieking Shack. They wouldn’t be able to see, but they could listen.

Bagman’s voice boomed across the stadium. “Welcome, Ladies and Gentlemen to the Tri-wizard Tournament. We are going to see some exciting things happening today. When the cannon goes off, our first contestant will be… Cedric Diggory! Who will be facing a Swedish Short-Snout! This dragon’s scales are silvery blue, and its powerful flame is also a brilliant blue color. That fire is hot enough to reduce timber and bone to ashes in seconds. This won’t be easy for the Hogwarts Champion! Let’s see what he can do?”

The crowd exploded with cheers and then oh’d and ah’d when the dragon was brought into the arena. When the dragon let out a breath of fire towards the stands, many of the spectators screamed.

The cannon fired and the seventh year Hufflepuff came out of the tent. He used a Transfiguration spell to change a rock into a dog to distract the dragon. He was partially successful; the dragon took the bait, and Cedric went for the Golden Egg. Halfway through, the dragon turned its attention back to Cedric, it let out a burst of flame that just missed the champion, but the heat was enough to burn his face. Cedric retrieved the egg, however, and passed the task.

The Hufflepuffs gave him a standing ovation, and the rest of Hogwarts joined them.

“I hope he isn’t hurt too bad,” Susan said, gripping Gary’s hand so tight the blood stopped flowing.

“I’m sure he’s okay,” he said patting her hand. “Madam Pomfrey will fix it right up.”

“Yeah,” she said loosening her hold.

“Yes, a great show!” Bagman predicted, “Now let’s see the score for our brave Hogwarts’ champion!”

The judges stood and Bagman gave his score first it was a nine, Dumbledore shot a score of eight, Karkaroff gave a four, Percy showed a six and Madame Maxime gave a score of eight. For a total score of thirty-five. The crowd cheered for the higher points and booed Karkaroff. Percy’s got a mix of both.

“Now! Ladies and Gentlemen, our next champion will be… Fleur Delacour!” boomed Bagman.

The Beauxbatons’ students and visitors stood up and clapped when the cannon went off. Fleur came from the tent and faced a Common Welsh Green. The Welsh Green’s roar is rather distinctive and somewhat melodious and it issues its fire in narrow jets.

Fleur used her Veela charm and enchanted the dragon to sleep, but while retrieving the golden egg, the dragon snored and let out a jet of flame that set her skirt alight. She extinguished the flames, and retrieved her egg.

“Oh, she’ll lose points for that,” Bagman predicted. “Now the scores.”
Once again Bagman went first and once again it was a nine, Dumbledore gave a six, Karkaroff gave a five, Percy shot off a five and Madam Maxime gave an eight. The final award being thirty-three.

“I guess they weren’t impressed,” mused Harry.

“Maybe, if she had actually used a spell she might have gotten a higher score,” suggested Daphne in a huff. Harry kept trying to be friends with the Beauxbatons’ girl, but she kept snubbing him. Daphne wasn’t jealous, per say, well maybe a little. Harry kept insisting that it was because the girl’s father was high up in the French government and would make a good political ally. Daphne agreed with that, but it didn’t mean she had to like it.

“Yeah, maybe,” he conceded.

“Now, for our final contestant… Viktor Krum!”

The Bulgarian ran from the tent and confronted a Chinese Fireball. The Fireball’s scarlet and smooth scaled were fringed with golden spikes around its snub-snouted face and extremely protuberant eyes. Its name is derived from the mushroom-shaped flame that comes from its nostrils when angered, along with the large mushroom-shaped flame it shoots from its mouth.

Victor used the Conjunctivitis Curse to blind the dragon and retrieve his egg. However when the dragon stumbled around it smashed half of the real eggs. Making Harry wonder why they used the eggs of the dragons that were supposed to be protected, sometimes he just didn’t understand officials.

“Oh, bad show!” Bagman said. “What will he lose for that?”

Bagman seemed to be stuck on the number nine, Dumbledore gave a five, Karkaroff shot off a ten (which caused the audience to boo), Percy gave a six and Madame Maxime concluded with a six. Putting Viktor in first place with thirty-six.

Harry and Gary applauded for their friend, ignoring the glares from some of the Hufflepuff. Most of the school knew they were friends with the Bulgarian seeker. When the champions came out of the medical tent the whole crowd stood up and gave a round of applause for them all.

“Yes, give these brave boys and girl a big hand.” Bagman said. “The next task will be just as daring. It will be held on the twenty fourth of February. Until then Ladies and Gentlemen!” and he canceled the mic.

“Well, we can conclude that Karkaroff will not be a fair judge,” Terry said bitterly.

“Yeah, too bad he can’t be replaced. I wonder what Viktor thinks about it,” Mandy said as they walked to the castle.

“Neither will Bagman, what with giving everyone a nine. I wonder what his game is,” Harry added. He knew from his dad the man was a gambler, but if he was giving all the players the same score, did that mean he wasn’t betting on the tournament?

The rest of today’s classes were canceled and it was almost time for dinner. So the students of all three schools were making their way to the Great Hall.

Now that the task was over, they all wondered what was next. Rumors going around suggested there was something happening for Christmas. A lot of girls were excited and rightly guessed that is was a dance of some sort, of course their history lessons pointed in that direction. So the topic turned to dresses and make-up for the girls and who was going to ask who for the boys. The Potter twins had already confirmed with their girlfriends that if rumor was correct they would be attending together.
AN: sorry for the condensed version of the first task, and football game, I am not a sports writer. I keep trying to find someone who will co-write my action scenes, but so far no takers. Oh, well, I hope you enjoyed this chapter.
December 25, 1994

The students had been correct; the ball was announced two weeks ago. Christmas day came with a ton of snow. The grounds were covered with the white stuff and there were paths from the Beauxbatons’ carriage and the Durmstrang boat, from where the students traveled for meals.

The castle was a glittering beauty, everlasting icicles hung from every banister. Fairies flitted about the halls. The whole building was giving a good cleaning so even the walls were bright, well as bright as stone could be. The suits of armor, also polished, were spelled to sing carols whenever someone passed them by.

Laughter filled the halls as students opened their presents. Toys and games were shared and teens were seen running up and down the halls. The professors didn’t dock points on this day; they knew that the students needed to unwind after a grueling term. They did however yell at them to slow down in the halls and chastised anyone for using magic outside of the common rooms.

It was Christmas night and the whole school was filled with emotion. Most good, some worried, but you could feel the hum in the air from so much teen anticipation. First, second and third years were pouting. They did get a special dinner that ended at eight, but it wasn’t the same as a ball.

Gary was in his dorm donning his dress robes. They were a deep red with gold trim. He was trying to do the impossible and tame his hair. Neville and Dean were laughing at him and joking that he should give it up as a lost cause.

Neville was taking Luna to the ball. His robes were a light blue, something his grandmother picked out, but they didn’t look too gaudy. Actually they were quite tasteful, with the silver trim accenting his coloring. Luna was going to dress similarly, in a light blue gown, which looked like a fairy’s dress.

Dean was taking Ginny, much to Ron’s disapproval. Dean had sent a letter to Mr. Weasley to ask permission knowing she would not be able to attend otherwise. His robes were dark grey, with black trimming. Ginny’s dress was silver with black trim. It was loose and perfect for a girl her age, Gary and Harry had bought it for her one Hogsmeade weekend. The dress she had received from her mum was okay, but the coloring was wrong.

Ron came from the bathroom; a blush filled his face a deep crimson, which clashed with his ginger hair and his golden robes. The robes were more like a dress with its ruffles and lace. You could tell where the poor boy had tried to make it manlier and remove some of the ruffles, which actually made it more dress like.

Gary and the other two Mutineers were hard pressed not to laugh outright. So they turned their backs on the embarrassed boy.
“Hey, Gary, where are you meeting Susan at?” Dean asked, grasping at anything to get their minds off those hideous robes.

“I’m going to be a gentleman and meet her at her dorm entrance,” Gary said with a shrug.

“Oh, I’m meeting Luna in the Entrance Hall,” Neville said as he fixed his tie one last time.

“Ginny’s going to meet me in the common room,” Dean said, turning away from the mirror.

“I still don’t like you dating my sister,” Ron piped up with a scowl on his face.

“It’s not up to you. Besides I have permission from you Da,” Dean said casually. He had already had this argument.

Ron just snarled and stomped from the room. Seamus followed his grumpy friend, sending a glare at the other three boys. As soon as the door closed the boys let loose with their laughter.

“Did you see those robes? I don’t know what Mrs. Weasley was thinking, sometimes I feel sorry for Ron,” Gary said between chuckles. He knew from the twins that Bill had better dress robes than those, and Ron could have used them.

“I don’t either, mate. But I’ll tell you what, if my ma ever tried to get me in something like that, I would have set it on fire,” Dean said.

“Come on, let’s go find our dates,” Neville suggested. And the three took one last look in the mirror and left to get the girls.

Gary went to the barrels that guarded the Hufflepuff dorm and waited for someone to fetch Susan. When she came out his jaw dropped. Susan was dressed in a daring red, skintight gown. At the neck were small gold jewels that sparkled light on to her face, making her look like a nymph. Her hair was pulled back into a chignon, with wisps of loose strands framing her face. To Gary she looked stunning.

“Oh Merlin, you look great. I’m surprised your aunt let you wear such a mature dress,” Gary said stupidly.

Susan frowned, a cute pout on her lips then just as quickly she grinned. “She didn’t, but it is better to ask for forgiveness than try and get permission,” she said with a brilliant smile.

“Whatever the cause, I approve. Shall we, my lady?” Gary said, jutting out his elbow.

“We shall, good sir,” she agreed and placed her hand in the crook. They journeyed to the Entrance Hall and soon enough spotted Harry and Daphne.

Harry’s robes were a dark green with a light green trim, which brought out his eyes. Somehow he managed to tame his hair so it slicked back from his face. Daphne’s dress was a deep emerald green, with light green trimming. It fell mid-knee and flared from the waist. The bodice was tight and showed her ever growing curves. The open robe she wore over it was silver to complement the dress. Her hair was fashioned in curls that hung down her back, but was pulled back from her face and held with a small silver butterfly hair clip.

“You guys look good,” Gary said as they joined the pair.

“You don’t look bad yourself,” Daphne complimented. She was taking in Susan’s dress with a quirk of her eyebrow. Susan just shrugged and wiggled her eyebrows.
McGonagall opened the doors to the Great Hall and announced that the students could enter. The usual twelve Christmas trees were bedecked with everything from luminous holly berries to real, hooting, golden owls. The walls of the Hall had all been covered in sparkling silver frost, with hundreds of garlands of mistletoe and ivy crossing the starry black ceiling. The House tables had vanished; instead, there were about a hundred smaller, lantern-lit ones, each seating about a dozen people. You could see from the windows an area of lawn right in front of the castle had been transformed into a sort of grotto full of fairy lights — meaning hundreds of actual living fairies were sitting in the rosebushes that had been conjured there, and fluttering over the statues of what seemed to be Father Christmas and his reindeer.

Gary and Harry led their dates to a table in the middle of the room; they were soon joined by Terry and Mandy, along with Tracey and Spencer. Neville and Luna were at a table to their right with Dean and Ginny. All of the third year Mutineers were attending; Ellie Godfrey was Viktor’s date, he decided that it would be easier to escort one of the twins’ friends than to try and sort out the fangirls, much to the thanks of the older Mutineers.

The doors opened again and the Champions filed through. Cedric was escorting his girlfriend Cho Chang. Fleur looked as radiant as ever in robes of silver-gray satin, and was accompanied by the Ravenclaw Quidditch captain, Roger Davies. Viktor and Ellie made a cute couple, even with the size difference. Ellie kept giggling as she looked at the stunned students.

Dinner was served by ordering off a menu, instead of the usual buffet style. All you had to do was look at the menu, place your hands next to your plate and say what you wanted. The children chatted as they ate, the Potter twins were a bit disappointed that Krum couldn’t join them, but were happy to have Baan and his date, Astoria, at the table. Many of the Mutineer girls were dates of the Durmstrang boys they had made friends with. They talked about the difference between their schools and generally just kept the conversation light. This was a day to relax.

Luna could be heard saying to stay away from the mistletoe as it was infested with nargles. Neville just nodded in agreement and went along with it.

When all the food had been consumed, Dumbledore stood up and asked the students to do the same. Then, with a wave of his wand, all the tables zoomed back along the walls leaving the floor clear, and then he conjured a raised platform into existence along the right wall. A set of drums, several guitars, a lute, a cello, and some bagpipes were set upon it.

The Weird Sisters now trooped up onto the stage to wildly enthusiastic applause; they were all extremely hairy and dressed in black robes that had been artfully ripped and torn. As they picked up their instruments the lanterns on all the other tables had gone out, and the champions and their partners were standing up.

They all looked lovey as they danced the first dance. Krum guided Ellie around the dance floor like they had been partnered for years. Roger Davies, on the other hand had a glazed look in his eyes, and you could tell it was Fleur who was leading, though she did a good job of it. Cedric and Cho were also doing well and they both smiled at each other all through the dance.

Harry looked at the Staff Table and saw most of the staff was there dressed to the nines, well except Snape who had on his usual teaching robes, though his hair seemed cleaner. The only professor that wasn’t there was Moony; he volunteered to watch the map tonight so everyone could have a break, which made Harry a little sad that his godfather couldn’t enjoy the night. Even Professor Watts attended, somehow dressed in blue and bronze dress robes. Sally could be seen off to the side of the Hall, bobbing her head to the music. The Hogwarts ghosts mingled with the crowd, telling of Christmases past.
The entire ball was going well; everyone was having a good time. The Weird Sisters soon upped the beat for the younger crowd. The only two that didn’t seem to be enjoying themselves was Ron and Hermione. Ron wouldn’t dance with his date, and Hermione soon left in tears after he yelled at her. Even Seamus seemed to have a good time with his date, some Hufflepuff girl Harry didn’t know. At least he danced with her.

Harry took Daphne to the cleared area outside the castle, to cool off and have a romantic walk. They were strolling down one of the paths, when they came upon Hagrid and Madame Maxime.

“We shouldn’t disturb them,” Daphne said as she tugged on Harry’s sleeve. “Let’s take a different path. Look, that one over there looks empty.” She pointed to a brightly lit path, which had the Father Christmas statue at the end.

“Okay,” Harry said, letting her guide him away. Just as they were turning down the other path, Madame Maxime started shouting at Hagrid. Daphne just pulled harder on Harry’s arm.

“It’s none of our business. Hagrid is a grown man. Leave it,” she said firmly.

Harry sighed and nodded. He ran his hand down her arm and grasped her tiny hand in his. They ventured away from the arguing couple and soon found a bench to rest on.

“Are you having a good evening?” Harry asked, turning to face his lovely date. Even after all that dancing she still looked beautiful.

Her face lit up with a brilliant smile. “I have never had such a wonderful night. Thanks to my devoted boyfriend.” She said and kissed him on the cheek, making him blush.

“That’s great,” Harry stammered. Then he looked into her eyes and his face softened. “I’m having a great time as well.” With that he leaned forward and they shared their first kiss. It was light and kind of awkward, but sweet nonetheless. “Thank you for being such a wonderful person.”

Daphne blushed and leaned her head against his shoulder. They sat for a while just enjoying the night.

The ball finally concluded at midnight and all the gentlemen escorted their dates to their dorms and then proceeded to their own rooms.

Gary ushered Susan to the barrels and just as they were about to arrive, Susan pulled him into an alcove. She then took his face in her hands and planted a firm kiss on his lips. After that stunning moment, she ran out of the alcove and entered her dorm. Gary touched his fingers to his lips, let out a whoop and then proceeded to walk, in a daze, to his common room.

“Oh, look at Gary,” Lavender said to Parvati as he exited the portrait, “It looks like he was either smacked or kissed.” She smirked smugly.

“None of your business,” Gary said, snapping out of his stupor and sticking his tongue out at the two snickering girls. “Did you guys have a good night?” he asked changing the subject.

“Schmitt was a perfect gentleman,” Parvati stated, happy that she agreed to go with the older boy.

“Kurt danced with me all night,” Lavender said with a dreamy smile. Her date was quite handsome and she hoped that they could continue to get to know one another, even if it was just friendship.
“That’s great,” Gary said. “Well, I’m going to get out of these robes and go to bed.” He waved to all his friends and proceeded to do just that.

It was a good night and relieved a lot of tension. Harry made sure to call Remus on the mirror to ensure himself that the man at least got dinner. Remus reported that all was well and he did enjoy the wonderful meal that Hogwarts planned for the evening.

**Meanwhile with the parents**

A week before Christmas the Potters called another meeting. This time they had good news, they were renting a yacht for the day and treating everyone to a day of relaxation. Lily mentioned a cruise, but it was decided that no one could take the time off for that amount of time. So they all agreed that when Voldemort was gone everyone, including the children, would take a week long cruise up the British coastline.

This night though was just for the parents. Sirius even managed to get a date with a French single mother, a Villette Courtois, whose daughter was at Hogwarts with the Beauxbatons’ assembly. She was beautiful woman with long blonde hair and a pixie face. She was tall and willowy, with the grace of a dancer. She had come into the Hogsmeade Library to see what it was all about and struck up a conversation with Sirius, who was manning the crystal booth. Gary had expressed his joy that his godfather was finally dating.

Instead of meeting at the Manor as they usually did, everyone decided to meet at the docks. It was a general consensus that they would be going semiformal. So only casual suits and party dresses. No one wanted to dress up; they all just wanted to relax.

The large crowd of parents, and Sirius and his date, converged on the small dock known as St Saviour’s Dock on the south bank of the River Thames, 420 meters east of Tower Bridge and forms the eastern end of the picturesque and historic embankment that starts at Tower Bridge known as Shad Thames. The other side of the Dock is Jacob’s Island. At the end of the dock was a small yacht, it was only one story high, with rooms to change if needed, and enough facilities to make sure everyone was taken care of. James hired a tour guide and a catering company.

At the front end of the deck of the yacht there was a group of small tables that fit six people. The railings were alight with bright blue Christmas lights, which gave the area soft lighting. The radio played classical carols and there was a dance floor set up on the other side of the deck. Lining the dance floor were poles of the same blue lights.

Dinner was buffet style, with tables set to the right side of the deck, which were filled with international dishes of; Thai turkey filo dippers, Clementine & vodka-baked salmon with beetroot crème fraîche sauce, Triple cheese & aubergine lasagna, British beef crostini, Smoked fish & potato latkes sharing a platter and many other delicious foods. The parents were ecstatic to be trying so many different countries foods.

James, Lily, Sirius, Villette, Wright and Wren all sat at the head table, after gathering their food. They kept the conversation light.

“So, Villette, are you enjoying yourself?” James asked politely, after the dinner started dying down.

“No, I’m not,” Lily asked.

“Oui, et is good to be out on a dinner date. Thank you for inviting me,” the blonde answered with a wistful smile. “Et ‘as been so long since I ‘ave enjoyed myself. Et is not easy to be the only parent of a teenage girl.”

“Do you mind if I ask what happened to Mr. Courtois? If it is not too personal,” Lily asked
tentatively.

“My ‘usband was killed by Death Eaters, when ‘e was visiting your Ministry,” the woman replied sadly.

“I am so sorry,” Lily said as she grabbed the blonde’s hand and gently rubbed her shoulder, feeling bad for bringing up such a sad memory.

“Et is fine. Et was a while ago, et still ‘urts a bit, but now I am … getting over the pain,” she said with a shaky smile. “My daughter, she is telling me ‘Mama, you are to be dating again’. She is very… insistent that this must be true,” Villette said proudly.

“Well, all the better for me,” Sirius said smugly. “Come on, my beautiful date, let’s dance.” And he stood and held out his hand to her. She took it and the two went and joined the other couples on the dance floor.

“I shouldn’t have said anything. I have no idea why I asked that,” Lily said. There was a little niggling feeling in the back of her mind that no one could be trusted. And she didn’t know this woman, maybe she had been living on the edge for too long.

“No, you probably shouldn’t have, but I do understand why you did. Come on, Lily-flower, let’s join everyone and relax. You need to unwind,” James said as he stood and took her by the elbow and led her to the dance floor. They swayed to the soft music; Lily laid her head on James’ shoulder and just released all the tension and flowed with the music.

“I wonder how the ball it going?” she said in a whisper. Not wanting to break the moment.

“We taught the boys how to behave at such a function. I’m sure they’re doing well, perfect little gentlemen. Don’t worry about the kids tonight; it’s our night to enjoy.” With that he moved a little more determined in his steps. He wanted it to be a night to remember. Lily laughed and followed along.

After about ten minutes of dancing the yacht started to cruise the Thames. The guide was pointing out all the historical sites that could be seen from the river. Things like the Houses of Parliament, the Tower of London and the Cutty Sark and many other attractions. Many of the parents enjoyed the tour and the open bar. Others decided that the dance floor was a better option. No one talked about the things they had been stressing over and everyone had a wonderful time just cutting loose.
February 11, 1995

It was Hogsmeade weekend and the Potter twins were determined to get their girlfriends something nice for Valentine’s Day. Last year’s gifts were sweet, but now that they were officially dating they needed to get something more meaningful.

Gary had written to Madam Bones and asked for permission to date her niece. She granted it only if he promised to keep their hormones in check, which he gave right away. She was quite upset when she found out what the fourth year Hufflepuff girl wore to the ball, and tore into the fathers that had taken the kids to Diagon Alley that summer.

Harry also requested Daphne’s father’s blessing. Being from a pure-blood family Mr. Greengrass was impressed and granted it. He knew that his daughter was a perfect lady and she always informed him of what a gentleman Harry was.

It was a small group of Mutineer boys that were roaming the village.

“I have no idea what to get Susan,” Gary confessed, looking around the shops to see if anything caught his eye. “Her aunt wasn’t much help; she thinks anything I get her will be good enough.”

“You got her that charm bracelet last year, right?” Terry asked as he too viewed the stores.

“Yes, Mum says I should get jewelry again, but she didn’t say what kind,” the youngest Potter said frustrated.

“Why don’t you get her a nice emerald necklace to go with her coloring?” Harry suggested. He was going to get something similar for Daphne, only topaz. “And maybe matching earrings,” he added thoughtfully.

“I’m not sure I want to get the same type to gift you’re getting Daphne. It shows I have no imagination,” Gary waved off his brother’s advice.

“Yeah, I guess that make sense,” his twin shrugged. The older they were the more they became their own person. Gary was far more outgoing then his quieter twin.

“How about something from the sports store, like the jersey from her favorite Quidditch team?” Spencer asked.

“Or even season tickets to her favorite football team,” Wright added.

“Those are actually good suggestions,” Gary said thoughtfully. Susan was a bit of a tomboy, if he
played it right and got something cute along with them he could pull it off. “I’m going to go talk to Mum. I think she’s at the Library today.” He went to break off from the group when Harry grabbed his sleeve.

“Not by yourself,” the older boy said firmly. “We still don’t know where Crouch Jr. is.”

“Oh, yeah,” Gary said sheepishly, he had become compliant. Nobody had heard a thing from the Death Eater or Voldemort in months.

“Let’s go to the jewelry store first, then we’ll go to the Library,” Harry said, pulling his brother along.

So the group of boys went to the store and Harry got his gift for Daphne. Terry got a charm bracelet for Mandy, since they weren’t quite as serious as the Potter twins and their girlfriends. The other boys were going to get something simple, like stuffed animals or flowers.

Harry and Gary were just leaving the shop, the other boys right behind them, when they heard a crack. As they spun around to the alley next to the store Harry was hit in the side with a stunning spell. Gary whirled around to try and see who attacked his brother. Just as he had lifted his hands to fire a cutting curse at the man in the shadows, he was also hit with a stunning spell.

The parents could be seen running down the street towards the boys, wands raised and ready to attack. They just spotted Crouch’s name on the map and came as soon as they could. They got within range and saw the other Mutineers attempt to fire spells at the kidnapper. Crouch sneered at them and disappeared with a port-key.

“Neville, what happened,” Lily said grabbing the boy by the arm and giving it a shake when she finally reached them.

“I’m not sure,” the blond boy said a bit dazed. “We were coming out of the shop when we heard the sound of apparition. The twins started to face whoever it was, but he got to them first.”

Frank extracted his son from the upset mother. “Neville, are you hurt?” The Gryffindor just shook his head.

James awoke Harry and asked him the same questions. Then he asked, “Harry, can you tell where your brother is?”

“Give me a minute,” the older twin said and shook the cobwebs from his head. He started calling down the bond. “Gary, Gary, can you hear me?” he called. He then shook his head at his parents.

“Keep trying,” Lily demanded. Harry just nodded his head and did as she said.

The parents sent the other boys back to the castle, then whipped out their mirrors and started rallying the troops, making sure to tell Amelia.

Later with Gary

Gary woke with a major headache and to the worried voice of his brother. “Gary, goddammit answer me!” Harry’s voice screamed in his head.

The teen groaned and opened his heavy eyes. His arms and feet were tied to a headstone. There was a man moving about the area in front of him. He could only conclude it was the elusive Crouch Jr. “Harry, what happened?”
The cemetery was old and there were many tombstones that were crumbling and falling apart. It was surrounded by woods and the shadows that were on the ground let Gary know that not much time had passed.

“We were ambushed. Where are you?” was the frantic reply.

“I’m in some graveyard. Crouch is here. He is setting up a cauldron and it looks like he is going to do some ritual.” Gary looked closer to the headstones around him. “All the grave markers say the last name Riddle,” he informed his brother. “There’s a baby-like body in front of the cauldron, I think it’s Voldemort,” he finished.

He could hear noises at his feet. He looked down and saw a gigantic snake slithering through the grass, circling the headstone where he was tied.

Sally popped up next to the teen and said, “Don’t worry, Gary, your brother can find you. The bond you have is strong. I need you to be as calm as you can and try and get out of your ropes,” she said as soothingly as she could, internally she was cursing that she couldn’t do more.

Gary took a deep breath and tried to cut his bonds. He sent a wandless cutting curse to the ropes, but nothing happened. “Damn, I think he suppressed my magic or these are magic resistant.”

“Okay, try and stay calm,” Sally said, “I think I know this ritual, it requires blood of the enemy. Remember what I told you guys a long time ago. Voldemort is not your enemy; he is a parasite that must be destroyed. As long as you keep that in mind, the ritual won’t work.”

“I’ll try, but it is kinda hard to think that when the man is trying to kill me,” Gary said taking another calming breath.

“Gary, we know where you are and we’ll be there in few minutes. Mum and Dad are gathering as many adults as they can, as quickly as they can. Try and hold on,” Harry said.

“Okay, hurry though, my magic is not working.”

“I’m going to get Dad to take me there now; maybe if I send some of my power to you, you can get loose.”

“We can try. We’ve never really shared power before,” Gary replied.

It was about that time that Barty noticed Gary was awake. He sneered at the helpless boy. All of his spying had paid off. Stupid Wormtail almost ruined everything when he got caught, but the Dark Lord never trusted that sniveling coward. It took months of re-planning after his failed attempt to get the boy in the tournament. His master was pleased, and would reward him well when he was revived. Now, finally, his master was going to be reborn and greater than ever.

“Feeling helpless, little boy?” the demented man smirked. “Can’t use your great power to get free? My Master is too smart for a weakling like you,” he boasted.

“Bartemius, continue with the preparations,” came a soft voice from the baby-like figure. “I will deal with the Boy Who Lived in due time.”

“Yes, Master,” Crouch said and turned back to the cauldron, adding more ingredients.

“Gary, me and Dad are outside the graveyard, but there are wards up. I don’t know how long it will take to get through them. I’m pushing my magic through the bond, but it seems the wards are stopping it.” Harry’s voice rang in his head.
“Okay, okay, I’m going to try and reach you,” Gary replied. He felt down the bond and could feel the barrier preventing the transfer.

The cauldron in front of the bound boy started to bubble, sparks flew in every direction. Crouch picked up the homunculus and gently lowered it in the potion. He then waved his wand and a bone flew from the grave Gary was tied to.

"Bone of the father, unknowingly given, you will renew your son.” The escaped convict intoned firmly as he threw the bone into the large pot.

Sally whispered in Gary’s ear, “Remember, not your enemy.”

Gary nodded, but he was not convinced, after all, this man has been trying to kill him and his brother all their lives. He was trying though.

Crouch placed his right arm over the cauldron, raised a knife to his hand and slicked off his index finger. “Flesh of the servant, willingly given, you will revive your master,” the crazy man cried joyfully.

“How close are you? Crouch is almost done,” Gary practically yelled down the bond.

“One more minute, we’re almost there.”

Crouch then turned and made his way to the teen. He lifted the knife and placed it on Gary’s arm. With a cruel smirk he cut deep into the flesh of the teen’s forearm. “Blood of the enemy, forcibly taken, you will resurrect your foe.” Placing a vial under the freely bleeding arm he collected the blood.

Gary sagged in defeat, he couldn’t think of Voldemort as anything but his enemy. The ritual will work.

Taking the blood back to the cauldron, Crouch poured it in. More sparks came from the potion, a white mist soon filled the area and Gary couldn’t see anything.

‘Let it not have worked,’ he prayed frantically, desperately reaching down the bond to get more power. Just then he felt the barrier break and magic flooded through his system. He cast another cutting curse and this time his hand was freed. He quickly untied his other hand and then unbound his feet. As the mist was beginning to clear, he ducked behind the headstone, sending a message to his brother letting him know where he was.

He saw familiar figures moving among the trees, and snuck his way towards them. Just as he was about there a large snake appeared in front of him, hissing in his face. He raised his hand and severed the head of snake without a word. And gave a huge sigh in relief and continued his way. He met up with his father and said quietly, “I killed the snake.”

James just nodded and jerked his head to the back of the woods. Gary looked and saw a very worried Harry and quietly made his way to his twin. Lily was also there, she healed Gary’s arm and then grabbed the boys; she was just about to take them away, when Sally popped up and shook her head.

“If you want to end it now, they have to stay,” she informed the overly-protective mother.

“No,” the distraught woman whispered. She and James had done everything to keep her boys away from the fight. It went against everything they believed in to keep the twins here.
“You must,” insisted Sally, “there is still the prophecy in play. No matter how much you shelter the boys, Harry has to face Voldemort.”

“Mum, I have to,” Harry said as he put a shaking hand on his mother’s arm. “This is what you guys have been training us for. If we’re going to do it, it should be now, before he starts killing again.”

Lily looked into her son’s eyes and saw only a scared teen, but the determined glint and the firming of the jaw let her know that he was brave enough to fight. It was with great reluctance that she nodded her head. The three Potters turned and made their way back to James.

James had been watching the resurrected Dark Lord search for his son. Now was the time, while the monster was weak. He glanced around and saw the same conviction on the other parents’ face. No one wanted this… man to roam free again. Lily and the twins joined him. He raised an inquiring eyebrow, Lily only shook her head sadly and mouthed, ‘prophecy’. His shoulders sagged and then after a minute he nodded his head. They spread out among the trees in a circle around the graveyard.

Voldemort was pressing his wand to the Dark Mark on Crouch’s arm. The Death Eaters would be here soon. They could end this war before it even started. The Dark Lord was glancing around the woods, he could see the figures moving into position, but he wasn’t concerned. They would never be able to kill him. His Death Eaters were formidable fighters. These pathetic wizards won’t stand a chance against him or his men.

One by one, the cloaked and masked men appeared. They formed a circle around their master and waited with bated breath.

“I had a wonderful speech all prepared for you, my friends. However, it seems we have company. I want you to find the Boy Who Lived and bring him before me, unharmed. Kill anyone else,” the silky voice of the deformed man said.

“Now!” James bellowed, lifting his wand and sending curse after curse to the robed figures in the graveyard. The parents all raised their wands to do the same, not one stunning curse was sent.

Caught by surprise five of the Death Eaters fell to harmful curses, the rest raised shields and started a barrage of counter attacks.

The Potters stood together, just outside the graves; it was unfortunate that the Dark Lord spotted them. He trained his wand on Harry — since he couldn’t tell them apart he would start with the closest— and sent a Killing Curse. Harry wandlessly lifted his necklace in the path of the deadly curse and the last horcrux was destroyed. As one the family turned and all four attacked the vile being with different curses.

Blood exploded everywhere, as Tom’s wand arm fell to his feet. His intestines spilled from his belly. A large gash bloomed across his eyes, blinding him immediately. The last curse was Harry’s and just as the Dark Lord was yelling his defiance to the sky; his head fell from his body.

The power he knew not— was his family standing united.

Four Years Later

Harry Potter looked around for the last time at the home he knew most of his life. He was getting married tomorrow, to the lovely Daphne Greengrass. They would be moving into their own house after they came back from their honeymoon. When they returned they were going to be opening a new inn in Diagon Alley, and hopefully, live a very quiet life.

As he glanced around his room he reflected on the last few years. After the Dark Lord fell, most of
the Death Eaters fled; well the ones who weren’t injured or dead. Lucius Malfoy was among the
injured, and since Madam Bones was there, this time he couldn’t buy his way out of Azkaban.

Harry and Gary were whisked away as soon as the body hit the ground. Their job was done. Lily
took them straight to the Hogsmeade Library and fed them Calming Draughts. Sally was there to let
them know that Voldemort was finally on his way to his just reward. It took an hour to talk the boys
down, but they did, then ushered them back to the castle.

Lily informed them that they would be speaking to Dumbledore as soon as Amelia finished with the
crime scene. She told them that if the Headmaster tried to talk to the boys before the parents got
there, to tell him to wait.

The Potter twins had made their way back to Hogwarts and were met by a large crowd of concerned
friends, and of course, their girlfriends. The boys had been covered in dirt and blood so everyone
was asking what happened; they only told them that it was finally over. The tension that had filled
the air changed to one of relief and confusion. The boys told the Mutineers they would get the whole
story that night.

Dumbledore, having been informed by Snape that his Dark Mark flared, did try and get the two tired
teens to his office. They stood firm and said their parents would be there soon. And sure enough, just
when the old man persisted, twenty adults filed into the hall. They all looked tattered and torn. But
the relief that showed on their faces was enough to calm their children.

His Dad had told him what happened in the headmaster’s office. James explained to Albus
everything the Mutineers and their parents had done over the years. How they hunted the horcruxes,
how they trained the boys. He smirked as he recounted the blatant disbelief on the old man’s face. It
took sharing the memories of their trials that finally put Dumbledore in his place.

After that confrontation James and Lily finally moved on with their lives. James stayed with the
Wizengamot and Lily joined the Unspeakables as a researcher. All of the movements they put
forward to keep the kids together were still in play. Wizards were still sending their kids to Muggle
schools and vacations were taking place outside the wizarding world. The libraries and the crystals
still thrived.

Harry smiled at the memory of Dumbledore stepping down as headmaster. Never again were they
bothered by that man. His faced then turned sad as he remembered Sally saying her good-byes. Now
that her mission was over she couldn’t stay. She had taken them to the Room of Requirements that
night and told them it was time for her to go. Needless to say the twins were upset; they had known
this deity all their lives. After a tearful hour of thanks and good-byes — Sally left.

Gary had married Susan right out of Hogwarts. The couple was expecting their first child soon.
Harry was proud of his brother. Gary became an Auror; the fight with Voldemort cemented his
career. Amelia Bones backed his choosing. The youngest Potter twin was still the heir to the Black
family, because even though Sirius married Villette, they still didn’t have a son. Gary was going to
split the fortune with Villette’s daughter, Arleta; however, he would inherit the title.

Because there was no outside interference, Viktor Krum won the Tri-wizard Tournament. Harry was
happy for his friend. He kept in touch with all the Durmstrang students he befriended.

Harry picked up the last thing to be packed. It was a photo album of all the Mutineers and their time
together, going back from when they were in the Muggle primary school.

As he flipped through the pages, he glanced at one of the first photos. He shook his head at the
picture of Ron, standing with his family. Ron had married Hermione and they lived poorly at the
Borrow. All that time Gary wasted on the bushy-haired girl made Harry a bit sad. Oh well, she choose her own path.

He turned the pages to the end and there was a photo of the whole gang. It was taken the day the Potter boys graduated. They had held a large party and every Mutineer and their parents celebrated with them.

Neville was standing next to Luna; the soft look in his eyes as he stared at the quirky girl was how he still looked at her now. They started dating just after the Yule Ball. Neville changed his career choice of Herbology to follow his girlfriend around the world looking for obscure animals.

Harry glanced at the other sets of twins in the photo. The Weasley twins, with the help of Sirius and Remus, opened their joke shop. It was a tremendous success. Molly never liked that her boys didn’t go into the Ministry, but the twins didn’t care. They were happy. Right now they were not seeing anyone, but talk was going around that they were flirting with two of the girls they played Quidditch with.

The Patil twins moved in with Lavender. Padma was training with Lily in the Unspeakables. Parvati and Lavender were under the apprenticeship of Trelawney. The batty woman was going to leave Hogwarts and wanted one of her two best students to take her place. Whichever one got the job the other would open a fortune telling stand next to Pandora’s Box.

Terry and Mandy tried dating, but it didn’t work for them. Terry is now seeing one of the Beauxbatons’ girls he met fourth year. Mandy was single and working in the Department of the Misuse of Muggle Artifacts.

Hannah was coupled up with Michael, which shocked everyone. They had bought the Daily Prophet and brought the sales back up to what they were before Skeeter ruined the paper.

Alice Mcfay, who had been one of the quieter Mutineers, was now sharing a flat with Sally Anne Perks. Both girls moved back to the Muggle world after leaving Hogwarts. They never truly felt they belonged to the wizarding world. They did keep in touch with the rest of the gang, but were happier where they were.

Spencer and Ginny are engaged to be married this winter. They both went into Quidditch and were doing well.

Tracey and Astoria were both apprenticed to Madam Malkin. The dressmaker was going to retire soon and the two girls wanted to take over the shop.

Everyone in the picture had moved on after the battle in the graveyard. The parents finally had relaxed their protective stances and let the teens be teens. The Mutineers met at least once a month to catch up on everyone.

“Harry,” a soft voice said behind him, “are you ready?” Harry turned to his soon to be wife and nodded. He put the picture album in the only open box in the room and went to her side.

“Just finishing packing,” he said.

Hphphp

AN: And that is that, I thank you all for reading and hope you enjoyed it. It was always my intention to end the story during the tournament. To tell the truth, this fic is much longer than I intended.
AN: If you like this story, then please check out my others. None of them are like this one, but you might still like them.

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!